

# A Reconciling Community Prays

*“We have come to know and to believe in the love God has for us. God is love; and whoever remains in love remains in God and God in him.”*

1 John 4:16

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

**ALL:** Amen

**Leader:** The Grace and Peace of God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ is with us.

**ALL:** Blessed be God forever.

## Opening Prayer

**Leader:** Lord God, Source of Love and Mercy,

In the plan of your providence you have revealed the boundlessness of your love in every generation. Remember your compassion and guide our hearts with your Spirit so that we may grow in faithfulness and seek you in all that we say and do. We ask this through Christ our Lord.

**ALL:** Amen

## The Word of God

Isaiah 55:6-12

**Brothers and Sisters let us listen to the words of the Prophet Isaiah:**

Seek the LORD while he may be found, call him while he is near. Let the scoundrel forsake his way, and the wicked man his thoughts; Let him turn to the LORD for mercy; to our God, who is generous in forgiving. For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways, says the LORD. As high as the heavens are above the earth, so high are my ways above your ways and my thoughts above your thoughts. For just as from the heavens the rain and snow come down and do not return there till they have watered the earth, making it fertile and fruitful, giving seed to him who sows and bread to him who eats, so shall my word be that goes forth from my mouth; It shall not return to me void, but shall do my will, achieving the end for which I sent it. Yes, in joy you shall depart, in peace you shall be brought back.

*(A moment of silence follows the scripture.)*

## Response

Psalm 25

**ALL:** I lift up my soul to my God.

**Reader:** In you I trust; do not let me be disgraced; do not let my enemies gloat over me. No one is disgraced who waits for you, but only those who lightly break faith.

**ALL:** I lift up my soul to my God.

**Reader:** Make known to me your ways, LORD; teach me your paths. Guide me in your truth and teach me, for you are God my savior.

For you I wait all the long day, because of your goodness, LORD.

**ALL:** I lift up my soul to my God.

**Reader:** Remember your compassion and love, O LORD; for they are ages old.  
Remember no more the sins of my youth; remember me only in light of your love.

**ALL:** I lift up my soul to my God.

**Reader:** Look upon me, have pity on me, for I am alone and afflicted.  
Relieve the troubles of my heart; bring me out of my distress.  
Put an end to my affliction and suffering; take away all my sins.

**ALL:** I lift up my soul to my God.

## Gospel

Luke 19:1-10

He came to Jericho and intended to pass through the town. Now a man there named Zacchaeus, who was a chief tax collector and also a wealthy man, was seeking to see who Jesus was; but he could not see him because of the crowd, for he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree in order to see Jesus, who was about to pass that way. When he reached the place, Jesus looked up and said to him, "Zacchaeus, come down quickly, for today I must stay at your house." And he came down quickly and received him with joy. When they all saw this, they began to grumble, saying, "He has gone to stay at the house of a sinner." But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, "Behold, half of my possessions, Lord, I shall give to the poor, and if I have extorted anything from anyone I shall repay it four times over." And Jesus said to him, "Today salvation has come to this house because this man too is a descendant of Abraham. For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save what was lost."



## Reflection

**Reader:** In every generation the Lord inspires the hearts of men and women to seek and call upon his name. In doing so God's providential mercy and love is generous beyond any human measure. For God's way are not human ways. We see the human way in the zeal for the Lord in the story of Zacchaeus, a wealthy and influential tax collector, who abandons all propriety and climbs a tree in order to get a glimpse of the Lord for whom his heart longed. Jesus finds Zeccheaus in the tree and rewards his zeal by saying, "come down, for today I must stay at your house."

Christ's way is to enter the hearts and home of all who welcome him. This reminds us that sometimes our first steps toward the Lord in repentance may seem "out on the limb" by human standards, but by God's standards the first step in a long succession of steps in the eternal relationship to which God calls all of us.

## Faith Sharing

- Recall a time when you went “out on a limb” to find Jesus. Who or what changed the situation for you?
- Think of a concrete action where you or your faith community can be the healing and reconciling presence of Christ for others? Share a story of reconciliation that touched you?
- How does this Gospel message of reconciliation challenge you and your faith community to heal divisions amid your parish, neighborhoods, families and world?



## Intercessions

**Leader:** Lord Jesus, you came into the world to seek and save what was lost, hear the prayer that we offer to you this day.

**Reader:** **Response: LORD HEAR OUR PRAYER**

**Reader:** For the Church, that like Zacchaeus, we may go out on the limb to be a reconciling presence of the Christ in our parish, families, neighborhoods and world, let us pray to the Lord.

**Reader:** For our world, that the divisions that separate us from the “ways of God” may be set aside so that the true peace and unity of Christ may prevail, let us pray to the Lord.

**Reader:** For what else shall we pray?

## The Lord’s Prayer

**Leader:** Gathering these and all of the prayers in our hearts, let us pray for God’s peace and mercy in the words that Jesus taught us... Our Father...

## Peace

**Leader:** Please share a sign of Christian peace.