

Service of Corporate Confession and Absolution

Stand

The sign of the cross may be made by all in remembrance of their Baptism.

P In the name of the Father and of the + Son and of the Holy Spirit.

C **Amen.**

P I will go to the altar of God,

C **to God my exceeding joy.**

P Our help is in the name of the Lord,

C **who made heaven and earth.**

Sit

P During this Lenten season we have heard our Lord's call to intensify our struggle against sin, death, and the devil—all that prevents us from trusting in God and loving each other. Since it is our intention to receive the Holy Supper of our Lord Jesus Christ on this night when He instituted this blessed meal for our salvation, it is proper that we complete our Lenten discipline by diligently examining ourselves, as St. Paul urges us to do. This holy Sacrament has been instituted for the special comfort of those who are troubled because of their sin and who humbly confess their sins, fear God's wrath, and hunger and thirst for righteousness.

But when we examine our hearts and consciences, we find nothing in us but sin and death, from which we are incapable of delivering ourselves. Therefore, our Lord Jesus Christ has had mercy on us. For our benefit He became man so that He might fulfill for us the whole will and law of God and, to deliver us, took upon Himself our sin and the punishment we deserve.

So that we may more confidently believe this and be strengthened in the faith and in holy living, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread, broke it, and gave it to His disciples and said: "Take, eat; this is My body, which is given for you." It is as if He said, "I became man, and all that I do and suffer is for your good. As a pledge of this, I give you My body to eat."

In the same way also He took the cup, gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying: "Drink of it, all of you; this cup is the new testament in My blood, which is shed for you for the forgiveness of sins." Again, it is as if He said, "I have had mercy on you by taking into Myself all your iniquities. I give Myself into death, shedding My blood to obtain grace and forgiveness of sins, and to comfort and establish the new testament, which gives forgiveness and everlasting salvation. As a pledge of this, I give you My blood to drink."

Therefore, whoever eats this bread and drinks this cup, confidently believing this Word and promise of Christ, dwells in Christ and Christ in him and has eternal life.

We should also do this in remembrance of Him, showing His death—that He was delivered for our offenses and raised for our justification. Giving Him our most heartfelt thanks, we take up our cross and follow Him and, according to His commandment, love one another as He has loved us. As our Lord on this night exemplified this love by washing His disciples' feet, so we by our words and actions serve one another in love. For we are all one bread and one cup. For just as the one cup is filled with wine of many grapes and one bread made from countless grains, so also we, being many, are one body in Christ. Because of Him, we love one another, not only in word, but in deed and in truth.

May the almighty and merciful God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, by His Holy Spirit, accomplish this in us.

C Amen.

P Having heard the Word of God, let us confess our sins, imploring God our Father for the sake of His Son, Jesus Christ, to grant us forgiveness.

Stand

Silence for reflection on God's Word and for self-examination.

P O almighty God, merciful Father,

C I, a poor, miserable sinner, confess unto You all my sins and iniquities with which I have ever offended You and justly deserved Your

temporal and eternal punishment. But I am heartily sorry for them and sincerely repent of them, and I pray You of Your boundless mercy and for the sake of the holy, innocent, bitter sufferings and death of Your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, to be gracious and merciful to me, a poor, sinful being.

P God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

C **Amen.**

P Do you believe that the forgiveness I speak is not my forgiveness but God's?

C **Yes.**

P Now may the God of peace Himself sanctify you completely, and may your whole spirit, soul, and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. He who calls you is faithful; He will surely do it. Go T in peace.

C **Amen.**

The people may greet one another in the name of the Lord by saying, "Peace be with you." The pastor concludes the exchange of peace with the SALUTATION and COLLECT OF THE DAY:

Salutation and Collect of the Day

P The Lord be with you.

C **And also with you.**

P Let us pray.

O Lord, in this wondrous Sacrament You have left us a remembrance of Your passion. Grant that we may so receive the sacred mystery of Your body and blood that the fruits of Your redemption may continually be manifest in us; for You live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C **Amen.**

We turn to the Service of the Word in the Divine Service Setting III, beginning with the readings on page 190 in the front of your hymnals.

Stripping of the Altar

The communion vessels are reverently removed from the altar, the altar is stripped, and the chancel is cleared in preparation for the solemn services of Good Friday.

Psalm 22

My God, My God, why have you for- | saken me?*

Why are you so far from saving me, from the words of my | groaning?

O my God, I cry by day, but you do not | answer,*

and by night, but I | find no rest.

Yet you are | holy,*

enthroned on the praises of | Israel.

In you our fathers | trusted,*

they trusted, and you de- | livered them.

To you they cried and were | rescued;*

in you they trusted and were not | put to shame.

But I am a worm and | not a man,*

scorned by mankind and despised by the | people.

All who see me | mock me,*

they make mouths at me; they | wag their heads;

"He trusts in the Lord; let him de- | liver him;*

let him rescue him, for he de- | lights in him!"

Yet you are he who took me | from the womb;*

you made me trust you at my | mother's breasts.

On you was I cast | from my birth,*

and from my mother's womb you have | been my God.

Be not far from me, for trouble | is near,*

and there is | none to help.

Many bulls en- | compass me;*

strong bulls of Bashan sur- | round me;

they open wide their | mouths at me,*

like a ravening and roaring | lion.

I am poured out like water, and all my bones are | out of joint;*

my heart is like wax; it is melted with- | in my breast;

my strength is dried up like a potsherd, and my tongue sticks | to my jaws;

you lay me in the | dust of death.

For dogs en- | compass me;*

a company of evildoers encircles me; they have pierced my | hands and

feet—

I can count | all my bones—*

they stare and gloat | over me;

they divide my garments a- | mong them,*

and for my clothing they | cast lots.

But you, O Lord, do not be | far off!*

O you my help, come quickly | to my aid!

Deliver my soul | from the sword,*

my precious life from the power | of the dog!

Save me from the mouth of the | lion!*

You have rescued me from the horns of the wild | oxen!

I will tell of your name to my | brothers;*

in the midst of the congregation I will | praise you:

You who fear the Lord, praise him! All you offspring of Jacob, glo- | rify
him,*

and stand in awe of him, all you offspring of | Israel!

For he has not despised or abhorred the affliction of the afflicted, and he has
not hidden his | face from him,*

but has heard, when he | cried to him.

From you comes my praise in the great congre- | gation;*

my vows I will perform before those who | fear him.

The afflicted shall eat and be satisfied; those who seek him shall | praise the
Lord!*

May your hearts live for- | ever!

All the ends of the earth shall remember and turn | to the Lord,*

and all the families of the nations shall worship be- | fore you.

For kingship belongs | to the Lord,*

and he rules over the | nations.

All the prosperous of the earth eat and | worship;*

before him shall bow all who go down to the dust, even the one who
could not keep him- | self alive.

Posterity shall | serve him;*

it shall be told of the Lord to the coming gener- | ation;

they shall come and proclaim his righteousness to a people | yet unborn,*

that he has | done it.

*All leave the church in silence. We will also gather in silence in observation of
Good Friday.*