

Priestless Sunday Service with holy Communion for the Sundays in Advent.

A. PRELIMINARY REMARKS

1. ABBREVIATIONS

D = Delegate, or leader of the celebration. He has been delegated by the local bishop.

P = Prayer Leader. He should be chosen from the local community.

L = Lector. He may be sent by the parish priest to accompany D on his way from the parish church with the Bl. Sacrament so that he is not alone. But he may also be chosen from the local community.

A = Assembly.

2. THE ALTAR

Should be prepared beforehand with a white cloth, a crucifix, candles and eventually some flowers before the arrival of D. When D arrives the candles are lit.

3. GREETING OF THE BL. SACRAMENT

The faithful wait at their places for the arrival of D with the Bl. Sacrament. When D enters they stand up. D places the bursa on the altar, kneels down in front of the Bl. Sacrament and says:

D O Sacrament most holy, O Sacrament divine

A All praise and all thanksgiving be every moment Thine!

The faithful sit down. D goes to a side table and vests for the service; either in cassock and surplice, or only the alb. Those of the people who arrive later venerate the Bl. Sacrament with a genuflection before they take their places. If hosts are left at the end of the celebration, D goes to the credence table after making a genuflection. When D then leaves, the assembly stands up.

4. PLACE OF THE MINISTERS

The place of D is usually at the seat, facing the congregation. For the prayer service he kneels in front of the altar. He stands at the altar facing the congregation before the distribution of holy Communion, from the Our Father on.

P has his place among the people.

L has his place also among the people, but preferably close to the lectern that he can easily come and go.

5. DISTRIBUTION OF THE MINISTERS

Also in the priestless Sunday service every one should do that and only that which belongs to him according to the diversity of functions. As the one delegated by the bishop D greets the community, says the introductory words, the prayer before the readings (resp. collect) and reads the gospel. He gives the homily and leads the whole prayer service. He leads also the prayers from the Our Father on to the distribution of holy Communion, and pronounces also the petition for God's blessing at the end.

The other parts may be assumed by P or divided between him and L. If there should be nobody else present to take these parts, they may be assumed by D.

6. POSITION OF THE FAITHFUL

The people should stand during the introduction, the gospel, from the Credo on throughout the prayer service and holy Communion and during the petition for God's blessing. During the rest of the celebration they sit.

B. PRIESTLESS SUNDAY SERVICE IN ADVENT.

I. INTRODUCTION

P 1. *Hymn*: O come, O come, Emmanuel, p. 43*.

D 2. *Greeting*: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

A And also with you.

D 3. *Introduction to the Sunday*.

We are in Advent. This word means "coming". We wait for the coming of the Lord. We wait for the completion of our redemption and for the great day of final judgment. As Christians we should look for the signs of Christ's return in glory. Let us keep in mind: The Lord is near. We lift up our eyes to the Lord and pray:

Lord, have mercy. A Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy. A Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy. A Lord, have mercy.

3a. *Optional Text*.

D With the Church we begin today the season of Advent. During this time we "wait in joyful hope for the coming of the glory of our Savior Jesus Christ." He will not only come at the end of time, but he comes to us here and now: in his word and in his sacrament. "Lift up your heads O gates, and be lifted up, you ancient doors, that the king of glory may come in" (Ps 24 (23), 7). We pray to him:

Lord, have mercy. A Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy. A Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy. A Lord, have mercy.

* The hymns have been selected from Our Community Mass in Advent and Christmastide. East Asian Pastoral Institute, Manila (1966).

3b. *Optional Text.*

D We are in Advent, looking for the coming of the Lord. Let us be ready for him. St. Paul admonishes us "to lay aside the works of darkness." Now is our salvation nearer than when we came to faith. Therefore we say:

Lord, have mercy. A Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy. A Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy. A Lord, have mercy.

II. SCRIPTURE SERVICE

The delegate may either conclude the introduction with the collect of the Sunday, or, omitting the collect, insert the following preparatory prayer before the readings:

D Lord Jesus Christ, you said: "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there I am in the midst of them." Behold, we are gathered in your name. We are ready to listen to your word. Give us the grace to understand it correctly and help us to observe it faithfully. This we ask you who live and reign for ever and ever.

A Amen.

Readings for the First Sunday in Advent (sit).

2. *Reading, introduced by P:*

P The Lord gave us a new commandment, to love one another, as he loved us. This love manifests itself in the observance of God's law: "If you love me, you will obey my commandments", said Jesus. Our holiness proves itself in this practical love. This is the best preparation for meeting the Lord when he comes in his glory at the end of time.

