

*“Nothing can come between us and the love of Christ”*

**A PARISH ADVENT RECONCILIATION SERVICE**



**OPENING HYMN:**

*“O Come, O Come Emmanuel...”*

**GREETING:** May the Lord who loves and forgives us be with you.

**ALL:** And with your spirit.

**OPENING PRAYER:**

Let us pray,  
Lord our God,  
you have loved us from the beginning  
with a love that knows no limits.  
On this Advent night  
help us to welcome this love into our lives once more.  
Help us to turn away from all that might try to separate us from you.  
We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

## LITURGY OF THE WORD

**FIRST READING:** Romans 8: 35, 37-39

### **A Reading from the letter of Paul to the Romans**

Nothing can come between us and the love of Christ, even if we are troubled or worried, or being persecuted, or lacking food or clothes, or being threatened or even attacked. These are the trials through which we triumph, by the power of him who loved us.

For I am certain of this: neither death nor life, no angel, no prince, nothing that exists, nothing still to come, not any power, or height or depth, nor any created thing, can ever come between us and the love of God made visible in Christ Jesus our Lord.

**The Word of the Lord.**

**PSALM:** Psalm 25

**GOSPELACCLAMATION:** Alleluia, alleluia! I am the handmaid of the Lord: Let what you have said be done to me. Alleluia!

**GOSPEL:** Luke 1:39-44

### **A Reading from the Holy Gospel according to Luke**

Mary set out and went as quickly as she could to a town in the hill country of Judah. She went into Zechariah's house and greeted Elizabeth. Now as soon as Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leapt in her womb and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. She gave a loud cry and said, "Of all women you are the most blessed, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. Why should I be honoured with a visit from the mother of my Lord? For the moment your greeting reached my ears, the child in my womb leapt for joy. Yes, blessed is she who believed that the promise made her by the Lord would be fulfilled."

**The Gospel of the Lord.**

**HOMILY:**

## EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE:

### **For failings in our private life:**

When we have abused or neglected the gifts of body or spirit God has given us,

When we have not honored our bodies as temples of the Holy Spirit through impurity whether alone or with others,

When we have failed to uphold the sanctity of human life, especially of the most vulnerable—the unborn, the sick, the weak, the poor, the dying,

When we have overindulged in food, alcohol, or drugs,

Whenever we have become too complacent or self-satisfied,

For ever being too afraid or lazy to do the right thing,

For any personal decisions, habits, or attitudes that keep us from being the child of God that we are called to be.

**Sung response: *Kyrie, kyrie, Eleison***

**For failings in our families:**

When we have hurt or neglected our families,

When we have wounded our spouse's dignity in the holiness of marriage,

When we have withheld our love from those closest to us,

When we have been too guarded or afraid to reach out,

When we have withdrawn into our own pursuits,

Whenever we have argued too easily,

Whenever we have deliberately hurt,

For ever failing to help when needed,

For ever failing to say we were sorry,

For ever failing to say we were wrong,

For ever failing to be a sign of God's love and grace to those we know we should love the most.

**Sung response: *Kyrie, kyrie, Eleison***

**For failures in our communities:**

When we have hurt or neglected our communities – our friends and neighbours, our Church, our country, our world,

When we have held back and let others face their work or trials alone,

When we have said we would do our part and let it slide,

When we have been a disruptive force because of our own ego,

When we could have been a peacemaker but kept quiet,

Whenever we have excluded others intentionally,

Whenever we have taken more for ourselves when others went lacking,

Whenever we have ignored others who were in need,

For ever choosing to keep to ourselves and not wanting or trying to be in community with others,

For any failing in being a neighbour to others.

**Sung response: *Kyrie, kyrie, Eleison***

**For our failures with our God:**

When we have failed to put our relationship with God first,

For the times when we chose to leave God out of our life,

When we have failed to make time for regular private prayer,

When we have failed to make time for worship with others,

When we have made important choices in our life without listening for God's voice speaking to us,

For ever holding back when our God was calling us to be an instrument of grace,

When others have been in need or in doubt and we have been too afraid to share the Good News of God's presence in our lives,

When we have failed to offer back to God gifts we have been given – our time, our talents, our treasures, our service, our lives,

For those times when we were in need of grace or forgiveness from God but were too proud or afraid to ask .

**Sung response: *Kyrie, kyrie, eleison***

**RITE OF RECONCILIATION**

**GENERAL CONFESSION OF SINS:**

I confess to almighty God...

**LITANY:**

Nothing can separate us from the love of God. Let us ask God to forgive us and bind up the wounds caused by our sin:

God of love and mercy, give us the grace of true repentance. Lord have mercy.

**R. Lord have mercy.**

Pardon us, your servants, and release us from the bondage of sin. Lord have mercy. **R.**

Forgive your children who confess their sins and restore them to unity with you and the Church. Lord have mercy. **R.**

Renew your love in our hearts, and help us to bear witness to it in our daily lives. Lord have mercy. **R.**

Keep us faithful to your commandments of love and service. Lord have mercy. **R.**

**OUR FATHER:**

Let us now pray to God our Father in the words Christ gave us... Our Father...

**The Presider concludes:**

Lord, Draw near to your servants  
who in the presence of your Church  
confess that they are sinners.

Through the ministry of the Church  
free them from all sin

so that renewed in spirit they may give you thankful praise. AMEN.

**INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

*Any necessary instruction can be given at this point – this may include the instruction for people to remain in the Church to conclude our prayer together. Music ministers might lead the assembly in some suitable reflective pieces.*

**PROCLAMATION OF PRAISE FOR GOD'S MERCY**

We have celebrated God's love and mercy. On this Advent night, we share the light that this love brings to our world as we stand united in praise of our God.

*Based on psalm 100—Led by a reader with people's response:*

Shout with joy to the Lord, all earth,  
serve the Lord with gladness,  
enter God's presence with joy. R.

**R. *Nothing can separate us from the love of God.***

Know that the Lord is God,  
our maker to whom we belong,  
our shepherd, and we the flock. R.

Enter the temple gates,  
the courtyard with thanks and praise;  
give thanks and bless God's name. R.

God's love is for ever,  
faithful from age to age. R.



## CONCLUDING PRAYER

As we prepare to celebrate the birth of Christ  
may the God of love  
fill your hearts with joy and every blessing.  
When he comes, may he find you watching in prayer  
with hearts filled with wonder and praise.  
And may almighty God bless you...

CLOSINGHYMN: *"Christ be our Light"*