CONTENTS

Introduction .................................................................................................................. 1
Some Ideas for the Parish ............................................................................................ 2
Lenten Penance Liturgies ............................................................................................ 4
   RITE FOR RECONCILIATION OF SEVERAL PENITENTS WITH INDIVIDUAL
   CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION (Rite of Penance). ........................................... 8
Stations Of The Cross ................................................................................................ 11
St. Alphonsus Liguori’s Stations of the Cross ......................................................... 13
Stations Booklets .................................................................................................... 14
Tenebrae ..................................................................................................................... 15
Stabat Mater ............................................................................................................. 18
Stabat Mater - Latin & English ............................................................................... 19
Allegri’s Miserere ..................................................................................................... 20
Postcard Mailing ...................................................................................................... 22
The Gift of God's Mercy ......................................................................................... 23
How to go to Confession ......................................................................................... 24
Order for the Blessing and Distribution of Ashes ................................................. 25

Cover: Sculpture by Sir Ninian Comper of the Risen Christ, church of St. Mary in Bury St. Edmonds, UK – Photograph by Fr. Lawrence Lew OP.
INTRODUCTION

This Lent-Easter 2021 Resource Pack brings together some of the resources available to parishes during this beautiful season in which we prepare for and then celebrate the resurrection. Many of these resources are readily available online but it was thought useful to put some of them in one place for parishes.

Since Lent is a period of preparation for the Solemnities of the Passion and the Resurrection it is appropriate that the Sacrament of Penance plays a key role in this preparation. Many parishes will want to add extra times for the Sacrament during this period and often will have a specific evening on which a Penance Liturgy is celebrated with time for individual confessions. We provide some homily helps from the Archdiocese of Washington DC to help in preparing your parishioners for the Sacrament of Penance. Also we provide the structure of the Rite of Penance for Several Penitents with individual Confessions.

The Stations of the Cross are a staple devotion for Catholics during Lent. We provide links to various types of Stations provided by the USCCB. Also there is a link to a booklet formatted version of the classic Way of the Cross of St. Alphonsus of Liguori.

Tenebrae may be new to your parish and this may be the year to try it. Tenebrae is a very moving and evocative liturgy which can be adapted to most parishes tastefully and easily. We have provided a suggested format and the text that can be adapted to your parishioners.

We have also included a brief section at the beginning of this document on ideas for other parish activities for the Lent and Easter Seasons. It can be very fruitful to try some new ideas during the major seasons of our liturgical year. We hope that you might try something new this year and that this season will bring many graces to your parish. Try the Tenebrae liturgy – people love it.

Prepared by:

ARCHDIOCESE OF PORTLAND IN OREGON
OFFICE OF DIVINE WORSHIP


**Some Ideas for the Parish**

★ **Lent Reflection Booklets.** There are many booklets available which a parish can purchase to distribute to parishioners for the Lenten Season. Some contain reflections for each day of Lent and can help prepare people for the celebration of Easter. Take a look at *Five Minutes with the Word* from the Word Among Us (wau.org).

★ **Visitors.** Easter is a time when we tend to see a lot of visitors in our parishes. It is always proper to offer them a special welcome at our Lenten and Easter Liturgies and Events. Perhaps printing a special handout or postcard for visitors which showcases the parish and details it regular Masses and events throughout the year might be useful. It could be prepared during Lent and handed out at Easter Masses to all visitors by your ushers/greeters.

★ **Postcard Mailing.** There may be some people in your parish that have been away from Mass for a while but you still have them as registered parishioners. Try a postcard mailing to all the people on your parish register. It can be inexpensive and quite effective. Hopefully, the Covid restrictions will be eased by the time we celebrate Easter this year. Have some attractive artwork on the front of the postcard and on the reverse detail the Holy Week Liturgies and Events with a note of welcome encouraging the recipient to join you for the celebrations.

★ **Easter Gifts.** Easter as well as Christmas is a great time to give your parishioners a thoughtful religious gift. There are many inexpensive gifts available to buy in bulk. The gift should above all be spiritual but it should also be useful. Books and CDs are a great choice. Many catholic publishers offer books at high discounts specifically to give out at Easter. Choose a title that fits in with your parish initiatives for 2019. Check out DynamicCatholic.com. They have a great selection of books in English and Spanish for bulk purchase.
★ **Tenebrae.** This prayerful liturgy is becoming a popular addition to Holy Week celebrations across the USA. It can be easily adapted to the needs of an individual parish and with its combination of psalms, readings and hymns is a very moving start to Holy Week. If possible a Tenebrae Hearse (a stand for 15 candles) can be incorporated to provide for a dramatic visual effect and the *Strepitus* is a very powerful climax to this devotion. If celebrated on the Wednesday of Holy Week it can be a great beginning to the Sacred Triduum. Seriously, Tenebrae is an awesome liturgy, everyone who comes comments on the beauty of it – try it!

★ **Stations of the Cross.** One of the most powerful devotions of the Catholic Church. This devotion includes a combination of prayer, music and movement. It is popular with the old and young alike. There are many variations and adaptations. Here we have provided the text of the most famous version, that of St. Alphonsus Liguori, and it can be adapted to any parish’s requirements.

★ **Confessions.** It is always a good idea during the Lenten season to schedule extra hours of confessions so that our people can experience the Sacrament at a convenient time. Evenings are usually best since many people are at home but vary the days and times so that you can reach as many people as possible.

★ **Music.** The *Stabat Mater* and Allegri’s *Miserere* are two Lenten pieces which evoke the season and are interesting pieces of church history and culture. Whilst the Miserere may be out of reach for most the beautiful hymn, the *Stabat Mater* can be incorporated into the Holy Week liturgies with beautiful effect.

★ **Adoration.** During the Lenten Season periods of Adoration of the Blessed Sacrament can be added either regularly at fixed times or at different days of the week changing each week. Some evening Adoration will be attractive to those who have full-work days and would like to have some prayer time in the evenings. The Office of Divine Worship has published a booklet regarding all Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament it can be viewed/downloaded [HERE](#).

★ **Ash Wednesday.** Add some times on Ash Wednesday when ashes can be distributed outside of Mass. The Order is included in this pack.
Lenten Penance Liturgies

- Preaching about the Sacrament in the build-up to the event is the key to a successful Penance Service. If a series of Homilies on the weekends before the Penance Service can be given by the clergy then the faithful will be more open to participating. These homilies should include the scriptural and theological basis of the sacrament together with some practical applications. A series of homilies extolling the beauty, necessity and abundance of God’s Mercy in the sacrament will make all the difference. Here are a couple of homily assists which may help you in preparing for your Penance Liturgy.