L 1 Thess 3, 12-4, 2.

3. *Responsorial Psalm,*
of Advent hymn, e.g., Ye heavens, open, p. 39.

4. *Gospel, introduced by P:*

P Our earthly life determines how we shall "stand before the Son of Man." Therefore, we have to be ready for the coming of the Lord. But we should not be afraid. Neither the troubles and difficulties of this life should disturb us, nor the cosmic upheavals at the end of time, because our consolation consists in the conviction that "our redemption is drawing near."

D Lk 21, 25-28. 34-36.

Readings for the Second Sunday in Advent.

2. *Reading, introduced by P:*

P We should know what is really important in our religion, what really matters. These are love and faith. Together with love we should have a refined and keen awareness of what God has revealed to us. Both love and faith have to grow in us for the glory and praise of God who is to be revealed fully in the glorious coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

L Phil 1,4-6.8-10.

3. *Responsorial Psalm,*
or Advent hymn, e.g., Ye heavens, open, p. 39.

4. *Gospel, introduced by P:*

P We must never forget that before God we are all sinners and in need of repentance and forgiveness. A kind of interior renewal must accompany the forgiveness of sins. This is the right preparation for the glorious coming of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

D Lk 3,1-6.

*Readings for the Third Sunday in Advent.*2. *Reading, introduced by P:*

P We come closer to Christmas. In a few days we begin the Aguinaldo Masses. A joyous, hopeful expectation goes through our hearts: We know, the Lord is near. He is in our midst, because we are assembled in his name. We are grateful for what he has done for us. We direct our petitions to him because he told us, that we would be heard. He will grant peace to our restless hearts, the peace promised by the angels on Christmas night to those with whom God is pleased.

L Phil 4,4-7.

3. *Responsorial Psalm,
or Advent hymn, e.g., Ye heavens, open, p. 39.*4. *Gospel, introduced by P:*

P We have to prepare our hearts for the coming of the Lord. He comes to us in each of our fellowmen. Every act of social justice, every act of love of neighbor the Lord considers as having been done to himself. Love and justice open our hearts for the Spirit of God, that he may take his dwelling in us. He is our assurance, the pledge that we shall finally meet the Lord in his glory.

D Lk 3, 10-18.

*Readings for the Fourth Sunday in Advent.*2. *Reading, introduced by P:*

P Only a few days separate us from the feast of the Nativity. The manger is being prepared. The poverty of the stable reminds us that the Lord came to save us by spending his life in hardships and difficulties and finally shedding his blood. In the moment when he entered the world, he declared that he was willing to give himself for us. "Christ gave his life for us. We too, then, ought to give our lives for our brothers" (1 Jn 3,16).

L Hb 10,5-10.

3. *Responsorial Psalm,*
or *Advent hymn, e.g., Ye heavens, open, p. 39.*

4. *Gospel, introducing by P:*

P Without being told to come to the aid of her elderly relative Elizabeth who was in the family way, Our Lady "went with haste" to her town and served her for three months until St. John the Baptist was born. Mary was fully aware during this time that she was the mother of the Messiah. But she remained the humble "handmaid of the Lord." She was the worthy mother of him who later on said that he had not come to be served, but to serve. What Mary did we have to do too. In the service of one another we have to bring the Savior to the world.

D Lk 1,39-45.

D 5. *Homily or explanation of the readings.*

D 6. *Apostles' Creed or Nicene Creed.*

III. PRAYER SERVICE

1. *Prayer for forgiveness.*

D Just and merciful God! Everything lies bare and open before your eyes, also our shortcomings and sins. Therefore, we confess our sins before you and ask for your forgiveness:

P for the disdain of the word of God (*silence*)
for our negligence in prayer
for our indifference and laziness in Christian life
for our laxity in the attendance in worship and in the reception of
the sacraments
for our disinterest in the task of the community
for our dissensions in our families and with our neighbors
for our intransigence and rash judgment
for our envy and jealousy
for our backbiting and bad example

D I confess (*all together*)

D Lord, instill in our hearts the holy fear of your coming judgment. Let us remember that the hour has come to get up from sleep, to lay aside the works of darkness and to put on the armor of light. We want to be eager in awaiting the coming of the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you for ever and ever.

A Amen.

