

The 1928 Book of Common Prayer: The Standard Book

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The Thanksgiving of Women after Child-birth

Commonly called the Churching of Women.

¶ This Service, or the concluding prayer alone, as it stands among the Occasional Prayers and Thanksgivings, may be used at the discretion of the Minister.

¶ The Woman, at the usual time after her delivery, shall come into the Church decently apparelled, and there shall kneel down in some convenient place as hath been accustomed, or as the Ordinary shall direct.

¶ The Minister shall then say unto her,

FORASMUCH as it hath pleased Almighty God, of his goodness, to give you safe deliverance, and to preserve you in the great danger of Child-birth; you shall therefore give hearty thanks unto God, and say,

¶ Then shall be said by both of them the following Hymn, the Woman still kneeling.

Dilexi, quoniam. Psalm cxvi.

MY delight is in the LORD; because he hath heard the voice of my prayer;

Because he hath inclined his ear unto me; therefore will I call upon him as long as I live.

I found trouble and heaviness; then called I upon the Name of the LORD; O LORD, I beseech thee, deliver my soul.

Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.

What reward shall I give unto the LORD for all the benefits that he hath done unto me?

I will receive the cup of salvation, and call upon the Name of the LORD.

I will pay my vows now in the presence of all his people,

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in the courts of the LORD's house; even in the midst of thee, O Jerusalem. Praise the LORD.

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;

As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

¶ Then shall the Minister say the Lord's Prayer, with what followeth: but the Lord's Prayer may be omitted, if this be used with the Morning or Evening Prayer.

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. Amen.

Minister. O Lord, save this woman thy servant;

Answer. Who putteth her trust in thee.

Minister. Be thou to her a strong tower;

Answer. From the face of her enemy.

Minister. Lord, hear our prayer.

Answer. And let our cry come unto thee.

Minister. Let us pray.

O ALMIGHTY God, we give thee humble thanks for that thou hast been graciously pleased to preserve, through the great pain and peril of child-birth, this woman, thy servant, who desireth now to offer her praises and thanks-givings unto thee. Grant, we beseech thee, most merciful Father, that she, through thy help, may faithfully live according to thy will in this life, and also may be partaker of everlasting glory in the life to come; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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¶ Then may be said,

GRANT, we beseech thee, O heavenly Father, that the child of this thy servant may daily increase in wisdom and stature, and grow in thy love and service, until *he* come to thy eternal joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ The Woman, that cometh to give her Thanks, must offer accustomed offerings, which shall be applied by the Minister and the Churchwardens to the relief of distressed women in child-bed; and if there be a Communion, it is convenient that she receive the Holy Communion.

The Order for the Visitation of the Sick

¶ The following Service, or any part thereof, may be used at the discretion of the Minister.

¶ When any person is sick, notice shall be given thereof to the Minister of the Parish; who, coming into the sick person's presence, shall say, PEACE be to this house, and to all that dwell in it.

¶ After which he shall say the Antiphon following, and then, according to his discretion, one of the Penitential Psalms.

Antiphon. Remember not, Lord, our iniquities; Nor the iniquities of our forefathers.

¶ Then the Minister shall say,

Let us pray.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Lord, have mercy upon us.

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. Amen.

Minister. O Lord, save thy servant;

Answer. Who putteth *his* trust in thee.

Minister. Send *him* help from thy holy place;

Answer. And evermore mightily defend *him*.

Minister. Let the enemy have no advantage of *him*;

Answer. Nor the wicked approach to hurt *him*.

Minister. Be unto *him*, O Lord, a strong tower;

Answer. From the face of *his* enemy.

Minister. O Lord, hear our prayer.

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Answer. And let our cry come unto thee.

Minister.

O LORD, look down from heaven, behold, visit, and relieve this thy servant. Look upon *him* with the eyes of thy mercy, give *him* comfort and sure confidence in thee, defend *him* in all danger, and keep *him* in perpetual peace and safety; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ Here may be said any one or more of the Psalms following, with Antiphon and Collect.

Antiphon. I did call upon the LORD with my voice; And he heard me out of his holy hill.

Domine, quid multiplicati? Psalm iii.

LORD, how are they increased that trouble me! many are they that rise against me.

Many one there be that say of my soul, There is no help for him in his God.

But thou, O LORD, art my defender; thou art my worship, and the lifter up of my head.

I did call upon the LORD with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill.