Homily Assist #1

For many of us Catholics, both those brought up in the Church since childhood and those formerly of Protestant or non-Christian faiths, the Sacrament of Reconciliation can seem a bit frightening. Perhaps it has been a long time since we’ve made a confession. Perhaps we struggle with disbelief, with despair, with human weakness, with addictions, or with lingering resentment or grief. And yet, how wonderful it would be to be freed from these chains!

What does sin do to the sinner? Sin is a choice, the result of which is the experience of alienation from God, our neighbor, creation, or ourselves. In Scripture, this experience is often described in terms of living as if dead (the ultimate alienation). Now for the ancient Hebrews, the worst thing about death is that the dead cannot praise God. Thus the Miserere, the great Psalm of Repentance, proclaims, “Restore me from death, God, my saving God, that my tongue may praise your healing power. Lord, open my lips; my mouth will proclaim your praise” (Ps 51:16-17). Thus when we sin, we wound or even destroy our life’s purpose: namely, making our lives a song of love and praise to the One who IS Love. And yet when God, in his mercy, heals and rescues us from our sins, the gift of praise is restored.

Do you remember the story of John the Baptist’s father, Zechariah? He doubted God’s Word (through the angel) that his wife, Elizabeth, would bear a son in their old age; as a result of his sin, he became mute. But when God forgave Zechariah after he acknowledged his sin through a corresponding act of faith, “immediately, his mouth was opened, his tongue freed, and he spoke blessing to God” (Lk 1:64). Again, the gift of praise was restored.

What, then, is the heart of confession? Yes, without a doubt, there is the confession of sins, after which one receives pardon, absolution, and a penance of healing. But there is something deeper, something much more profound. What brings me to confession, to what the Fathers of the Church called “second Baptism”? It should be the same thing that brought me to my first Baptism: faith. When I approach a priest for the healing sacrament, I confess—really, I profess—my faith, my trust in the God who forgives and heals me, the God of eternal mercy and love.
Finally, what *results* from a good confession, that is, a confession of sins following a genuine confession of faith and trust? None other than the confession (or profession) of *praise*. God, as it were, *brings us back to life*—heals our hearts, wounded in their ability to “speak,” to express love—so that we might be free to glorify him anew. Thus what begins as a frightening experience for many ends in *joy*—the gift of praise restored. “At the name of Jesus every knee should bend . . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father” (Phil 2:10-11). “The glory of God is a human being fully alive” (St. Irenaeus).

So if you come regularly to confession, know that Our Lord and I are grateful—please continue with this practice. If you haven’t been to the sacrament in a while, please come back. Invite others to come as well—after all, this is the time for a *New Evangelization*, for proclaiming Glad Tidings anew. Jesus tells us, “Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest” (Mt 11:28). Isn’t his message the *very essence* of the Good News? Friends, please hear Jesus’ call, and come to have your burdens lifted in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Come, be healed and restored. Jesus, our most merciful, loving, forgiving God will be waiting.

**Homily Assist #2**

When you meet up with someone about whom you care deeply, be it your spouse, a family member, or a good friend, what do you typically do when you spend time together? It can be any number of things: you may watch a sporting event or have dinner together or simply have a great conversation. But inevitably, we discover over time that the most important aspect of any valuable relationship is simply spending time together. As a relationship grows and deepens, what we actually do with someone else can often take a back seat to just being with them. At the same time, as we grow more comfortable with the other person, we become more ourselves and worry less about revealing our faults and weaknesses in their presence—because we know we are loved by them even with our imperfections.

This is exactly the kind of relationship that Jesus wants us to have with him. He desires for us to come and spend time with him, to simply be in his presence. This is the foundation of any good relationship! He invites us—actually, we could say that he begs us—to come and spend time with him, so that we may come to know his love for us.

The best part about his invitation is that he already knows us even better than we know ourselves. In his book *In the Presence of Our Lord*, Fr. Benedict Groeschel describes very well what it is like to be before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Fr. Groeschel says that before the tabernacle, before Our Lord, he feels at home as in no other place. He says,

“My sins, my defects, my quirks, are all known to Him. There is no secret, nothing to be embarrassed about, no place to hide. I believe (difficult as that may be at times) that He does in fact love me. . . . With all my failings I have never been afraid to come to Him. In fact, I have run to Him and He has been there for me.” (*In the Presence of Our Lord, 288*)
As Fr. Groeschel tells us, realizing that Jesus already knows us so completely should make us feel comfortable in his presence. This is because Our Lord loves us—not in spite of our faults and weaknesses—but with them, as we are. There are so many examples in the Gospels of Jesus associating himself with some of the most prominent sinners in his time without feeling any shame. He told those who questioned him about the company he kept, “Those who are healthy do not need a physician, but the sick do. I have come not to call the righteous to repentance but sinners” (Lk 5:32).

He spent time with these people because he loved them, and he desired their conversion. He loved them long before they even knew him or loved him. As St. John says in his first letter, “In this is love: not that we have loved God, but that he loved us and sent his Son as expiation for our sins” (1 Jn 4:10). Jesus has also loved us first and continues to do so. He is the one who reaches out to us first in so many ways. We simply must respond to his invitation.

This is all important, dear friends, because Lent is a special time that the Church gives us in order to renew our relationship with God and to strip away all the other things that prevent us from getting to know him more fully. In order to help us to do this, our parish will be open for quiet prayer and the Sacrament of Reconciliation frequently during Lent. This is a tremendous opportunity, my friends, to deepen your relationship with the One who loves you far beyond anyone else. Jesus is the One who already knows what is on your heart when you walk in the door, and wants to talk with you about it. He will be waiting for you, wanting to talk with you in person!

With Jesus, there is nothing to be afraid of. He is the one who takes the initiative, who comes down from heaven in the Eucharist in the form of bread so that you will not be afraid to approach him. He waits in silence for you, but when he speaks, he speaks right to your heart, in such a way that you know it is he who is speaking.

Like every relationship, our relationship with God is not always easy. Fortunately we can count on the fact that God is always faithful and always wants the best for us. When we fall away from God and act contrary to the teachings of his Church, we harm our relationship with both God and with his Church. When our relationship with God—which is the most important relationship we have—isn’t right, then it affects our other relationships as well. Every sin we commit, while it injures our relationship with God, necessarily also affects our relationship with others too, and harms our communion with the Church.