P *Hymn: On Jordan's Bank, p. 49.*

2. *Mutual Charity*

D Having obtained forgiveness from God and from one another, we are aware that we are brothers and sisters in Christ, who have to help one another. We are aware that we are one in Christ, in his holy Church, to whom we belong as branches of the Vine. Therefore, let us now bring our gifts, for the welfare of our poor brothers and sisters and for the Church that she may be able to fulfill the tasks entrusted to her by the Lord our God. (*silence*)

Now the collection is taken up by an usher or the sacristan.

3. *Praise and Thanksgiving*

D Lord, heavenly Father, in the name of Jesus, your Son and our brother we came here together, as the little community of N.N. We stand here also for those who could not come and those who do not want to come.

We are in union with our parish priest N.N., with our bishop N.N., with our Holy Father, Pope Paul and all who hold and teach the the faith that comes to us from the apostles.

We are also united with our deceased relatives and friends, who are still in purgatory. We know we live in the communion of all the angels and Saints, particularly with Mary, the Mother of our Lord and God, with St. John the Baptist, and the holy prophets. In all of them pulses the same divine life. Together with all of them we give you thanks for what you have done for us and our salvation.

P For your decision to send us a Savior and Redeemer after we sinned we praise you.

A We thank you, O Lord, we thank you.

P For the election of Abraham our father in faith and the promises you made to him, we praise you.

A We thank you, O Lord, we thank you.

P For the prophecy to David the king and for all prophecies concerning the coming of the Messiah, we praise you.

A We thank you, O Lord, we thank you.

P For the sending of John the Baptist who prepared the people for the coming of your Son, we praise you.

A We thank you, O Lord, we thank you.

P For choosing from all eternity Mary to be the Mother of your Son and our mother too, we praise you.

A We thank you, O Lord, we thank you.

P For the promise to send Jesus Christ at the end of time to judge the living and the dead, we praise you.

A We thank you, O Lord, we thank you.

P For your power to bring about everything you planned in your wisdom and love for us, we praise you.

A We thank you, O Lord, we thank you.

D You are the Holy One. You are the Lord. You are the Most High. To you be glory, might and praise, now and ever and world without end.

A Amen.

P *Hymn:* Wake, awake, p. 46.

4. *Intercessions.*

D Let us pray for God's mercy for the whole world. First we pray for our *families*:

- P for concord among ourselves, (*silence*)
for the parents who are worried about their children,
for the faith of our children.
Lord, hear our prayer
- A And let my cry come to you.
- D Let us pray for all the people of our *barrio* (town, etc.):
- P For our sick, especially N. and N., (*silence*)
for the old and the lonely,
for our separated brethren,
for all those of little faith, those without faith and those who are
hostile to the faith.
Lord, hear our prayer
- A And let my cry come to you.
- D Let us pray for the *Church* and the whole *world*:
- P for freedom for the Church, (*silence*)
for the salvation and well-being of our people,
for peace in the world.
Lord, hear our prayer
- A And let my cry come to you.
- D O Lord, you see our weakness and our needs. Rouse up your
power and come to save us. You are the salvation and the peace
of the world. To you be glory for ever and ever.
- A Amen.

IV. COMMUNION SERVICE

- D We are called God's children, and in fact we are. We say there-
fore in confidence:
- A Our Father . . .
- D Deliver us, Lord, from every evil . . .
for the coming of our Savior Jesus Christ.
- A For the kingdom, the power and the glory are yours,
now and for ever.

- D This is the Lamb of God . . .
- A Lord, I am not worthy . . .
Before giving Communion to others, D may take Communion himself saying in a low voice:
- D May the Body of Christ bring me to everlasting life.
He says to each one who receives holy Communion:
- D The Body of Christ.
Thanksgiving after Communion
Meditative Prayer
- P Lord Jesus Christ, you live in the midst of our community where we find shelter (*silence*)
 You are our light in the darkness of the world
 You are our refuge when we have sinned
 You are our peace and our reconciliation
 Stay with us! Lead us to the Father into the kingdom of glory!
Hymn: Creator of the stars, p. 35.

V. BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

If there are any brief announcements, they are made at this time.
Petition for Blessing.

- P Let us stand and close this meeting with the petition for God's blessing!
- D May the Lord bless us and protect us!
 May he let shine his face upon us and be gracious to us!
 May almighty God bless us all here present.
 the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.
- A Amen.
- A Greeting of Our Lady (*hymn*).