I laid me down and slept, and rose up again; for the LORD sustained me.

Salvation belongeth unto the LORD; and thy blessing is upon thy people.

The Collect.

HEAR us, Almighty and most merciful God and Saviour; extend thy accustomed goodness to this thy servant who is grieved with sickness. Visit *him*, O Lord, with thy loving mercy, and so restore *him* to *his* former health, that *he* may give thanks unto thee in thy holy Church; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

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Antiphon. I will go unto the altar of God; Unto the God of my joy and gladness.

Judica me, Deus. Psalm xliii.

GIVE sentence with me, O God, and defend my cause against the ungodly people; O deliver me from the deceitful and wicked man.

For thou art the God of my strength; why hast thou put me from thee? and why go I so heavily, while the enemy oppresseth me?

O send out thy light and thy truth, that they may lead me, and bring me unto thy holy hill, and to thy dwelling;

And that I may go unto the altar of God, even unto the God of my joy and gladness; and upon the harp will I give thanks unto thee, O God, my God.

Why art thou so heavy, O my soul? and why art thou so disquieted within me?

O put thy trust in God; for I will yet give him thanks, which is the help of my countenance, and my God.

The Collect.

SANCTIFY, we beseech thee, O Lord, the sickness of this thy servant; that the sense of *his* weakness may add strength to *his* faith, and seriousness to *his* repentance; and grant that *he* may dwell with thee in life everlasting; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Antiphon. I have considered the days of old; And the years that are past.

Voce mea ad Dominum. Psalm lxxvii.

I WILL cry unto God with my voice; even unto God will I cry with my voice, and he shall hearken unto me.

In the time of my trouble I sought the Lord: I stretched

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forth my hands unto him, and ceased not in the night season; my soul refused comfort.

When I am in heaviness, I will think upon God; when my heart is vexed, I will complain.

Thou holdest mine eyes waking: I am so feeble that I cannot speak.

I have considered the days of old, and the years that are past.

I call to remembrance my song, and in the night I commune with mine own heart, and search out my spirit.

Will the Lord absent himself for ever? and will he be no more intreated?

Is his mercy clean gone for ever? and is his promise come utterly to an end for evermore?

Hath God forgotten to be gracious? and will he shut up his loving-kindness in displeasure?

And I said, It is mine own infirmity; but I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most Highest.

The Collect.

HEAR, O Lord, we beseech thee, these our prayers, as we call upon thee on behalf of this thy servant; and bestow upon *him* the help of thy merciful consolation; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Antiphon. Though I walk in the midst of trouble; Yet shalt thou refresh me.

Confitebor tibi. Psalm cxxxviii.

I WILL give thanks unto thee, O Lord, with my whole heart; even before the gods will I sing praise unto thee.

I will worship toward thy holy temple, and praise thy Name, because of thy loving-kindness and truth; for thou hast magnified thy Name, and thy word, above all things.

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When I called upon thee, thou heardest me; and enduedst my soul with much strength.

Though I walk in the midst of trouble, yet shalt thou refresh me; thou shalt stretch forth thy hand upon the furiousness of mine enemies, and thy right hand shall save me.

The LORD shall make good his loving-kindness toward me; yea, thy mercy, O LORD, endureth for ever; despise not then the works of thine own hands.

The Collect.

O GOD, the strength of the weak and the comfort of sufferers; Mercifully accept our prayers, and grant to thy servant the help of thy power, that *his* sickness may be turned into health, and our sorrow into joy; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Antiphon. The LORD saveth thy life from destruction; And crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness.

Benedic, anima mea. Psalm ciii.

PRAISE the LORD, O my soul; and all that is within me, praise his holy Name.

Praise the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits:

Who forgiveth all thy sin, and healeth all thine infirmities;

Who saveth thy life from destruction, and crowneth thee with mercy and loving-kindness.

O praise the LORD, ye angels of his, ye that excel in strength; ye that fulfil his commandment, and hearken unto the voice of his word.

O praise the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye servants of his that do his pleasure.

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O speak good of the LORD, all ye works of his, in all places of his dominion: praise thou the LORD, O my soul.

The Collect.

ACCEPT, we beseech thee, merciful Lord, the devout praise of thy humble servant; and grant *him* an abiding sense of thy loving-kindness; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

¶ Any of the following Psalms, 20, 27, 42, 91, 121, 146, may, at the discretion of the Minister, be substituted for any of those given above.

