

Penitential Service – Lent 2023
Including reflections from the Spirituality of Blessed Columba Marmion
Becoming Human, Becoming Divine by Columba McCann OSB

Song **All Are Welcome (Jesse and Jenna Manibusan) – Laudate 2023**

All sing: All are welcome in this place. Behold Love’s amazing grace.
All are welcome! All are welcome!
Bring your hopes, bring your dreams, Mercy flows and Love redeems,
All are welcome, All belong.

Leader

We gather in the name of the Trinity.
Welcome to this place of honesty, forgiveness and peace.
We are here to be truthful with ourselves before God, to be open with humility to the grace of reconciliation and to embrace the peace of the One who loves unconditionally.
We take a moment of quiet to acknowledge our need for God’s mercy. *Pause*

All say: Christ have mercy, A Chríost déan trócaire orm, Christe eleison

Scripture **What do the prophets say about forgiveness?**

‘Return to the LORD your God. Your sin has made you stumble and fall’ (Hosea 14:1) *Pause*

‘If your sins be as scarlet, they shall be made as white as snow’. (Isaiah 1:18) *Pause*

‘But for you who revere my name the sun of righteousness shall rise, with healing in its wings’.
(Malachi 4:2) *Pause*

Song **Song of Hosea (Gregory Norbet)**

All sing: Long have I waited for your coming home to me and living deeply our new life.

Some questions for reflection: *How long since I last met Jesus in the Sacrament of Reconciliation? ... What was that journey home like?... Do I really feel welcome? ... How am I now?...*

Scripture **What do the Psalms say about forgiveness?**

‘Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness’ (Ps. 50) *Pause*

‘The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love’ (Ps.103:8) *Pause*

‘I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the guilt of my sin.’ (Ps.32:5)
Pause

Song **Be Merciful, O Lord (Michael Joncas)**

More questions for reflection: *What words or phrases stay with you from these psalms – God, in your kindness...slow to anger...I will confess...you forgave the guilt of my sin...have mercy on me ...*

Scripture **What do the Gospels say about forgiveness?**

'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us' (Matt 6:12)

Pause

'Do not judge, and you will not be judged. Do not condemn, and you will not be condemned. Forgive, and you will be forgiven.' (Luke 6:37)

Pause

'Peter came to Jesus and asked, "Lord how many times shall I forgive my brother or sister who sins against me? Up to seven times?"

Jesus answered, "I tell you, not seven times, but seventy-seven times". '(Matt 18:21-22) *Pause*

Final Questions for reflection: Who was the last person that you forgave? ... Do you find that words of judgement or words of forgiveness are the first to flow from your mouth?... Even counting to seventy seven takes a long time doesn't it?

Song **Be Still and Know (Trad.) or (Booth, Hart, Herrgesell) Emmanuel 2023**

The Lord's Prayer ... Act of Sorrow

Silent Reflection

Individual Confession and Absolution

A Goal - Invite the congregation to choose one of these quotations for their reflection at home

1.

'Whenever we may feel in debt to God because of sin, Columba's fundamental message is that in God's eyes there is no debt, aside from the joyful debt of gratitude for the generosity of his forgiveness brought to us in Christ which is always available.' p.34

2.

'In order to avoid sin, Columba proposed watchfulness, prayer and trust in Jesus Christ as our defence. Being alert to the various currents running through our mind and heart is a state of watchfulness, an important value in the monastic tradition to which Columba belonged. It is a very traditional Christian form of mindfulness. It means being alert to those ways of thinking which draw us away from treasuring our relationship with God as our true and deepest source of happiness.' p.70

3.

'Perhaps a gentle daily practice would be to begin by noticing the blessings we have received from God at the end of the day, before going to notice the moments when we responded well and moments when we didn't. This situates an awareness of our weakness and tendency towards sin in the larger context of God's love.' p.76

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Bless us, O Lord, and these your gifts of forgiveness.

May we use them generously and without judgement

Amen.

Song **Now Thank We All Our God (Veritas Hymnal)**