

[COVID-19 prevents us from gathering as a community for our annual advent penitential service. You may use the following Advent Penitential Home Service, as individuals or as a family. Thank you.]

ADVENT PENITENTIAL HOME SERVICE

PREPARE THE WAY OF THE LORD

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Opening Prayer: Open our hearts to your love, O Lord. Help us to overcome sin, and give you praise by serving others. Fill us with mercy and compassion to all. All praise and glory are yours, Father, forever and ever. Amen.

First Reading: Isaiah 40:3-5

A voice cries out: "In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

Psalm 146: **Response: "Lord, come and save us"**

It is the Lord who keeps faith forever, who executes justice for the oppressed; who gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free. R.

The Lord opens the eyes of the blind and lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous and watches over the strangers. R.

The Lord upholds the orphan and the widow, but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin. The Lord will reign forever, your God, O Zion, for all generations. R.

Gospel: Matthew 3:1-3

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one whom the Prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: "Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight."

Examination of Conscience

Let us turn to God our Father and ask his mercy that we may turn away from sins and come back to him in love.

Do I show reverence and respect for God and his name? Do I praise and thank God each day?
Do I love him with my whole heart and strength? (Pause)

Do I keep the Lord's day holy by prayer and worship? Do I take full part in community worship? Or do I profane the Lord's day by unbecoming activities and excesses? (Pause)

Do I respect God's gift of life by showing kindness and love to young and old? Do I work to save the lives of the unborn, and to bring about respect and dignity for all God's children? Do I take reasonable care of my own health and that of my own family? (Pause)

Do I respect my body as temple of the Holy Spirit? Do I strive to remain pure in every thought, word, and deed? (Pause)

Do I control my appetite for more possessions? Do I respect other people's rights to their own property? Do I avoid pollution and destruction of the world God gives us? (Pause)

Do I show my love for God by loving and serving others? Do I serve God in joy? Do I seek to give him thanks and praise through Christ in everything I do? (Pause)

Do I live holy and blameless in God's sight? Do I ask the Holy Spirit for guidance and strength to love others as Jesus has loved me? (Pause)

Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good. I have sinned against You whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. In the name of Jesus your Son, who suffered for me, have mercy on me my God. Amen.

Our Father...Hail Mary...Glory be...

Closing Prayer:

Stir up our hearts, O Lord, to make ready the paths of your Only Begotten Son, that through his coming, we may be found worthy to serve you with minds made pure. Through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.