¶ Here shall be said,

O SAVIOUR of the world, who by thy Cross and precious Blood hast redeemed us; Save us, and help us, we humbly beseech thee, O Lord.

¶ As occasion demands, the Minister shall address the sick person on the meaning and use of the time of sickness, and the opportunity it affords for spiritual profit.

¶ Here may the Minister inquire of the sick person as to his acceptance of the Christian Faith, and as to whether he repent him truly of his sins, and be in charity with all the world; exhorting him to forgive, from the bottom of his heart, all persons that have offended him; and if he hath offended any other, to ask them forgiveness; and where he hath done injury or wrong to any man, that he make amends to the uttermost of his power.

¶ Then shall the sick person be moved to make a special confession of his sins, if he feel his conscience troubled with any matter; after which confession, on evidence of his repentance, the Minister shall assure him of God's mercy and forgiveness.

¶ Then the Minister shall say,

Let us pray.

O MOST merciful God, who, according to the multitude of thy mercies, dost so put away the sins of those who truly repent, that thou rememberest them no more; Open thine eye of mercy upon this thy servant,

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who most earnestly desireth pardon and forgiveness. Renew in *him*, most loving Father, whatsoever hath been decayed by the fraud and malice of the devil, or by *his* own carnal will and frailness; preserve and continue this sick member in the unity of the Church; consider *his* contrition, accept *his* tears, assuage *his* pain, as shall seem to thee most expedient for *him*. And forasmuch as *he* putteth *his* full trust only in thy mercy, impute not unto *him* *his* former sins, but strengthen him with thy blessed Spirit; and, when thou art pleased to take *him* hence, take *him* unto thy favour; through the merits of thy most dearly beloved Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*.

¶ Then shall the Minister say,

THE Almighty Lord, who is a most strong tower to all those who put their trust in him, to whom all things in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, do bow and obey; Be now and evermore thy defence; and make thee know and feel, that there is none other Name under heaven given to man, in whom, and through whom, thou mayest receive health and salvation, but only the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ. *Amen*.

¶ Here the Minister may use any part of the service of the Book, which, in his discretion, he shall think convenient to the occasion; and after that shall say,

UNTO God's gracious mercy and protection we commit thee. The LORD bless thee, and keep thee. The Lord make his face to shine upon thee, and be gracious unto thee. The LORD lift up his countenance upon thee, and give thee peace, both now and evermore. *Amen*.

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PRAYERS.

¶ These Prayers may be said with the foregoing Service, or any part thereof, at the discretion of the Minister.

A Prayer for Recovery.

O GOD of heavenly powers, who, by the might of thy command, drivest away from men's bodies all sickness and all infirmity; Be present in thy goodness with this thy servant, that *his* weakness may be banished and *his* strength recalled; that *his* health being thereupon restored, *he* may bless thy holy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer for Healing.

O ALMIGHTY God, who art the giver of all health, and the aid of them that turn to thee for succour; We entreat thy strength and goodness in behalf of this thy servant, that *he* may be healed of *his* infirmities, to thine honour and glory; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Thanksgiving for the Beginning of a Recovery.

GREAT and mighty God, who bringest down to the grave, and bringest up again; We bless thy wonderful goodness, for having turned our heaviness into joy and our mourning into gladness, by restoring this our *brother* to some degree of *his* former health. Blessed be thy Name that thou didst not forsake *him* in *his* sickness; but didst visit *him* with comforts from above; didst support *him* in patience and submission to thy will; and at last didst send *him* seasonable relief. Perfect, we beseech thee, this thy mercy towards *him*; and prosper the means which shall be made use of for *his* cure: that, being restored to health of body, vigour of mind, and cheerfulness of spirit, *he* may be able to go to thine house, to offer thee an oblation with great gladness, and to bless thy holy Name for all thy

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goodness towards *him*; through Jesus Christ our Saviour, to whom, with thee and the Holy Spirit, be all honour and glory, world without end. *Amen.*

A Prayer for a Sick Person, when there appeareth but small hope of Recovery.

