

Do This and You Will Live...

(Luke 10: 28)

Adult Reconciliation Liturgy Including the Second Rite of Penance

Please note: While this liturgy has been prepared for large communities, it can readily be used in more informal intimate settings with small community groups. It includes the Second Rite of Penance but can easily be adapted to a non-sacramental celebration.

Before the Liturgy Begins:

Have the Liturgy Co-ordinator welcome and brief the community, explaining to them in a reassuring manner, the logistics of the ritual, where to go and what to do, without giving away the symbolism, or turning it into a commentary or homily. Having done so the liturgy co-ordinator invites them to stand for the opening hymn.

Gathering Hymn and Procession: CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT (As One Voice/Vol1 & Gather Australia)

The Church is darkened and The Word of God is lead in procession by the Cross bearer, followed by the incense bearer. The Word is held high and is surround by lit candles. The Servers, Ministers and Presider follow. When the hymn has, ended the Ministers and Servers go to their allocated places. The Cross is enthroned and the Word is then displayed to the community as the Presider says, **The Word of God is our Light**. The community repeat this acclamation. The Word is then enthroned and incensed.

Welcome & Introduction:

Presider: The grace and peace of our loving God be with you all.

All: And also with you.

Presider: This evening we gather round the Word of God, where we hear Jesus, clearly and simply name the greatest commandment of all – love of God and love of neighbour. This, He says, is the way to fullness of life. We are here now, because we feel the need to renew our lives, we are ready to recognize and own all that blocks the fullness of God’s life in us, and we are hungry for God’s strengthen grace. And so, let us bow our heads and quiet our minds and hearts as we pray. (silent pause)

Opening Prayer:

God of tender mercy and love, you alone are perfect love and it is through you that we know love. May we open our hearts to your saving grace, that we may chose life in the faithfulness of our love for you and our neighbour. We make this prayer in the name of Jesus, the One who calls us to life.

All: Amen

Liturgy of the Word:

First Reading: Deut 30: 15 – 20 *“The two ways....choose life”*

Have this beautiful invitation to life recited rather than read. Choose a lector who is able to engage the community through their genuine presence and eye contact. Have them learn this text by heart and proclaim it to the community, as she/he holds the Word open before them.

Pause for silent reflection before the psalm is sung

Sung Response: IF TODAY YOU HEAR GOD'S VOICE (Gather Australia)

Second Reading: 1 John 2: 3 -10 *"Keep the commandments...of love"*

Pause for silent reflection before the Gospel Acclamation

Gospel Acclamation:

As the acclamation is proclaimed the Word is incensed

Praise and Honour to You Lord Jesus Christ.

Your Word O God is a light for our path and joy for our hearts.

Praise and honour to you Lord Jesus Christ.

Gospel: Luke 10: 25 –28

Homily Suggestions:

Invite the community to consider the clear message of the readings – life is found in choosing God's way of love. What are the obstacles and difficulties in choosing this way? What are the barriers that we need to face and overcome, which block the flow of life and love in us? Let us pause to reflect.

Play some appropriate instrumental music during this quiet reflection and let it flow into the Examination of Conscience.

Examination of Conscience:

Presider:

Let us kneel and search our hearts before the loving mercy and compassion of our God.

Reader: "If you love Yahweh your God and follow God's way... you will live" (Deut 30:16)

Pause

In what way have I failed to love God?

Pause

Presider: Let us confess our failure to love

All: I confess to you O God and to you my brothers and sisters.

Reader: "Anyone who loves his or her brother and sister is living in the light" (1Jn 2:10)

Pause

In what way have I failed to love others?

Pause

Presider: Let us confess our failure to love

All: I confess to you O God and to you my brothers and sisters

Reader: “Do this and life is yours” (Lk 10:28)

Pause

In what way have I failed to choose the path of life?

Pause

Presider: Let us confess our failure to love.

All: I confess to you O God and to you my brothers and sisters.

Presider: Let us be seated now and listen to God’s call to us.

Hymn: WILL YOU LOVE ME? (As One Voice/Vol 1)

Have one or two people dance this tender hymn and the community sing the choruses.