Fortunately, the Lord Jesus has provided a very easy remedy to heal our relationship not only with him but also with his Church—namely, the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Through the priest, the Church forgives sins in the name of Jesus. When you make a sincere confession, you receive the forgiveness of Jesus! His forgiveness heals you and restores your relationship not only with him, but also with his Church and the members of the Church.

I know from my own experience that many Catholics do not frequent the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and sometimes it is out of a sense of fear. But just as you have nothing to fear in encountering Jesus in the Eucharist, there is nothing to fear in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, either. Jesus comes to you in the person of the priest, full of compassion for you. He wants nothing more than to take away the burden of your sins. Make no mistake—sin puts a burden on us. When
we have sinned and have not been to confession, we can sometimes literally feel weighed down, or heavy. It is also harder to act with love toward our loved ones and friends, much less to be charitable to our enemies! But Jesus is more powerful than sin, and through the Sacrament of Reconciliation, he wants to remove this burden, to wipe the slate clean, and to give us a new beginning.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is also importantly a sacrament of healing. We are all wounded by our own sins, by the guilt we have from the hurts we have inflicted on others, and by our own lack of forgiveness of hurts inflicted upon us by others. Jesus wants to heal these wounds, to take away or alleviate the pain that they cause. But he will not force us to come to him; he respects our own free will and wants us to seek forgiveness, which can be difficult. Yet all it takes is just a contrite heart and an honest confession, and Jesus stands ready to console us.

Now perhaps there is a lot on your mind, and you have been meaning to come to confession for a while but have been afraid to do so. I promise you that I [and my brother priest(s)] will treat anyone who comes to me/us in confession with nothing but compassion, respect, and dignity. As priests, we are ordained to be “other Christs,” and nothing brings us greater joy than to bring Christ’s healing love to those who are broken and in need of help through the Sacrament of Reconciliation—especially for those who have been away from the sacrament for a while.

If you have been away, come back during Lent. It is a time of renewal, of new beginnings, of new life. Allow this Lent to be a new beginning in your life of faith. I hope you can join us on [day of week] from [time of day] for prayer and confession. The Light Is On for You gives every one of us an opportunity to recommit ourselves to the Lord, to start afresh, to cleanse our souls in confession, removing barriers and obstacles to the life of grace. I look forward to seeing you there.


- Penance Liturgies or Services can take on many different forms. The common aim of course is to provide the Sacrament of Penance to as many parishioners as possible in this preparation for the Feasts. These larger services can involve priests for the local area which has the advantage of offering different priests to hear your parishioners’ confessions.

- *Repetitio mater studiorum est* – Repetition is the mother of learning. Choose a date for your Penance Service and start promoting it early and often. Mention it in all your homilies, mention it at all your announcements, insert a flyer in your bulletin, a banner on your website and your social media links. Perhaps get some personal testimonies from someone who was away from the Sacrament for a while.

- There are many examinations of Conscience which you can give to your parishioners in the weeks prior to your Penance Service. Here are some which are available from the USCCB click [HERE](#).
Add a prayer into your General Intercessions each week focusing on the Sacrament. For some suggestions click [HERE].

The various Rites of Penance are detailed in the Roman Ritual (Rite of Penance). Below is the format for the Rite of Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession which may be used for a Parish Lenten Penance Liturgy.

**RITE FOR RECONCILIATION OF SEVERAL PENITENTS WITH INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION (Rite of Penance).**

When a number of penitents assemble at the same time to receive sacramental reconciliation, it is fitting that they be prepared for the sacrament by a celebration of the word of God. Those who will receive the sacrament at another time may also take part in the service.

Communal celebration shows more clearly the ecclesial nature of penance. The faithful listen together to the word of God, which proclaims his mercy and invites them to conversion; at the same time they examine the conformity of their lives with that word of God and help each other through common prayer. After each person has confessed his sins and received absolution, all praise God together for his wonderful deeds on behalf of the people he has gained for himself through the blood of his Son. If necessary, several priests should be available in suitable places to hear individual confessions and to reconcile the penitents.

**Introductory Rites**

When the faithful are assembled, a suitable hymn may be sung. Then the priest greets them, and, if necessary, he or another minister gives a brief introduction to the celebration and explains the order of service. Next he invites all to pray and after a period of silence completes the (opening) prayer.

**The Celebration of the Word of God**

The sacrament of penance should begin with a hearing of God’s Word, because through his word God calls men to repentance and leads them to a true conversion of heart.

One or more readings may be chosen. If more than one are read, a psalm, another suitable song, or a period of silence should be inserted between them, so that the word of God may be more deeply understood and heartfelt assent may be given to it. If there is only one reading, it is preferable that it be from the gospel.

Readings should be chosen which illustrate the following:

a) the voice of God calling men back to conversion and ever closer conformity with Christ;

b) the mystery of our reconciliation through the death and resurrection of Christ and through the gift of the Holy Spirit;
c) the judgment of God about good and evil in men’s lives as a help in the examination of conscience.

The homily, taking its theme from the scriptural text, should lead the penitents to examine their consciences and to turn away from sin and toward God. It should remind the faithful that sin works against God, against the community and one’s neighbors, and against the sinner himself.

Therefore, it would be good to recall:

a) the infinite mercy of God, greater than all our sins, by which again and again he calls us back to himself;

b) the need for interior repentance, by which we are genuinely prepared to make reparation for sin;

c) the social aspect of grace and sin, by which the actions of individuals in some degree affect the whole body of the Church;

d) the duty to make satisfaction for sin, which is effective because of Christ’s work of reparation and requires especially, in addition to works of penance, the exercise of true charity toward God and neighbor.

After the homily a suitable period of silence should be allowed for examining one’s conscience and awakening true contrition for sin. The priest or a deacon or other minister may help the faithful with brief considerations or a litany, adapted to their background, age, etc.

If it is judged suitable, this communal examination of conscience and awakening of contrition may take the place of the homily. But in this case it should be clearly based on the text of scripture that has just been read.

**The Rite of Reconciliation**
At the invitation of the deacon or other minister, all kneel or bow their heads and say a form of general confession (for example, I confess to almighty God). Then they stand and join in a litany or suitable song to express confession of sins, heartfelt contrition, prayer for forgiveness, and trust in God’s mercy.

Finally, they say the Lord’s Prayer, which is never omitted.

After the Lord’s Prayer the priests go to the places assigned for confession. The penitents who desire to confess their sins go to the priest of their choice. After receiving a suitable act of penance, they are absolved by him with the form for the reconciliation of an individual penitent.

