

Response:

L: Praise the Lord, for he is good;

ALL: for his mercy endures forever.

L: Praise the God of gods;

ALL: for his mercy endures forever.

L: Praise the Lord of lords;

ALL: for his mercy endures forever.

L: Who alone has done great wonders, (Ps 136:2-4)

ALL: for his mercy endures forever.

L: The Lord remembered us in our low estate,

ALL: for his mercy endures forever.

L: Freed us from our foes,

ALL: for his mercy endures forever.

L: And gives bread to all flesh,

ALL: for his mercy endures forever.

L: Praise the God of heaven, (Ps 136:23-26)

ALL: for his mercy endures forever.

L: The Lord be with you.

ALL: And with your spirit.

L: A reading from the holy Gospel

according to Matthew. (Mt 9:12-13)

ALL: Glory to you, O Lord.

L: Jesus said, "Those who are well do not need a physician, but the sick do. Go and learn the meaning of the words, 'I desire mercy, not sacrifice.' I did not come to call the righteous but sinners." The Gospel of the Lord.

Reflection or Homily

The Sacrament of Reconciliation:

L: Let us call to mind our sins so that we may seek God's mercy:

Forgive me, God of love and tenderness, for I have not contemplated frequently enough on the mystery of mercy nor gazed intently enough upon your face of mercy. (Pause) And so I pray:

ALL: I trust in your mercy!

L: Forgive me, God of love and tenderness, for I have not discovered often enough your mercy in Word and Sacrament, especially through the Eucharist. (Pause) And so I pray:

ALL: I trust in your mercy!

L: Forgive me, God of love and tenderness, for I have not discovered deeply enough your mercy in my sister and brother, in my neighbor, and in the people with whom I interact. (Pause) And so I pray:

ALL: I trust in your mercy!

L: Forgive me, God of love and tenderness, for I have not discovered frequently enough your mercy in creation and culture, in nature and technology, and in the signs of the times.

(Pause) And so I pray:

ALL: I trust in your mercy!

L: Forgive me, God of love and tenderness, for I have not adequately prepared myself to encounter your mercy by means of prayer and meditation. (Pause) And so I pray:

ALL: I trust in your mercy!

L: Forgive me, God of love and tenderness, for I have not thoroughly prepared myself for your mercy by means of spiritual reading and continuing education. (Pause) And so I pray:

ALL: I trust in your mercy!

L: Forgive me, God of love and tenderness, for I have not genuinely prepared myself for your mercy by means of a change of heart, a concern for my own well-being, or a mindfulness toward the world around me. (Pause) And so I pray:

ALL: I trust in your mercy!

L: Forgive me, God of love and tenderness, for I have not wholeheartedly shared your mercy in gratitude through the spiritual and corporal acts of charity. (Pause) And so I pray:

ALL: I trust in your mercy!

L: Forgive me, God of love and tenderness, for I have not heartily shared your mercy in gratitude through my working for justice or my actions toward peace. (Pause) And so I pray:

ALL: I trust in your mercy!

L: Forgive me, God of love and tenderness, for I have not effectively shared your mercy in gratitude through the encounter of dialogue, the bonding of trusting interaction, and the bridge-building of forgiveness and reconciliation. (Pause) And so I pray:

ALL: I trust in your mercy!

L: Forgive me, God of love and tenderness, for I have squandered your mercy because I have neglected you, rejected your mercy because I centered on myself, and betrayed your mercy because I have hurt others. (Pause) And so I pray:

ALL: I trust in your mercy!

L: Forgive me, God of love and tenderness, for I have sinned against you. (Pause) And so I pray:

ALL: I trust in your mercy!

L: As our common act of contrition we pray: (Ps 51)
Have mercy on me, God, in accord with your merciful love; * in your abundant compassion blot out my transgressions. * Thoroughly wash away my guilt; * and from my sin cleanse me. * A clean heart create for me, God; * renew within me a steadfast spirit. * Do not drive me from before your face, * nor take from me your holy spirit. * Restore to me the gladness of your salvation; * uphold me with a willing spirit. * Through Christ our Lord. * Amen.

