

# *Psalms & Songs of Mercy*

Martin Foster

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This collection has as its starting point the Year of Mercy which begins on 8 December 2015. Many of the pieces are based on passages highlighted in Pope Francis' *Misericordiae Vultus*. They are intended to be used whenever a community's liturgy and prayer reflect on God's mercy. The psalms could be used at both Penitential Services and Rites of Penance — Psalm 135 which does not occur in the Sunday Eucharist could be used as a song of thanksgiving. Further pieces will be available on the Bear Music website [www.bearmusic.info]

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# Remember your mercy, Lord

## Psalm 24 (25)

Music by Martin Foster

Re - mem - ber your mer - cy, O Lord, and the love you have shown from of old.

1. Lord, make me know your ways.  
Lord, teach me your paths.  
Make me walk in your truth, and teach me  
for you are God my saviour.
2. Remember your mercy, Lord,  
and the love you have shown from of old.  
Do not remember the sins of my youth  
In your love remember me,  
because of your goodness, O Lord.
3. The Lord is good and upright.  
He shows the path to those who stray,  
he guides the humble in the right path;  
he teaches his way to the poor.

Psalm 24 (25):4–9 R̄. v.6

- cf. 26th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

In this Jubilee Year, may the Church echo the word of God that resounds strong and clear as a message and a sign of pardon, strength, aid, and love. May she never tire of extending mercy, and be ever patient in offering compassion and comfort. May the Church become the voice of every man and woman, and repeat confidently without end: “Be mindful of your mercy, O Lord, and your steadfast love, for they have been from of old” [MV25]

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# The Lord is compassion and love

## Psalm 102

Music by Martin Foster

The Lord is com-pas-sion and love, — slow to an-ger and rich — in mer-cy. — mer-cy. —

Final

The first system of the musical score consists of three staves. The top staff is the vocal line, the middle is the right-hand piano accompaniment, and the bottom is the left-hand piano accompaniment. The music is in 6/8 time and the key signature has three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat). The lyrics are written below the vocal line. A 'Final' bracket is placed over the last few notes of the vocal line.

The second system of the musical score consists of three staves, continuing the vocal line, right-hand piano accompaniment, and left-hand piano accompaniment from the first system. The lyrics are not present in this system.

1. My soul, give thanks to the Lord,  
all my being bless his holy name.  
My soul, give thanks to the Lord  
and never forget all his blessings.
2. It is he who forgives all your guilt,  
who heals every one of your ills,  
who redeems your life from the grave,  
who crowns you with love and compassion.
3. His wrath will come to an end;  
he will not be angry for ever.  
He does not treat us according to our sins  
nor repay us according to our faults.
4. For as the heavens are high above the earth  
so strong is his love for those who fear him.  
As far as the east is from the west  
so far does he remove our sins.

Psalm 102 (103): 1–4. 9–12 R̄ v. 8

- 24th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

“Patient and merciful.” These words often go together in the Old Testament to describe God’s nature. His being merciful is concretely demonstrated in his many actions throughout the history of salvation where his goodness prevails over punishment and destruction. In a special way the Psalms bring to the fore the grandeur of his merciful action: “He forgives all your iniquity, he heals all your diseases, he redeems your life from the pit, he crowns you with steadfast love and mercy” (Ps 102:3-4). [MV6]

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For his merciful love lasts for ever

Psalm 135 (136)