When the confessions are over, the priests return to the sanctuary. The priest who presides invites all to make an act of thanksgiving and to praise God for his mercy. This may be done in a psalm or hymn or litany. Finally, the priest concludes the celebration with prayer, praising God for the great love he has shown us.
**Dismissal of the People**
After the prayer of thanksgiving the priest blesses the faithful. Then the deacon or the priest himself dismisses the congregation.

Remember to advertise your Penance Service so as to attract many parishioners. There is a bulletin insert from the USCCB entitled God’s Gift of Forgiveness: A Pastoral Exhortation on the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation which contains the reasons for, and the how to, of going to confessions. It is included in this Resource pack but can also be accessed by clicking [HERE](#).

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*Example of Bulletin Insert or Webpage Banner*
The Stations of the Cross originated in pilgrimages to Jerusalem and a desire to reproduce Via Dolorosa. Imitating holy places was not a new concept. For example, the religious complex of Santo Stefano in Bologna, Italy, replicated the Church of the Holy Sepulcher and other religious sites, including Mount of Olives and Valley of Josaphat.

After the siege of 1187, Jerusalem fell to Muslims. Forty years later Franciscans were allowed back into the Holy Land. Their founder, Saint Francis of Assisi, held the Passion of Christ in special veneration and was the first person to receive stigmata. In 1217, St. Francis also founded the Custody of the Holy Land to guard and promote the devotion to holy places. Their efforts were recognized when Franciscans were officially proclaimed custodians of holy places by Pope Clement VI in 1342. Although several travelers who visited the Holy Land during the 12–14th centuries (e.g. Riccoldo da Monte di Croce, Burchard of Mount Sion, James of Verona), mention a "Via Sacra", i.e. a settled route that pilgrims followed, there is nothing in their accounts to identify this with the Way of the Cross, as we understand it. The earliest use of the word "stations", as applied to the accustomed halting-places in the Via Sacra at Jerusalem, occurs in the narrative of an English pilgrim, William Wey, who visited the Holy Land in the mid-15th century, and described pilgrims following the footsteps of Christ to the cross. In 1521, a book called Geystlich Strass (German: "spiritual road") was printed with illustrations of the stations in the Holy Land.

During the 15th and 16th centuries the Franciscans began to build a series of outdoor shrines in Europe to duplicate their counterparts in the Holy Land. The number of stations varied between seven and thirty; seven was common. These were usually placed, often in small buildings, along the approach to a church, as in a set of 1490 by Adam Kraft, leading to the Johanneskirche in Nuremberg. A number of rural examples were established as attractions in their own right, usually on attractive wooded hills. These include the Sacro Monte di Domodossola (1657) and Sacro Monte di Belmonte (1712), and form part of the Sacri Monti of Piedmont and Lombardy World Heritage Site, together with other examples on different devotional themes. In these the sculptures are often approaching life-size and very elaborate. Remnants of these are often referred to as Calvary hills.

In 1686, in answer to their petition, Pope Innocent XI granted to the Franciscans the right to erect stations within their churches. In 1731, Pope Clement XII extended to all churches the right to have the stations, provided that a Franciscan father erected them, with the consent of the local bishop. At the same time the number was fixed at fourteen. In 1857, the bishops of England were allowed to erect the stations by themselves, without the intervention of a Franciscan priest, and in 1862 this right was extended to bishops throughout the church. Although the Franciscans lost the rights to the Stations they maintained their control of the Cappuccino market.
Pope John Paul II led an annual public prayer of the Stations of the Cross at the Roman Colosseum on Good Friday. Originally, the pope himself carried the cross from station to station, but in his last years when age and infirmity limited his strength, John Paul presided over the celebration from a stage on the Palatine Hill, while others carried the cross. Just days prior to his death in 2005, Pope John Paul II observed the Stations of the Cross from his private chapel. Each year a different person is invited to write the meditation texts for the Stations. Past composers of the Papal Stations include several non-Catholics. The pope himself wrote the texts for the Great Jubilee in 2000 and used the traditional Stations.

The celebration of the Stations of the Cross is common on the Fridays of Lent, especially Good Friday. Community celebrations are usually accompanied by various songs and prayers. Particularly common as musical accompaniment is the *Stabat Mater.*

Structurally, Mel Gibson's 2004 film, *The Passion of the Christ,* follows the Stations of the Cross. The fourteenth and last station, the Burial, is not prominently depicted (compared to the other thirteen) but it is implied since the last shot before credit titles is Jesus resurrected and about to leave the tomb. It has become a tradition in many parishes in the USA to have a parish showing of this film at the beginning of Holy Week.

Stations are a very popular devotion for Catholics during Lent. Some individuals take it upon themselves to recite the stations each day during Lent. Parishes usually offer a communal celebration on Friday evenings during Lent. On Good Friday the stations are offered at various times outside of the Passion Liturgy which takes place traditionally at three o’clock. Often in parishes the Passion Liturgy is celebrated in the evening and the Stations are recited at three o’clock instead.

Click on the links below to get the various different types of the Stations of the Cross from the USCCB.

- Audio Stations of the Cross
- Stations of the Cross for Vocations
- Scriptural Stations of the Cross
- Stations of the Cross for Life
- A Scriptural Way of the Cross for Lent  （en Espanõl）
- Praying the Stations of the Cross for Victims of Human Trafficking  （en Espanõl）
St. Alphonsus Liguori’s Stations of the Cross

Composed by St. Alphonsus Liguori (1696 - 1787) in 1787 the year of his death, this is a very popular form of the Stations of the Cross. In addition to the text below, a verse of the Stabat Mater Dolorosa is often sung or recited when moving from one station to the next. A plenary indulgence is attached for the faithful who make a devout exercise of a set of Stations of the Cross which have been lawfully erected. (#63 of the Enchiridion of Indulgences).

St. Alphonsus was a man in love with Jesus. For Alphonsus, the Stations of the Cross provided the opportunity to meditate on the true meaning of the love of the Most Holy Redeemer. This classic version of the Way of the Cross, long a parish favorite, offers insight into the mind of a saint and the emotion and passion that formed his devotion.

Click on picture below to get a download of a Microsoft WORD file which contains St. Alphonsus’ Stations of the Cross in booklet format. It can be adapted to your parish needs. The booklet contains Benediction of the Most Blessed Sacrament but obviously this can be omitted and deleted if needed.
These beautiful booklets of the Stations of the Cross according to St. Alphonsus printed on high quality stock are available from the office of Divine Worship. Each parish can receive twenty copies (either English or Spanish) free of charge and additional copies in packs of twenty for $40. Contact amvandyke@archdpdx.org for more details.