The Our Father:

Individual Confession and Absolution:

At this point, several people come forward with bowls of burning incense and lit candle trays. They assemble on the sanctuary and then lead the priests to their specified location for confession. The burning incense and candle trays are placed in their allocated positions near the priest. Small bowls of incense crystals are already in place. *Ensure the church is well ventilated and that the incense and candle tray are not on top of the priest and penitent.* As individuals go to one of the several priests positioned throughout the Church, they burn a piece of incense and after their absolution they take a small candle. *(Night light / tealight candles are the best in that the wax is contained).* Throughout this the following hymns may be sung.

- HOLY GROUND (Holy Ground)
- INSTRUMENTAL VERSION OF HOLY GROUND (Holy Ground)
- ON EAGLES’S WINGS (M. Joncas - As One Voice/Vol1 & Gather Australia)

Praise of God’s Mercy: (All Stand with lighted candles held high)

Presider: Let us stand in praise and thanksgiving

Reader: Your love is eternal O God

All: We praise you God of endless love

Reader: Your mercy and compassion abound

All: We praise you God of endless love

Reader: You are the peace and joy of our hearts

All: We praise you God of endless love

Extinguish candles here.

Concluding Prayer:

Praise and glory to you God of life, for you have visited your people with the grace of your loving forgiveness and tender compassion. May we, who have

been renewed by your love go forth from this sacred place, and be for all, the gift of your love. We ask this through Jesus who is our life.

All: Amen

Blessing and Dismissal:

Presider: (With extended hands) **May God's face smile upon you and God's love remain with you always.**

All: Amen

Presider: Let us go now in loving service of our God.

All: Amen

Final Hymn: EYE HAS NOT SEEN (As One Voice/Vol 1 & Gather Australia)

Props & Resources:

- Processional Cross
- Several Large candles
- Word of God
- Several bowls of charcoal and burning incense
- Small bowls of incense – 1 per bowl of charcoal
- 1 small candle for each person
- Tapers & matches

People Required:

- Cross Bearer
- Candle Bearers
- Bearer of the Word
- 2 Lectors
- 1 Reader for the Examination of Conscience
- Several priests
- Someone to light the charcoal in the incense bowls
- Several people to carry incense bowls and lit candle trays
- People to welcome the community and distribute stones
- Several ushers to direct the flow of people during confession

Music Notes:

These songs and hymns are suggestions only – you would know others that are suitable for this liturgy. The important thing about choosing the music is that whatever is chosen supports and enhances the ritual for which it is being used and is suitable for your community. (See our Music Notes Page and articles in A Note or Two...)

- **Christ Be Our Light** (Bernadette Farrell – As One Voice/Vol 1 & Gather Australia)
- **If Today You Hear God’s Voice** (Jane Woods – Gather Australia)
- **Will You Love Me?** (Brian Boniwell – As One Voice /Vol 1 & Gather Australia)
- **Holy Ground** (Monica Brown – Holy Ground)
- **One Eagle’s Wings** (Michael Joncas – As One Voice /Vol 1 & Gather Australia)
- **Eye Has Not Seen** (Marty Haugen – As One Voice/Vol1 & Gather Australia)

Specific Notes:

- **Liturgical Co-ordinator** - This person should not be the same person as the Presider. The Liturgical Co-ordinator’s role is to oversee and coordinate the liturgy, instruct the community and ensure everything is in place and all involved in any way, are briefed, rehearsed, where necessary, and comfortable. Since there are many people required behind the scenes, for the smooth flow of this liturgy, such as the sacristan with the lighting of the charcoal and incense etc, it is very important to cross check equipment, timing and procedure.
- **Briefing before the ritual – (should take 5 minutes all up)**
The Liturgical Co-ordinator (LC) welcomes the community and explains the logistics of the procedure for individual confession and anything else that they will be invited to participate in that may be unfamiliar or confusing to them. It may be helpful here to have a couple of people demonstrate what people need to do. Talk about the meaning of the symbols of incense and candles, and instruct people about when to extinguish their candle, pointing out that they can take it home and use it during lent.
- **Procedure for Individual Confession**
In order to keep this time quiet and prayerful, avoid having big queues of people and lots of movement. This can be done by carefully planning the procedure and briefing the community before the liturgy about the desire to keep this time prayerful, the need to avoid big queues and the locations to go to under the direction of the ushers who will come to them. Try to have no more than 2 or 3 people waiting in line. Ensure you have enough priests to accommodate the size of the community so that this liturgy does not go on for hours.