OFATHER of mercies, and God of all comfort, our only help in time of need; We fly unto thee for succour in behalf of this thy servant, here lying in great weakness of body. Look graciously upon *him*, O Lord; and the more the outward man decayeth, strengthen *him*, we beseech thee, so much the more continually with thy grace and Holy Spirit in the inner man. Give *him* unfeigned repentance for all the errors of *his* life past, and stedfast faith in thy Son Jesus; that *his* sins may be done away by thy mercy, and *his* pardon sealed in heaven; through the same thy Son, our Lord and Saviour. *Amen.*

A Prayer for the Despondent.

COMFORT, we beseech thee, most gracious God, this thy servant, cast down and faint of heart amidst the sorrows and difficulties of the world; and grant that, by the power of thy Holy Spirit, he may be enabled to go upon *his* way rejoicing, and give thee continual thanks for thy sustaining providence; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

A Prayer which may be said by the Minister in behalf of all present at the Visitation.

OGOD, whose days are without end, and whose mercies cannot be numbered; Make us, we beseech thee, deeply sensible of the shortness and uncertainty of human life; and let thy Holy Spirit lead us in holiness and righteousness, all our days: that, when we shall have served thee

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in our generation, we may be gathered unto our fathers, having the testimony of a good conscience; in the communion of the Catholic Church; in the confidence of a certain faith; in the comfort of a reasonable, religious, and holy hope; in favour with thee our God, and in perfect charity with the world. All which we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

*A Commendatory Prayer for a Sick Person
at the point of Departure.*

O ALMIGHTY God, with whom do live the spirits of just men made perfect, after they are delivered from their earthly prisons; We humbly commend the soul of this thy servant, our dear *brother*, into thy hands, as into the hands of a faithful Creator, and most merciful Saviour; beseeching thee, that it may be precious in thy sight. Wash it, we pray thee, in the blood of that immaculate Lamb, that was slain to take away the sins of the world; that whatsoever defilements it may have contracted, through the lusts of the flesh or the wiles of Satan, being purged and done away, it may be presented pure and without spot before thee; through the merits of Jesus Christ thine only Son our Lord. *Amen.*

LITANY FOR THE DYING.

O GOD the Father;
Have mercy upon the soul of thy servant.

O God the Son;
Have mercy upon the soul of thy servant.

O God the Holy Ghost;
Have mercy upon the soul of thy servant.

O holy Trinity, one God;
Have mercy upon the soul of thy servant.

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From all evil, from all sin, from all tribulation;

Good Lord, deliver him.

By thy holy Incarnation, by thy Cross and Passion, by thy precious Death and Burial;

Good Lord, deliver him.

By thy glorious Resurrection and Ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost;

Good Lord, deliver him.

We sinners do beseech thee to hear us, O Lord God; That it may please thee to deliver the soul of thy servant from the power of the evil one, and from eternal death;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee mercifully to pardon all *his* sins.

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to grant *him* a place of refreshment and everlasting blessedness;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

That it may please thee to give *him* joy and gladness in thy kingdom, with thy saints in light;

We beseech thee to hear us, good Lord.

O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world;

Have mercy upon him.

O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world;

Have mercy upon him.

O Lamb of God, who takest away the sins of the world;

Grant him thy peace.

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

OUR Father, who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, On earth as it

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is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, But deliver us from evil. Amen.

Let us pray.

O SOVEREIGN Lord, who desirest not the death of a sinner; We beseech thee to loose the spirit of this thy servant from every bond, and set *him* free from all evil; that *he* may rest with all thy saints in the eternal habitations; through Jesus Christ our Lord, who liveth and reigneth with thee and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

An Absolution to be said by the Priest.

THE Almighty and merciful Lord grant thee pardon and remission of all thy sins, and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

A Commendation.

DEPART, O Christian soul, out of this world,
In the Name of God the Father Almighty who created thee.

In the Name of Jesus Christ who redeemed thee.

In the Name of the Holy Ghost who sanctifieth thee.

May thy rest be this day in peace, and thy dwelling-place in the Paradise of God.

A Commendatory Prayer when the Soul is Departed.

INTO thy hands, O merciful Saviour, we commend the soul of thy servant, now departed from the body. Acknowledge, we humbly beseech thee, a sheep of thine own fold, a lamb of thine own flock, a sinner of thine own redeeming. Receive him into the arms of thy mercy, into

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the blessed rest of everlasting peace, and into the glorious company of the saints in light. Amen.

UNCTION OF THE SICK.