Alternatively, you can download the pdf versions in ENGLISH or SPANISH and make your own booklets.
The traditional Roman Catholic Tenebrae (Latin meaning darkness or shadows) was a celebration, after dark on the evenings of Wednesday, Thursday and Friday of Holy Week, of a combination of the next day's Matins (composed of 3 nocturns each day) and Lauds, the first two hours of the Divine Office. The readings of each day's first nocturn were taken from the Book of Lamentations. Each day's office of Tenebrae contained 15 psalms, 9 readings, and one canticle, the Benedictus (Song of Zechariah). Lighting was gradually reduced throughout the service.

Initially 15 candles were lit and placed on a special stand known as a hearse, which were extinguished one by one after each psalm. The last candle was hidden beneath the altar, ending the service in total darkness. In some places the use of a strepitus (Latin for 'great noise') was included as part of the service. The great noise was usually generated by slamming a book closed, banging a hymnal or breviary against the pew, or stomping on the floor, symbolizing the earthquake that followed Christ's death. This custom seems to have originated as a simple signal to depart in silence. Following the great noise a single candle, which had been hidden from view, was returned to the top of the hearse, signifying the return of Christ to the world with the Resurrection.

The lessons of the first nocturn at Matins were taken from the Book of Lamentations. These lessons have been set to music by many composers, of whom the most famous are Palestrina, Tallis, Lassus, Marc-Antoine Charpentier, François Couperin, Ernst Krenek (Lamentatio Jeremiae prophetæ, op. 93) and Stravinsky (Threni). In addition, the responses have been set by Lassus, Gesualdo, Victoria and Jan Dismas Zelenka.
The lessons of the second nocturn were taken from the writings of St. Augustine and St. Leo the Great, and the lessons of the third nocturn from the epistles of Paul the Apostle. These however have been neglected by composers and are not even provided with a special lesson tone in the *Liber Usualis*. The singing of the Lamentations of Jeremiah in Gregorian Chant is one of the most beautiful sounds that the church has ever produced. If it can be produced at a parish Tenebrae service it is always a most welcome addition to the Holy Week liturgies. You can hear the beginning of the Lamentations by clicking HERE.

The office of Tenebrae was universal within the Roman Rite until the reforms of the Holy Week ceremonies by Pope Pius XII, which he introduced experimentally in the first half of the 1950s and made obligatory in 1955. He ended the practice of celebrating the Easter Vigil, and so the resurrection of Christ, on Saturday morning and moved the Holy Thursday Mass and Good Friday services to the evening or the afternoon. The solemn evening celebration of the next day's Matins and Lauds were thus ended.

Although it is thus no longer part of the official Holy Week rites of the Roman Catholic Church, except for Wednesday evening in cathedrals where the Chrism Mass is celebrated on Thursday morning, Tenebrae, or a similar service in English, is celebrated in some individual Catholic churches. In fact an adaptation of the Tenebrae service is becoming a popular commencement of the Holy Week liturgies in many Catholic parishes.

Producing a sort of hybrid liturgy for the Tenebrae service is most acceptable at the parish level and allows parishioners to have a glimpse of the great beauty of the Tenebrae Office without the early mornings or the duration.

We have attached a link to a Tenebrae Liturgy that was developed for St. Francis Xavier Parish in Acushnet, MA and has been used in that parish for the last 9 years. It is usually celebrated on the Wednesday of Holy Week and has consistently attracted a large amount of parishioners. The service last about 50 minutes and can be easily adapted to most parishes and is easily accessible to most music programs. The music consists of Psalms sung to the Meinrad tones, verses of the Stabat Mater, the chanted Lamentations and an opening of hymn.

The readings used can be any translation but here we provide translations using a more archaic English which is quite attractive for a change.
If you do not have a 15 candle hearse then candles can be placed at various different places in the sanctuary. The ☽ symbol in the program indicates when a candle should be extinguished. The two at the very beginning are the two altar candles. At the end of the liturgy the last candle is briefly taken out of the sanctuary (hidden for just a minute or so, then brought back and placed in the hearse or on the altar still lit. During the absence of the last lit candle the Strepitus is effected by the people, and ministers striking books on the pews or stomping their feet on the ground creating an awful noise in the church. (Kids really like this for some reason.) After the Strepitus all depart in silence.

Here are the links for the various documents you can use to produce your own Tenebrae Service.

- The Lamentations of Jeremiah
- St. Leo the Great
- St. Paul to the Corinthians
- Tenebrae Program
- Tenebrae Booklet
- Lamentations from the Liber Usualis [Lesson I] [Lesson II]

If you have any questions about preparing a Tenebrae Liturgy for your parish feel free to call the Office of Divine Worship.
The Stabat Mater is a 13th-century Catholic hymn to Mary, which portrays her suffering as Jesus Christ's mother during his crucifixion. Its author may be either the Franciscan friar Jacopone da Todi or Pope Innocent III. The title comes from its first line, Stabat Mater dolorosa, which means "the sorrowful mother was standing". The hymn is sung at the liturgy on the memorial of Our Lady of Sorrows. The Stabat Mater has been set to music by many Western composers, most famously by Palestrina (~1590), Vivaldi (1712), Domenico (1715) and Alessandro Scarlatti (1723), Pergolesi (1736), Joseph Haydn (1767), Rossini (1831–42), Dvořák (1876–77), Verdi (1896–97), Karol Szymanowski (1925–26), Poulenc (1950) and Arvo Pärt (1985). On a related note, The Estonian composer, Arvo Pärt, the world's most performed living composer, was honored with the Ratzinger Prize, presented in the Vatican on 18 November 2017.

The Stabat Mater is generally ascribed to Jacopone da Todi (ca. 1230–1306). Da Todi was a Franciscan who is venerated as a Blessed within the Order but whose cause for canonization was never completed probably due to the argument he had with Pope Boniface VIII. Arguing with Popes is never a good idea.

The Stabat Mater was well known by the end of the 14th century and Georgius Stella wrote of its use in 1388, while other historians note its use later in the same century. In Provence, about 1399, it was used during the nine days' processions.

As a liturgical sequence, the Stabat Mater was suppressed, along with hundreds of other sequences, by the Council of Trent, but restored to the missal by Pope Benedict XIII in 1727 for the Feast of the Seven Dolors of the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Today the hymn can be found in the Graduale Romanum and most popular parish hymnals. The hymn is used at Stations of the Cross and at various other times especially during Lent. It is interesting to note that the current Roman Missal suggests that the Stabat Mater should be sung during the Veneration of the Cross on Good Friday “in memory of the compassion of the Blessed Virgin Mary”.

