

**A LENTEN SERVICE OF REPENTENCE,
MEDITATION, AND PRAYER
FOR SMALL GROUPS**
Season of Lent 2015

Opening: Jesus said: "If any of you would come after me, deny yourself and take up your cross and follow me." *Mark 8:34*

Hymn: Let Your Healing Love

General Confession and Absolution

Leader: Let us confess our sin, in penitence and faith, firmly resolved to keep God's commandments and to live in love and peace with all men.

All: God of all mercy, we confess that we have sinned against you, opposing your will in our lives. We have denied your goodness in each other, in ourselves, and in the world you have created. We repent of the evil that enslaves us, the evil we have done, and the evil done on our behalf. Forgive, restore, and strengthen us through our Savior Jesus Christ, that we may abide in your love and serve only your will. Amen.

Leader: Almighty God, who forgives all who truly repent, have mercy on us, pardon and deliver us from all our sins, confirm and strengthen us in all goodness, and keep us in life eternal; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Collect

Leader: Almighty God, whose beloved son willingly endured the agony and shame of the cross for our redemption: Give us courage to take up our cross and follow Him; who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, One God, now and forever. Amen. (*Book of Common Prayer, pg 252*)

All: Amen

Hymn: Search Me, O God

Scripture Reading: Psalm 51:1-12

Let us all, as the Psalmist prays, ask for cleansing and pardon.

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you

alone, have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight, so that you are justified in your sentence and blameless when you pass judgment. Indeed, I was born guilty, a sinner when my mother conceived me. You desire truth in the inward being; therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart. Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones that you have crushed rejoice. Hide your face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me. Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take your holy spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and sustain in me a willing spirit.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

All: Thanks be to God.

Lectio Divina: *Listening for the gentle touch of Christ in the Word.* (See insert for instructions)

Responsive Prayer (Taken from, *Out of the Ordinary*, 2000 by Joyce Rupp. Used by permission of Ave. Maria Press)

Leader: Lord of life and hope, create in us a clean heart,

All: open and receptive, so that I may embrace the many ways you choose to visit my life.

Leader: Create in us a clean heart,

All: cleared of the refuse of old battles with others and deadly opposition with myself.

Leader: Create in us a clean heart,

All: purified through the daily disruptions and the life encounters that take me beyond my grasping control and ego-centeredness.

Leader: Create in us a clean heart,

All: freed from the clutter of cultural enticements, so that I can enjoy the beauty of life's simple things and relish the gift I easily take for granted.

Leader: Create in us a clean heart,

All: bathed from harsh thoughts, shame, and perfectionistic tendencies, warmly welcoming others with the embrace of nonjudgement.

Leader: Create in us a clean heart,

All: brushed free of frantic busyness, so that I will have time to dwell with you in the listening space of solitude and silence.

Leader: Create in us a clean heart,

All: rinsed of the residue of false messages about my identity, enabling my inner goodness and light to shine through all I am and do.

Leader: Create in us a clean heart,

All: cleansed of anxiety and lack of trust, restoring in me an enduring faith in your abiding presence and unconditional love.

Leader: Create in us a clean heart,

All: washed with your mercy and strengthened by your love, helping me move beyond whatever keeps me from union with you.

Leader: Create a clean heart in us, God. Dust off the unmindful activity that constantly collects there. De-clutter our hearts from harsh judgements and negativity. Wash away our resistance to working through difficult relationships. Remove whatever keeps us from following in your compassionate footsteps. Lord Jesus, you came among us to share our humanity and transform our lives. We are people of hope and joy because we know You will always be with us and supporting us in every part of our lives. We praise you and thank you of Lord.

All: Amen

Hymn: In the Darkness I Cannot Go

Prayer

Heavenly Father,
You sent your Son to proclaim the good news of your salvation and to manifest your healing power. Continue your gracious work among us by the power of your Holy Spirit, and grant that we who have received your forgiveness and healing may live your gospel and manifest your kingdom in all that we think and say and do, now and always. Through Jesus Christ our Physician and Savior, who has taught us to pray by saying:

All: Our Father in heaven,
hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come,
your will be done,
on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil,
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen

LAYING ON OF HANDS AND ANOINTING WITH OIL

Leader: Blessed are you, sovereign God, gentle and merciful, creator of heaven and earth. Your Word brought light out of darkness, and daily your Spirit renews the face of the earth. Your anointed Son brought healing to those in weakness and distress. He broke the power of evil and set us free from sin and death that we might praise your name for ever. By the power of your Spirit may your blessing rest on those who are anointed with this oil in your name; may they be made whole in body, mind and spirit, restored in your image, renewed in your love, and serve you as sons and daughters in your kingdom. Through your anointed Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, to whom with you and the Holy Spirit we lift our voices of thanks and praise:

All: Blessed be God, our strength and our salvation, now and forever. Amen.

As we prayed for the person on our right during Lection Divina, we will also anoint that person

with oil. Making the sign of the cross on the person's forehead, say these words: I anoint you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Marked with this cross of Christ, may God's healing presence make you whole in body, mind, and spirit, give you light and peace, and keep you in life eternal. Amen.

Benediction

All: Almighty God, so draw my heart to you, so guide my mind, so fill my imagination, so control my will, that I may be wholly yours. And then use me I pray, as you will, and always to your glory and the welfare of your people. Through Jesus Christ my Lord and Savior, Amen.

We commit ourselves to God and leave in his care.

Final Note:

Because the Holy Spirit is continually at work in each of us, pushing us toward wholeness, the process of healing is like removing sticks and leaves from a stream until the water runs clear. If we simply get out of the way of the Lord's work in us, we can trust that we are being led to the particular kind of wholeness God wills for us.

References:

The absolution and prayers for anointing are from Gunstone, John, *Prayers for Healing*, Highland Inter Publishing Service Ltd, 1992 ed.

Confession is from *Enriching Our Worship 1, Supplemental Liturgical Materials prepared by the Standing Liturgical Commission 1997*, Church Publishing Inc., New York.