

Reader 2: You shall not covet your neighbor's spouse.  
You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Reader 1: And so we ask: Are my thoughts and desires in line with God's will for my life? Do I give my full attention and affection to my spouse and not put myself in positions of temptation or lust? Do I allow God to provide me with all that I need? Am I content with what I have, or do I spend too much time comparing myself and my possessions with others? Am I addicted to shopping and buying?

*(Pause for reflection.)*

**P** Together let us pray:

**A** **Lord, through your mercy and grace, let us set things straight.**

#### GENERAL CONFESSION OF SINS

*(All stand.)*

**P** Although we have made mistakes and found ourselves slaves to sin and selfishness, we ask now for God's forgiveness, for a grace that is as deep and limitless as the ocean:

**A** **I confess to almighty God and to you, my brothers and sisters, that I have greatly sinned, in my thoughts and in my words, in what I have done and in what I have failed to do, through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault; therefore I ask blessed Mary ever-Virgin, all the Angels and Saints, and you, my brothers and sisters, to pray for me to the Lord our God.**

*(Remain standing.)*

#### LITANY OF REPENTANCE

**P** Overcome by God's unfailing and undeserved love, we pray for the confidence to seek and find reconciliation with him and with those we may have hurt.

**C** For those times when we did not respond to those in need or ignored them in order to focus on our own needs, we pray:

**A** **Lord, have mercy.**

**C** For those times when we chose to embrace comfort and self-interest instead of aligning our lives with your will and commandments, we pray:

**A** **Christ, have mercy.**

**C** For the times when we have not responded to your call to care for the earth and all its inhabitants, we pray:

**A** **Lord, have mercy.**

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

**P** We pray in the words that Jesus taught us:

**A** **Our Father, who art in heaven...**

*(All sit. Instructions for individual confession are given here. When individual confessions are complete, the assembly gathers once again.)*

#### CONCLUDING PRAYER

*(All stand.)*

**P** God of grace and countless mercy, we thank you for the wisdom of the Church in giving us this Lenten season, a time to begin again, confident in the new life offered to us through the cross of your son, Jesus Christ.

**A** **Amen.**

**P** We have been washed clean through this sacrament of forgiveness and healing, Almighty God, and so we are a new people. Let us extend to one another a sign of Christ's peace.

*(All may exchange a Sign of Peace.)*

#### FINAL BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

**P** May the blessing of Almighty God be yours, in the name of the Father, and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

**A** **Amen.**

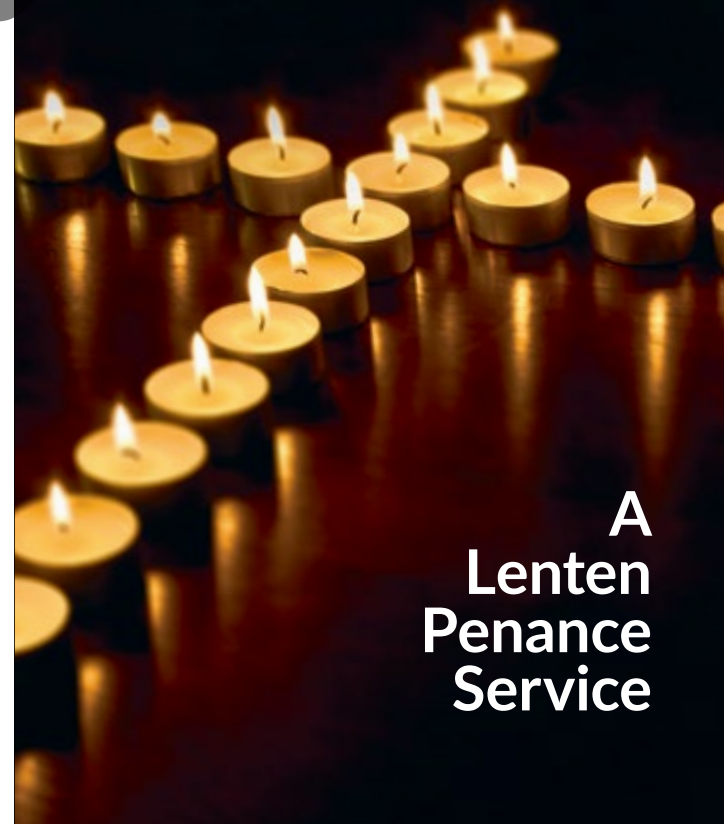
**P** Go in peace, glorifying the Lord by your life.