The composer of the melody for the hymn is unknown but it first appears in a German hymnbook of the 17th Century, Maintzisch Gesangbuch.
STABAT MATER - LATIN & ENGLISH

AT THE CROSS HER STATION KEEPING

Stabat Mater Dolorosa

Stabat Mater

STABAT MATER

1. At the cross her station keeping,
   Stood the mournful Mother weeping,
   Close to Jesus to the last,
   Of the sole spot ten One!

2. Through her heart, his sorrow sharing,
   Was that Mother anguish bearing,
   Now at length the sword has passed,
   Dum pen dé bat Fí li us.

3. O quam tristis et aflicta
   Con tri stá tam Fu it il la
   high ly blest
   La - cri - mó - sa
   Be - ne - di - cta
   In amando Christum Deum
   Be - ne - di - cta
   In pax Christi stá tem
   Per tran - sí vit
   Matrem Christi si vindé ret
   In tvido supe rici
   Per tran - sí vit
   In tvido supe rici
   La - cri - mó - sa
   Be - ne - di - cta

4. Christ above in torment hangs,
   She beneath beholds the pangs
t Of her dying, glorious Son.

5. Is there one who would not weep,
   Whelmèd in miseries so deep,
   Quæ maerébat et dolébat,
Pia Mater, dum vidébat
Nati poenas incitát.

6. Can the human heart refrain
   From partaking in her pain,
   Quæ est homo qui non fléret,
   Matrem Christi si vindé ret
   In tanto supplí ci ?

7. Bruised, derided, cursed, defiled,
   She beheld her tender Child,
   Pro peccátis suæ gentis
   Et flagellis subdi tum.

8. For the sins of his own nation
   Saw him hang in desolation,
   Vidit suum dulcem Natum
   Moriéntem desolátum,
   Dum emi sit spiritüm.

9. O thou Mother! Font of love,
   Touch my spirit from above,
   Eis Mater, fons amó ris,
   Me sentire virn dolori
   Fac ut tæcum lúgeam.

10. Make me feel as thou hast felt;
    Make my soul to glow and melt
    Mea Cruci fíger plagas
    Cordi meo valide.

11. Holy Mother, pierce me through,
    In my heart each wound renew
    Sancta Mater, istud agas,
    Crucí fixi fíger plagas
    Cordi meo valide.

12. Let me share with thee his pain,
    Who for all my sins was slain,
    Tui Nati vulneráti,
    Tam dignáti pro me pati,
    Poenas mecum dividé.

13. Let me mingle tears with thee,
    Mourning him who mourned for me,
    Fac me vere tecum flére,
    Crucí fixi condólere,
    Donec ego víxero.

14. By the cross with thee to stay;
    There with thee to weep and pray,
    Juxta crucem tecum stáre,
    Ac me tibi sociáre
    In planctu désidero.

15. Virgin of all Virgins best!
    Listen to my fond request:
    Virgo virginum praedéa,
    Mihi jam non sis amára:
    Fac me tecum plángere.

Text: 88 7; Stabat Mater dolorosa; Jacopone da Todi; 1230-1306; tr. by Edward Caswall, 1814-1878, alt.
Music: Mantzisch Gesangbuch, 1661.
Miserere (full title: Miserere Mei, Deus, Latin for "Have mercy on me, O God") is a setting of Psalm 51 (50) by the Italian composer Gregorio Allegri. It was composed during the reign of Pope Urban VIII, probably during the 1630s, for use in the Sistine Chapel during matins, as part of the exclusive Tenebrae service on Holy Wednesday and Good Friday of Holy Week.

The Miserere is written for two choirs, one of five and one of four voices, and is an example of Renaissance polyphony. One of the choirs sings a simple version of the original Miserere chant; the other, spatially separated, sings an ornamented commentary on this.

The Tenebrae service where the Miserere would be sung normally began at dusk, hence the name (tenebrae is Latin for "shadows" or "darkness"). During the ritual, candles would be extinguished one by one, save for the last candle which remained alight and was then hidden. Gregorio Allegri envisioned the setting of the Miserere to be the final act within the first lesson of the Tenebrae service.

The Miserere is one of the most frequently recorded pieces of late Renaissance music. An early and celebrated recording of it is the one from March 1963 by the Choir of King’s College, Cambridge, conducted by David Willcocks, which was sung in English and featured the then-treble Roy Goodman. This recording was originally part of a gramophone LP recording entitled Evensong for Ash Wednesday but the Miserere has subsequently been re-released on various compilation discs.

Historically informed recordings have been released by the Sixteen, the Tallis Scholars and, more recently, Tenebrae.

In 2015 the Sistine Chapel choir released their first CD, including the 1661 Sistine codex version of the Miserere recorded in the chapel itself. This recording is unusual in that it uses a score that is quite rare and that the acoustics of the Sistine Chapel are really unique. If there is anything close to the original experience of hearings Allegri’s original piece this is probably it.
It has been described as one of the most sublime pieces of music ever composed. It was the last of twelve falsobordone Miserere settings composed and chanted at the Vatican Tenebrae service since 1514 and is the most popular.

At some point, it became forbidden to transcribe the music and it was allowed to be performed only at those particular services at the Sistine Chapel, thus adding to the mystery surrounding it. Three authorized copies of the work were distributed prior to 1770: to the Holy Roman Emperor, Leopold I; to the King of Portugal; and to Padre (Giovanni Battista) Martini. However, none of them succeeded in capturing the beauty of the Miserere as performed annually in the Sistine Chapel. Since the lifting of the ban, Allegri's Miserere has become one of the most popular a cappella choral works now performed.

According to the popular story (backed up by family letters), fourteen-year-old Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart was visiting Rome when he first heard the piece during the Wednesday service. Later that day, he wrote it down entirely from memory, returning to the Chapel that Friday to make minor corrections. Less than three months after hearing the song and transcribing it, Mozart had gained fame for the work and was summoned to Rome by Pope Clement XIV, who showered praise on him for his feat of musical genius and awarded him the Chivalric Order of the Golden Spur on July 4, 1770.

Although originally intended for the Office of Tenebrae this piece is now a staple of a capella choirs of worth. There are literally thousands of recordings of this masterpiece by Father Gregorio Allegri (he was a priest in his spare time). Listen to an abridged version of it by King's College Choir, by clicking HERE.
The Office of Divine Worship will be happy to help if you would like to use this design for your Holy Week mailing. If you provide us with your Holy Week schedule we can send you your own artwork. Alternatively if you would like we can have the postcard printed for you at reasonable cost (approx. $50 for 500 cards).