Music by Martin Foster

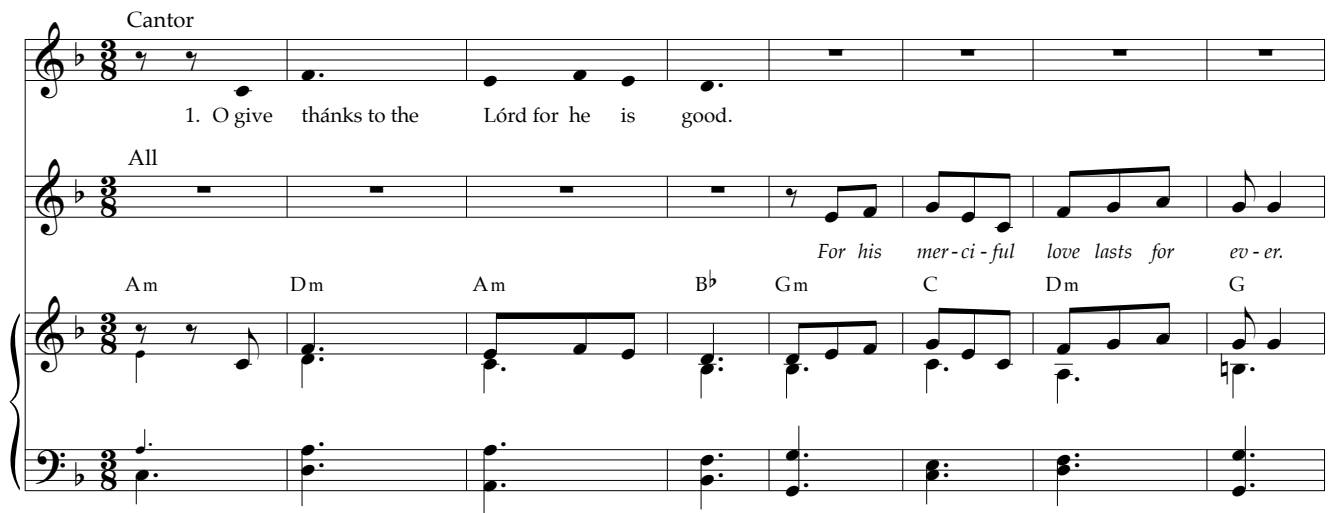
Cantor

1. O give thanks to the Lórd for he is good.

All

For his mer-ci-ful love lasts for ev-er.

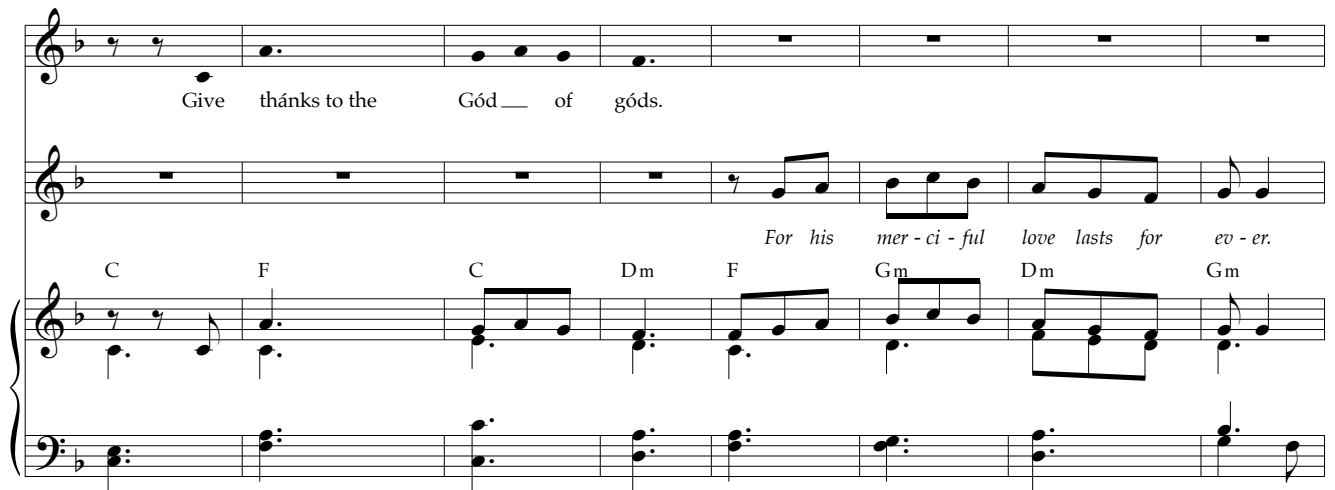
Am Dm Am B $\flat$  Gm C Dm G



Give thanks to the Gód of góds.

For his mer-ci-ful love lasts for ev-er.