¶ When any sick person shall in humble faith desire the ministry of healing through Anointing or Laying on of Hands, the Minister may use such portion of the foregoing Office as he shall think fit, and the following:

O BLESSED Redeemer, relieve, we beseech thee, by thy indwelling power, the distress of this thy servant; release *him* from sin, and drive away all pain of soul and body, that being restored to soundness of health, *he* may offer thee praise and thanksgiving; who livest and reignest with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one God, world without end. *Amen.*

I ANOINT thee with oil (or I lay my hand upon thee), In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; beseeching the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all thy pain and sickness of body being put to flight, the blessing of health may be restored unto thee. *Amen.*

¶ The Minister is ordered, from time to time, to advise the People, whilst they are in health, to make Wills arranging for the disposal of their temporal goods, and, when of ability, to leave Bequests for religious and charitable uses.

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¶ Forasmuch as all mortal men are subject to many sudden perils, diseases and sicknesses, and ever uncertain what time they shall depart out of this life; therefore, to the intent they may be always in readiness to die, whensoever it shall please Almighty God to call them, the Ministers shall diligently from time to time, but especially in the time of pestilence, or other infectious sickness, exhort their parishioners to the often receiving of the Holy Communion of the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ, when it shall be publicly administered in the Church; that so doing, they may, in case of sudden visitation, have the less cause to be disquieted for lack of the same. But if the sick person be not able to come to the Church, and yet is desirous to receive the Communion in his house; then he must give timely notice to the Minister, signifying also how many there are to communicate with him; and all things necessary being prepared, the Minister shall there celebrate the Holy Communion, beginning with the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel, here following.

The Collect.

ALMIGHTY, everliving God, Maker of mankind, who dost correct those whom thou dost love, and chastise every one whom thou dost receive; We beseech thee to have mercy upon this thy servant visited with thine hand, and to grant that *he* may take *his* sickness patiently, and recover *his* bodily health, if it be thy gracious will; and that, whensoever *his* soul shall depart from the body, it may be without spot presented unto thee; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Epistle. Hebrews xii. 5.

MY son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

The Gospel. St. John v. 24.

VERILY, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath ever-

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lasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

¶ Or the following Collect, Epistle, and Gospel.

The Collect.

OLORD, holy Father, by whose loving-kindness our souls and bodies are renewed; Mercifully look upon this thy servant, that, every cause of sickness being removed, he may be restored to soundness of health; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

The Epistle. 1 St. John v. 13.

THESSE things have I written unto you that believe on the name of the Son of God; that ye may know that ye have eternal life, and that ye may believe on the name of the Son of God. And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask any thing according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hear us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.

The Gospel. St. John vi. 47.

JESUS said, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life. I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.

¶ After which the Minister shall proceed according to the form before prescribed for the Holy Communion, beginning at these words, Ye who do truly, etc.

¶ At the time of the distribution of the holy Sacrament, the Minister shall first receive the Communion himself, and after minister unto

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those who are appointed to communicate with the sick, and last of all to the sick person.

¶ When circumstances render it expedient to shorten the Service, the following form shall suffice:

The Confession and the Absolution; Lift up your hearts, etc., through the Sanctus; The Prayer of Consecration, ending with these words, partakers of his most blessed Body and Blood; The Prayer of Humble Access; The Communion; The Lord's Prayer; The Blessing. And NOTE, That for the Confession and Absolution the following may be used.

The Confession.

O ALMIGHTY Father, Lord of heaven and earth, we confess that we have sinned against thee in thought, word, and deed. Have mercy upon us, O God, after thy great goodness; according to the multitude of thy mercies, do away our offences and cleanse us from our sins; for Jesus Christ's sake. *Amen.*

The Absolution.

THE Almighty and merciful Lord grant you Absolution and Remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. *Amen.*

¶ But if a man, either by reason of extremity of sickness, or for want of warning in due time to the Minister, or by any other just impediment, do not receive the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood, the Minister shall instruct him, that if he do truly repent him of his sins, and stedfastly believe that Jesus Christ hath suffered death upon the Cross for him, and shed his Blood for his redemption, earnestly remembering the benefits he hath thereby, and giving him hearty thanks therefor, he doth eat and drink the Body and Blood of our Saviour Christ profitably to his soul's health, although he do not receive the Sacrament with his mouth.

¶ This Office may be used with aged and bed-ridden persons, or such as are not able to attend the public Ministration in Church, substituting the Collect, Epistle, and Gospel for the Day, for those appointed above.