Sacramental Confession. Then, all stand and recite the common penance:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord;
 my spirit rejoices in God my savior.
 For he has looked upon his handmaid's lowliness;
 behold, from now on will all ages call me blessed.
 The Mighty One has done great things for us,
 and holy is his name.
 His mercy is from age to age to those who fear him.
 He has shown might with his arm,
 dispersed the arrogant of mind and heart.
 He has thrown down the rulers from their thrones
 but lifted up the lowly.
 The hungry he has filled with good things;
 the rich he has sent away empty.
 He has helped Israel his servant,
 remembering his mercy,
 according to his promise to our fathers,
 to Abraham and to his descendants forever. (Lk 1:46-55)
 Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
 as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever.
 Amen.

Conclusion:

L: The Lord be with you.
ALL: And with your spirit.
 L: Bow down for the blessing. **(Pause)**
 May mercy, peace, and love be yours in
 abundance. (Jude 1:2)
ALL: Amen.
 L: May God grant you mercy and peace. (Tob 7:11)
ALL: Amen.
 L: May you be blessed by the Lord – **(+)** Father,
 Son, and Holy Spirit – who is ever merciful to
 the living and to the dead. (Ruth 2:20)
ALL: Amen.
 L: Go. Be merciful, just as your heavenly Father is
 merciful. (Lk 6:36)
ALL: Thanks be to God!

Closing Hymn:

There's a wideness in God's mercy,
 like the wideness of the sea.
 There's a kindness in God's justice,
 which is more than liberty.
 There is no place where earth's sorrows
 are more felt than up in heav'n.
 There is no place where earth's failings
 have such kindly judgment giv'n.
 For the love of God is broader
 than the measures of the mind.
 And the heart of the Eternal
 is most wonderfully kind.
 If our love were but more faithful,
 we would gladly trust God's Word,
 and our lives reflect thanksgiving
 for the goodness of our Lord.

Lenten Penance Service

Opening Song:

(LM)

Kind Maker of the world, O hear
 The fervent pray'r with honest tear
 Poured forth by ev'ry penitent
 Who keeps this holy fast of Lent.
 Each heart is manifest to thee;
 Thou knowest our infirmity;
 Now we repent and seek thy face;
 Grant unto us thy pard'ning grace.
 Spare us, O Lord, who now confess
 Our weakness and our sinfulness
 And, for the glory of thy name,
 Our weakened souls to health reclaim.
 Accept, O Lord, this Lenten tide,
 This fast which you have sanctified,
 That we, through sacramental ways,
 May reach the joy of paschal days.

L: In the name...
ALL: Amen.
 L: May the God of mercy be with you all.
ALL: And also with you.
 L: Let us prepare ourselves for the Sacrament of
 Reconciliation. **(brief pause)**
 L: You are a kind and merciful God.
 Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
 L: You are righteous, O Lord, and all your deeds
 are just and all your ways are mercy and truth.
 Christ, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
 L: You are rich in mercy, because of the great love
 you have for us,
 Lord, have mercy.
Lord, have mercy.
 L: Let us pray:
 Lord, hear the prayers of those who call on you,
 forgive the sins of those who confess to you,
 and in your merciful love give us you pardon
 and peace through Christ our Lord.
ALL: Amen.

The Liturgy of the Word

A reading from the Letter of St. Paul to Titus: (Tit 3:4-7)
 When the kindness and generous love of God our
 savior appeared, not because of any righteous deeds
 we had done but because of his mercy, he saved us
 through the bath of rebirth and renewal by the holy
 Spirit, whom he richly poured out on us through Jesus
 Christ our savior, so that we might be justified by his
 grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life.
 The Word of the Word.