



PRAYER SERVICE FOR THE YEAR OF MERCY

DECEMBER 8, 2015 – NOVEMBER 20, 2016

This brief prayer service may be used in any number of contexts
(parish meetings, small groups, family prayer, etc.),
and may be led by anyone.

Opening Hymn (optional)

If desired, an opening song may be sung from a hymnal.
It may be drawn from the sample list below, or another suitable song may be selected.

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore You
The King of Love My Shepherd Is
Love Divine, All Loves Excelling
Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
There's a Wideness in God's Mercy
What Wondrous Love Is This?
Lord, Who throughout These Forty Days (Lent)
On Jordan's Bank (Lent)
Christ the Lord Is Risen Today (Easter time)

Leader: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

All: Amen.

Leader: We gather before God our almighty Father,
aware of our great need for His mercy
and also of His great desire to bestow love and forgiveness upon us.

During this Jubilee Year of Mercy,
may our prayer and our reading of the Scriptures
lead us to a greater appreciation for divine love.

May we always recognize
that Jesus Christ "is the face of the Father's mercy."
May we never cease to proclaim to the world
the pardon and salvation offered through Jesus,
and to live out the Gospel
through humble acts of mercy.

Scripture Reading:

One of the following Scripture readings is then read.

Isaiah 55:6-9

Seek the LORD while he may be found,
call upon him while he is near.
Let the wicked forsake their way,
and sinners their thoughts;
Let them turn to the LORD to find mercy;
to our God, who is generous in forgiving.

OR

1 John 3:14-18

Beloved:
We know that we have passed from death to life
because we love our brothers.
Whoever does not love remains in death.
Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer,
and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him.
The way we came to know love
was that he laid down his life for us;
so we ought to lay down our lives for our brothers.
If someone who has worldly means
sees a brother in need and refuses him compassion,
how can the love of God remain in him?
Children, let us love not in word or speech
but in deed and truth.

OR

Luke 6:27-36 *Love of Enemies.*

Jesus said to his disciples:
“To you who hear I say,
love your enemies, do good to those who hate you,
bless those who curse you, pray for those who mistreat you.
To the person who strikes you on one cheek,
offer the other one as well,

and from the person who takes your cloak,
do not withhold even your tunic.
Give to everyone who asks of you,
and from the one who takes what is yours do not demand it back.
Do to others as you would have them do to you.
For if you love those who love you,
what credit is that to you?
Even sinners love those who love them.
And if you do good to those who do good to you,
what credit is that to you?
Even sinners do the same.
If you lend money to those from whom you expect repayment,
what credit is that to you?
Even sinners lend to sinners,
and get back the same amount.
But rather, love your enemies and do good to them,
and lend expecting nothing back;
then your reward will be great
and you will be children of the Most High,
for he himself is kind to the ungrateful and the wicked.
Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful.

Other Potential Readings

Isaiah 25:6-9 – *The LORD will destroy death forever.*

Joel 2:12-19 – *For gracious and merciful is He, slow to anger, rich in kindness*

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 – *God was reconciling the world to Himself in Christ*

Ephesians 2:1-10 – *God who is rich in mercy...brought us to life with Christ*

Matthew 7:7-11 – *Ask and it will be given to you; seek and you will find; knock and the door will be opened to you.*

Luke 15:1-7 – *The parable of the lost sheep*

Luke 15:11-32 – *The prodigal son*

Or other suitable readings may be chosen from Scripture.

Responsorial Psalm

The following responsorial psalm may then be sung or read.
If desired, another suitable psalm may also be chosen in its place.

Psalm 103:1-2, 3-4, 8-9, 11-12

R./ The Lord is kind and merciful.

Bless the LORD, my soul;
all my being, bless his holy name!
Bless the LORD, my soul;
and do not forget all his gifts,

R./ The Lord is kind and merciful.

He pardons all your sins,
and heals all your ills,
He redeems your life from the pit,
and crowns you with mercy and compassion,

R./ The Lord is kind and merciful.

Merciful and gracious is the LORD,
slow to anger, abounding in mercy.
He will not always accuse,
and nurses no lasting anger;

R./ The Lord is kind and merciful.

For as the heavens tower over the earth,
so his mercy towers over those who fear him.
As far as the east is from the west,
so far has he removed our sins from us.

R./ The Lord is kind and merciful.

Intercessions

Leader: In mercy, we find the beating heart of the Gospel.
Mindful of our world's yearning for this Good News,
and with trust in the depth of divine love,
let us bring our prayers to God, the Father of mercies.

Reader:

1. May all members of the Church embrace with renewed zeal their responsibility to be a living sign of the Father's love in the world.
Let us pray to the Lord.

R./ Lord, hear our prayer.

2. May all nations and authorities exercise both justice and mercy in matters of governance, with a regard for reconciliation and human dignity.
Let us pray to the Lord.

R./ Lord, hear our prayer.

3. May the poor, the marginalized, the sick, and the suffering all experience the compassion of Christ in their trials, and so be sustained in hope.
Let us pray to the Lord.

R./ Lord, hear our prayer.

4. May the dead benefit from our prayers, and may they experience forever the boundless mercy of God in the heavenly kingdom.
Let us pray to the Lord.

R./ Lord, hear our prayer.

*Additional petitions may be added
according to the needs of the local community.*

Concluding Prayer

The following is the prayer composed by Pope Francis for the Year of Mercy.

All pray together:

Lord Jesus Christ,
you have taught us to be merciful like the heavenly Father,
and have told us that whoever sees you sees Him.
Show us your face and we will be saved.
Your loving gaze freed Zacchaeus and Matthew from being enslaved by money;
the adulteress and Magdalene from seeking happiness only in created things;
made Peter weep after his betrayal,
and assured Paradise to the repentant thief.
Let us hear, as if addressed to each one of us, the words that you spoke
to the Samaritan woman:
“If you knew the gift of God!”

You are the visible face of the invisible Father,
of the God who manifests his power above all by forgiveness and mercy:
let the Church be your visible face in the world, its Lord risen and glorified.
You willed that your ministers would also be clothed in weakness
in order that they may feel compassion for those in ignorance and error:
let everyone who approaches them feel sought after, loved, and forgiven by God.

Send your Spirit and consecrate every one of us with its anointing,
so that the Jubilee of Mercy may be a year of grace from the Lord,
and your Church, with renewed enthusiasm, may bring good news to the poor,
proclaim liberty to captives and the oppressed,
and restore sight to the blind.

We ask this through the intercession of Mary, Mother of Mercy,
you who live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit for ever and ever.

Amen.

A closing song may be sung,
either drawn from the list above or selected from a hymnal.