

ADVENT

PREPARING FOR RECONCILIATION

The Church encourages us to listen to the word of God as part of our preparation to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation.

The scriptures proclaim God's mercy and also call us to conversion. A time of quiet reading, reflecting, and praying with the scriptures helps us to more deeply understand the love of God and to respond to it from our hearts.

As the rain and the snow
come down from the heavens
and do not return
without watering the earth,
making it yield and giving growth
to provide seed for the sower
and bread for the eating,
so the word that goes from my mouth
does not return to me empty,
without carrying out my will
and succeeding in what it was sent to do.

Isaiah 55.10-11

God is light; there is no darkness in him at all

This is what we have heard from Jesus Christ,
and the message that we are announcing to you:

God is light; there is no darkness in him at all.

If we say that we are in union with God
while we are living in darkness

we are lying because we are not living the truth.

But if we live our lives in the light,
as he is in the light,

we are in union with one another,
and the blood of Jesus, his Son,
purifies us all from sin.

If we say we have no sin in us,

we are deceiving ourselves

and refusing to admit the truth;

but if we acknowledge our sins,
then God who is faithful and just

will forgive our sins and purify us
from everything that is wrong.

To say that we have never sinned is to call God a liar
and to show that his word is not in us.

I am writing this, my children, to stop you sinning;

but if anyone should sin,

we have our advocate with the Father,

Jesus Christ, who is just;

he is the sacrifice that takes our sins away,

and not only ours, but the whole world's.

1 John 1.5-10; 2.1-2

You are welcome to take this card from the Church

**Liturgy
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ENGLAND
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Let the wicked abandon their way and return to the Lord, and he will have mercy on them because he is generous in forgiving.

Thus says the Lord:

Oh, come to the water all you who are thirsty;
though you have no money, come!
Buy corn without money, and eat,
and, at no cost, wine and milk.

Why spend money on what is not bread,
your wages on what fails to satisfy?

Listen, listen to me,
and you will have good things to eat
and rich food to enjoy.

Pay attention, come to me;
listen, and your soul will live.

Seek the Lord while he is still to be found,
call to him while he is still near.

Let the wicked man abandon his way,
the evil man his thoughts.

Let him turn back to the Lord

who will take pity on him,

to our God who is rich in forgiving;

for my thoughts are not your thoughts,

my ways not your ways - it is the Lord who speaks.

Yes, the heavens are as high above the earth

as my ways are above your ways,

my thoughts above your thoughts.

Isaiah 55:1-3. 6-9

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Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand.

In due course John the Baptist appeared; he preached in the wilderness of Judaea and this was his message: 'Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is close at hand'. This was the man the prophet Isaiah spoke of when he said:

*A voice cries in the wilderness:
Prepare a way for the Lord,
make his paths straight.*

This man John wore a garment made of camel-hair with a leather belt round his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then Jerusalem and all Judaea and the whole Jordan district made their way to him, and as they were baptised by him in the river Jordan they confessed their sins. But when he saw a number of Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism he said to them, 'Brood of vipers, who warned you to fly from the retribution that is coming? But if you are repentant, produce the appropriate fruit, and do not presume to tell yourselves, "We have Abraham for our father," because, I tell you, God can raise children for Abraham from these stones. Even now the axe is laid to the roots of the trees, so that any tree which fails to produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown on the fire. I baptise you in water for repentance, but the one who follows me is more powerful than I am, and I am not fit to carry his sandals; he will baptise you with the Holy Spirit and fire. His winnowing-fan is in his hand; he will clear his threshing-floor and gather his wheat into the barn; but the chaff he will burn in a fire that will never go out.'

Matthew 3:1-12

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Isaiah 55.10-11

You are the light of the world.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by men.

'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.'

Matthew 5:13-16

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Isaiah 55.10-11

Our salvation is near.

You know 'the time' has come: you must wake up now: our salvation is even nearer than it was when we were converted. The night is almost over, it will be daylight soon - let us give up all the things we prefer to do under the cover of the dark; let us arm ourselves and appear in the light. Let us live decently as people do in the daytime: no drunken orgies, no promiscuity or licentiousness, and no wrangling or jealousy. Let your armour be the Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 13:11-14

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Isaiah 55.10-11

*In so far as you did this to one of the least of these
brothers of mine you did it to me.*

Jesus said to his disciples: 'When the Son of Man comes in his glory, escorted by all the angels, then he will take his seat on his throne of glory. All the nations will be assembled before him and he will separate men one from another as the shepherd separates sheep from goats. He will place the sheep on his right hand and the goats on his left.

Then the King will say to those on his right hand, "Come, you whom my Father has blessed, take for your heritage the kingdom prepared for you since the foundation of the world. For I was hungry and you gave me food; I was thirsty and you gave me drink; I was a stranger and you made me welcome; naked and you clothed me, sick and you visited me, in prison and you came to see me." Then the virtuous will say to him in reply, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry and feed you; or thirsty and give you a drink? When did we see you a stranger and make you welcome; naked and clothe you; sick or in prison and go to see you?' And the King will answer, "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you did it to me".

Next he will say to those on his left hand, "Go away from me, with your curse upon you, to the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. For I was hungry and you never gave me food; I was thirsty and you never gave me anything to drink; I was a stranger and you never made me welcome, naked and you never clothed me, sick and in prison and you never visited me." Then it will be their turn to ask, "Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty, a stranger or naked, sick or in prison, and did not come to your help?" then he will answer, "I tell you solemnly, in so far as you neglected to do this to one of the least of these, you neglected to do it to me." And they will go away to eternal punishment, and the virtuous to eternal life.'

Matthew 25:31-46

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Isaiah 55.10-11

*The Son of Man has come to seek out
and save what was lost.*

Jesus entered Jericho and was going through the town when a man whose name was Zacchaeus made his appearance; he was one of the senior tax collectors and a wealthy man. He was anxious to see what kind of man Jesus was, but he was too short and could not see him for the crowd; so he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to catch a glimpse of Jesus who was to pass that way. When Jesus reached the spot he looked up and spoke to him: 'Zacchaeus, come down. Hurry, because I must stay at your house today.' And he hurried down and welcomed him joyfully. They all complained when they saw what was happening. 'He has gone to stay at a sinner's house,' they said. But Zacchaeus stood his ground and said to the Lord, 'Look, sir, I am going to give half my property to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody I will pay him back four times the amount.' And Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because this man too is a son of Abraham; for the Son of Man has come to seek out and save what was lost.'

Luke 19:1-10

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