**A** **Thanks be to God.**

#### CLOSING HYMN

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# Gracious and Merciful



**A**  
**Lenten  
Penance  
Service**

# Gracious and Merciful

## A Lenten Penance Service

### OPENING HYMN

*(All stand.)*

Presider: In the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit.

**All: Amen.**

Presider: May the mercy and grace of God, incarnate to us through Jesus Christ and the continuing work of the Holy Spirit, be with you.

**All: And with your spirit.**

**P** Encouraged by our faith in the good news of Christ and the promise of God's forgiveness, we take this opportunity to begin again, to be made clean through the blood and mercy of Jesus Christ.

*(Pause for reflection.)*

**P** Let us pray: Saving God, we gather in your name, assured in your gracious and merciful love that gives us the confidence to confess our sins and confide in you about those times when we have failed to love you and those you have placed in our lives. We come to set things straight with you, loving God, encircled as we are by a love that is beyond measure. See into our hearts and claim us for your own as new creations in your son, Jesus Christ.

**A Amen.**

*(All sit.)*

**First Reading.....Isaiah 1:16-18**

**Responsorial Psalm.....Psalm 103:6-7, 8-9, 10-11, 12-13**

**C** The Lord is kind and merciful.

**A** The Lord is kind and merciful.

**C** The LORD secures justice  
and the rights of all the oppressed.  
He has made known his ways to Moses,  
and his deeds to the children of Israel.

**A** The Lord is kind and merciful.

**C** Merciful and gracious is the LORD,  
slow to anger and abounding in kindness.  
He will not always chide,  
nor does he keep his wrath forever.

**A** The Lord is kind and merciful.

**C** Not according to our sins does he deal with us,  
nor does he requite us according to our crimes.  
For as the heavens are high above the earth,  
so surpassing is his kindness toward those who  
fear him.

**A** The Lord is kind and merciful.

**C** As far as the east is from the west,  
so far has he put our transgressions from us.  
As a father has compassion on his children,  
so the LORD has compassion on those who fear him.

**A** The Lord is kind and merciful.

**Second Reading .....Titus 3:3-8**

*(All stand.)*

**Gospel Reading .....John 8:1-12**

*(All sit.)*

### HOMILY

### EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

*(All kneel.)*

Reader 1: "You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments." (Matthew 22:37-40)

Reader 2: As we look at our lives and the ways we have sinned or failed, we begin, as always, with love. Our best response to God's call can be seen in how we love God, how we love others and how we love ourselves. First, we ask ourselves, how well do we love God?

Reader 1: I am the Lord your God: You shall not have strange gods before me. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

Reader 2: And so we ask: Do I put other people, things and obligations before God? Do my words raise God up or put him down? Do they build the kingdom or lead to its destruction? Do I go to Mass each week and on Holy Days of Obligation? Do I make holy days holy? Do I devote time to personal prayer? Do I set aside time on Sundays for my family and for service to others?

*(Pause for reflection.)*

**P** Together, let us pray:

**A** Lord, through your mercy and grace, let us set things straight.

Reader 1: Next, we ask, how well do I love others?

Reader 2: Honor your father and mother. You shall not kill. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not steal. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Reader 1: And so we ask: Do I respect and care for my parents and elders? Do I have patience with them in their old age? Have I injured or hurt others physically, emotionally or verbally? Do I gossip? Do I protect and honor the sanctity of life from conception to natural death?

Reader 2: Do I recognize that my body and the bodies of others are temples of the Holy Spirit? Do I respect sexual purity and the sanctity of marriage and teach it to others? Have I ever taken what belongs to someone else? Have I wasted the time of my employer? Do I tell lies that hurt others? Do I tell jokes or use words at the expense of whole groups and races of people?

*(Pause for reflection.)*

**P** Together, let us pray:

**A** Lord, through your mercy and grace, let us set things straight.

Reader 1: Finally, we ask, how well do we love ourselves?