These attractive postcards are a great way to let your parishioners know your Holy Week schedule. They can be mailed to all your registered parishioners. They can be handed out after Mass on the weeks leading up to Holy Week or they can be left in the back of the church for people to take home with them. Families can easily pin them to their activities board or fridge to remind them about Holy Week liturgies. Parishioners can take extra copies to hand out to neighbors to invite them to the Easter Celebrations. In summary printed postcards are a very flexible and cost effective way of getting your Holy Week Schedule out into the community. Try some!

**ST. MARGARET PARISH**

**Wednesday 17 April**
Tenebrae 7:00pm

**Holy Thursday 18 April**
Mass of the Lord’s Supper 7:00pm

**Good Friday 19 April**
Passion Liturgy 3:00pm
Stations of the Cross 7:00pm

**Holy Saturday 20 April**
Easter Vigil 8:30pm

**Easter Sunday**
Holy Mass 8:00am & 10:00am

**PLEASE COME AND CELEBRATE WITH US.**
Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ:

“Peace be with you!” With these words, the Risen Lord greeted his frightened Apostles in the Upper Room on the day of his Resurrection. They were troubled, anxious, and fearful—much like each one of us at some point in our lives. Christ repeated the words, “Peace be with you.” But then he added, “Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them” (Jn 20:19-23).

What an extraordinary gift! The Risen Lord was proclaiming that all the suffering he had just endured was in order to make available the gifts of salvation and forgiveness. He wanted the Apostles to receive these gifts. He wanted them to become apostles of this forgiveness to others.

In the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, also called confession, we meet the Lord, who wants to grant forgiveness and the grace to live a renewed life in him. In this sacrament, he prepares us to receive him free from serious sin, with a lively faith, earnest hope, and sacrificial love in the Eucharist. The Church sees confession as so important that she requires that every Catholic go at least once a year.1 The Church also encourages frequent confession in order to grow closer to Christ Jesus and his Body, the Church. By the grace of the Holy Spirit, we seek forgiveness and repentance, let go of patterns of sin, grow in the life of virtue, and witness to a joyful conversion. Since the graces of the sacrament are so similar to the purpose of the New Evangelization, Pope Benedict XVI has said, “The New Evangelization . . . begins in the confessional!”2

We bishops and priests are eager to help you if you experience difficulty, hesitation, or uncertainty about approaching the Lord in this sacrament. If you have not received this healing sacrament in a long time, we are ready to welcome you. We, whom Christ has ordained to minister this forgiveness in his name, are also approaching this sacrament, as both penitents and ministers, throughout our lives and at this special moment of grace during Lent. We want to offer ourselves to you as forgiven sinners seeking to serve in the Lord’s name.

During Lent—in addition to the various penitential services during which individual confession takes place—we bishops and priests will be making ourselves available often for the individual celebration of this sacrament. We pray that through the work of the Holy Spirit, all Catholics—clergy and laity—will respond to the call of the New Evangelization to encounter Christ in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. Come to the Lord and experience the extraordinary grace of his forgiveness!

1 Catechism of the Catholic Church, nos. 1457-1458.
How to Go to Confession...

May the Passion of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of all the saints, whatever good you do and suffering you endure, heal your sins, help you grow in holiness, and reward you with eternal life. Go in peace.

—Rite of Penance, no. 93

1 PREPARATION: Before going to confession, take some time to prepare. Begin with prayer, and reflect on your life since your last confession. How have you—in your thoughts, words, and actions—neglected to live Christ’s commands to “love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind,” and to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt 22:37, 39)? As a help with this “examination of conscience,” you might review the Ten Commandments or the Beatitudes (Ex 20:2-17; Dt 5:6-21; Mt 5:3-10; or Lk 6:20-26).

2 GREETING: The priest will welcome you; he may say a short blessing or read a Scripture passage.

3 THE SIGN OF THE CROSS: Together, you and the priest will make the Sign of the Cross. You may then begin your confession with these or similar words: “Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been [give days, months, or years] since my last confession.”

4 CONFESSION: Confess all your sins to the priest. If you are unsure what to say, ask the priest for help. When you are finished, conclude with these or similar words: “I am sorry for these and all my sins.”

5 PENANCE: The priest will propose an act of penance. The penance might be prayer, a work of mercy, or an act of charity. He might also counsel you on how to better live a Christian life.

6 ACT OF CONTRITION: After the priest has conferred your penance, pray an Act of Contrition, expressing sorrow for your sins and resolving to sin no more. A suggested Act of Contrition is:

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. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. (Rite of Penance, no. 45)

7 ABSOLUTION: The priest will extend his hands over your head and pronounce the words of absolution. You respond, “Amen.”

8 PRAISE: The priest will usually praise the mercy of God and will invite you to do the same. For example, the priest may say, “Give thanks to the Lord for he is good.” And your response would be, “His mercy endures for ever” (Rite of Penance, no. 47).

9 DISMISSAL: The priest will conclude the sacrament, often saying, “Go in peace.”

If it has been a while since your last confession, remember, “Do not fear” (Is 41:10). The priest will help guide you. And feel free to take this how-to guide with you! (For more information, visit www.usccb.org/confession.)
Order for the Blessing and Distribution of Ashes

1656 The season of Lent begins with the ancient practice of marking the baptized with ashes as a public and communal sign of penance. The blessing and distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday normally takes place during the celebration of Mass. However, when circumstances require, the blessing and distribution of ashes may take place apart from Mass, during a celebration of the word of God.

1657 This order may also be used when ashes are brought to the sick. According to circumstances, the rite may be abbreviated by the minister. Nevertheless, at least one Scripture reading should be included in the service.

1658 If already blessed ashes are brought to the sick, the blessing is omitted and the distribution takes place immediately after the homily. The homily should conclude by inviting the sick person to prepare himself or herself for the reception of the ashes.

1659 This rite may be celebrated by a priest or deacon who may be assisted by lay ministers in the distribution of the ashes. The blessing of the ashes, however, is reserved to a priest or deacon. Also note there is no indication of the distribution of Holy Communion. This is to be simply a Liturgy of the Word of God.

This blessing is an adaptation of the rite for the blessing and distribution of ashes on Ash Wednesday in *The Roman Missal (Sacramentary)*, as found in *The Book of Blessings* prepared by International Commission on English in the Liturgy (ICEL) 1989.

INTRODUCTORY RITES

1660 When the community has gathered, a suitable song may be sung.

After the singing, the minister says:

**In the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**

All make the sign of the cross and reply: R. *Amen.*

1661 A *Priest or Deacon* greets those present in the following or other suitable words, taken mainly from sacred Scripture.

*The grace, the mercy, and the peace of God the Father and Christ Jesus our Savior be with you.*

And all reply: R. *And also with you.*

1662 A *lay minister* greets those present in the following words:

*Praised be the God of grace, mercy, and peace. Blessed be God for ever.*

And all reply: R. *Blessed be God for ever.*
In the following words, the minister prepares those present for the blessing and distribution of the ashes.

My brothers and sisters, the hour of God’s favor draws near, the day of his mercy and of our salvation approaches, when death was destroyed and eternal life began.

As we begin this season of Lent, we gather today to acknowledge that we are sinners.

As we express our sorrow, may God be merciful to us and restore us to his friendship.

OPENING PRAYER

The minister then says the opening prayer.

Let us pray.

After a brief period of silence, the minister continues:

Father in heaven,

the light of your truth bestows sight to the darkness of sinful eyes.

May this season of repentance

bring us the blessing of your forgiveness and the gift of your light.

Grant this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

A reader, another person present, or the minister reads a text of sacred Scripture.

[The reading can be taken from the Lectionary for Mass for Ash Wednesday] Or:

Deuteronomy 30:15-20 Here, then, I have today set before you life and prosperity, death and doom.

Isaiah 58:5-10 Is this the manner of fasting I wish? That a man bow his head like a reed?

2 Corinthians 5:20-6:2--Be reconciled to God, now is the acceptable time.

Matthew 6:1-6, 16-18--Your Father, who sees all that is done in secret, will reward you.

As circumstances suggest, the following responsorial psalm may be sung, or some other suitable song.

R. Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

As circumstances suggest, the minister may give those present a brief explanation of the biblical text, so that they may understand through faith the meaning of the celebration.

PRAYER OF BLESSING

After the homily the minister, if a Priest or Deacon, joins his hands and says one of the blessing prayers that follow:

Dear friends in Christ, let us ask our Father

to bless these ashes which we will use as the mark of our repentance.

Pause for silent prayer.
Lord, bless the sinner who asks for your forgiveness and bless all those who receive these ashes. May they keep this lenten season in preparation for the joy of Easter. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

R. Amen.

1670 Or:

Lord, bless these ashes by which we show that we are dust.
Pardon our sins and keep us faithful to the discipline of Lent, for you do not want sinners to die but to live with the risen Christ, who reigns with you for ever and ever.

R. Amen.

He sprinkles the ashes with holy water in silence.

[a lay minister may distribute ashes blessed earlier in the day]
[If a lay minister is leading, the following words of Scripture are said over the blessed ashes:]
[Daniel turned to the LORD God, pleading in earnest prayer, with fasting, sackcloth, and ashes.
O LORD, we are shamefaced, like our kings, our princes, and our fathers, for having sinned against you.
But yours, O LORD, our God, are compassion and forgiveness! ] (Dan.9:3,8-9)

DISTRIBUTION OF THE ASHES

1671 The minister then places the ashes on those who come forward, saying [one of the formulas below] to each: [If there are a number to receive ashes, other ministers may assist in the distribution.]

Turn away from sin and be faithful to the gospel.
Or:
Remember, you are dust and to dust you will return.

1672 Meanwhile some of the following antiphons or other appropriate songs are sung. These may be repeated after each verse of Psalm 51, “Have mercy on me, O God.”

Antiphon 1 Come back to the Lord with all your heart; leave the past in ashes, and turn to God with tears and fasting, for he is slow to anger and ready to forgive.
Antiphon 2 Let the priests and ministers of the Lord lament before his altar, and say: Spare us, Lord; spare your people! Do not let us die for we are crying out to you.
Antiphon 3 Lord, take away our wickedness.

Or:

Responsory

V. Direct our hearts to better things, O Lord; heal our sin and ignorance.

R. Lord, do not face us suddenly with death, but give us time to repent.

V. Turn to us with mercy, Lord: we have sinned against you.

R. Help us, God our savior, rescue us for the honor of your name.

R. Turn to us with mercy, Lord; we have sinned against you.

1673 After the giving of ashes the minister’s hands are washed; the rite concludes with the general intercessions and the final blessing.

INTERCESSIONS

1674 The intercessions are then said. The minister introduces them and an assisting minister or one of those present announces the intentions. From the following those best suited to the occasion may be used or adapted, or other intentions that apply to the particular circumstances may be composed.

The minister [introduces the Intercessions saying]:

Our merciful Father does not desire the death of sinners but rather that they should turn from their sins and have life.

Let us pray that we who are sorry for our sins may fear no future evil and sin no more.

Assisting minister: By human weakness we have disfigured the holiness of the Church: pardon all our sins and restore us to full communion with our brothers and sisters. We Pray to the Lord: R. Lord Hear Our Prayer

Assisting minister: Grant the forgiveness of sins and the gift of new life to those who will be baptized this Easter. We Pray to the Lord: R. Lord Hear Our Prayer

Assisting minister: Your mercy is our hope: welcome us to the sacrament of reconciliation. We Pray to the Lord: R. Lord Hear Our Prayer

Assisting minister: Give us the will to change our lives, and the lives of others, by charity, good example, and prayer. We Pray to the Lord: R. Lord Hear Our Prayer

Assisting minister: Make us a living sign of your love for all to see: people reconciled with you and each other. We Pray to the Lord: R. Lord Hear Our Prayer
**LORD’S PRAYER**
1675 After the intercessions the minister, in the following or similar words, invites all present to sing or say the Lord’s Prayer.

Now, in obedience to Christ himself, let us join in prayer to the Father, asking him to forgive us as we forgive others.
All: Our Father . . .

**CLOSING PRAYER**
The minister says:
Let us pray.
After a brief period of silence, the minister continues:

Father, our source of life, you know our weakness.
May we reach out with joy to grasp your hand and to walk more readily in your ways.
We ask this through Christ our Lord.
R. Amen.

**CONCLUDING RITE**
1676 The minister concludes the rite by saying:
May the Father bless us, for he has adopted us as his children.
R. Amen.
May the Son come to help us, for he has received us as brothers and sisters.
R. Amen.
May the Spirit be with us, for he has made us his dwelling place.
R. Amen.

1677 A minister who is a Priest or Deacon then blesses all present:
And may almighty God bless you all, the Father, and the Son, + and the Holy Spirit.
R. Amen.

[A lay minister concludes by signing themselves and saying:] May the Lord bless us, protect us from all evil, + and bring us to everlasting life.
R. Amen.

1678 It is preferable to end the celebration with a suitable song.