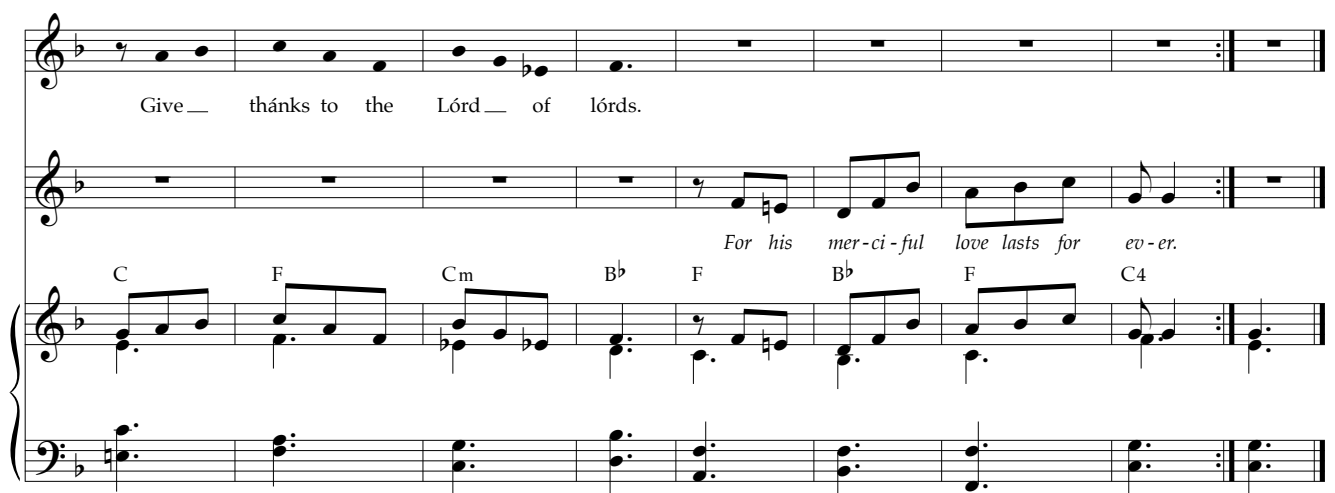
C F C Dm F Gm Dm Gm



Give thanks to the Lórd of lórd.

For his mer-ci-ful love lasts for ev-er.

C F Cm B $\flat$  F B $\flat$  F C4



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- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <p>1. O give <u>thanks</u> to the <u>Lord</u> for he is <u>good</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> Give <u>thanks</u> to the <u>God</u> of <u>gods</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> Give <u>thanks</u> to the <u>Lord</u> of <u>lords</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i></p> <p>2. Who <u>alone</u> has wrought <u>marvellous works</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> Whose <u>wisdom</u> it <u>was</u> made the <u>skies</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> Who <u>fixed</u> the earth <u>firmly</u> on the <u>seas</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i></p> <p>3. It was <u>he</u> who <u>made</u> the great <u>lights</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> The <u>sun</u> to <u>rule</u> in the <u>day</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> The <u>moon</u> and the <u>stars</u> in the <u>night</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i></p> <p>4. The first-<u>born</u> of the <u>Egyptians</u> he <u>smote</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> He brought <u>Israel</u> <u>out</u> from their <u>midst</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> Arm <u>outstretched</u>, with <u>power</u> in his <u>hand</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i></p> <p>5. He <u>divided</u> the <u>Red Sea</u> in <u>two</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> He made <u>Israel</u> <u>pass</u> through the <u>midst</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> He flung <u>Pharaoh</u> and his <u>force</u> in the <u>sea</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i></p> | <p>6. Through the <u>desert</u> his <u>people</u> he <u>led</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> <u>Nations</u> in their <u>greatness</u> he <u>struck</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> <u>Kings</u> in their <u>splendour</u> he <u>slew</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i></p> <p>7. <u>Sihon</u>, <u>king</u> of the <u>Amorites</u>, [B]<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> And <u>Og</u>, the <u>king</u> of <u>Bashan</u>, [C]<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i></p> <p>8. He let <u>Israel</u> <u>inherit</u> their <u>land</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> On his <u>servant</u> their <u>land</u> he <u>bestowed</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> He <u>remembered</u> <u>us</u> in our <u>distress</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i></p> <p>9. And he <u>snatched</u> us <u>away</u> from our <u>foes</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> He gives <u>food</u> to <u>all</u> living <u>things</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> To the <u>God</u> of <u>heaven</u> give <u>thanks</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i></p> <p>10. Give <u>praise</u> to the <u>Father</u> <u>almighty</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> To his <u>Son</u> <u>Jesus Christ</u> the <u>Lord</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i><br/> To the <u>Spirit</u> who <u>dwells</u> in our <u>hearts</u>,<br/> <i>For his merciful love lasts for ever.</i></p> |
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“For his mercy endures forever.” This is the refrain repeated after each verse in Psalm 136 as it narrates the history of God’s revelation. By virtue of mercy, all the events of the Old Testament are replete with profound salvific import. Mercy renders God’s history with Israel a history of salvation. To repeat continually “for his mercy endures forever,” as the psalm does, seems to break through the dimensions of space and time, inserting everything into the eternal mystery of love. It is as if to say that not only in history, but for all eternity man will always be under the merciful gaze of the Father. It is no accident that the people of Israel wanted to include this psalm – the “Great Hallel,” as it is called – in its most important liturgical feast days. [MV7]

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When verse 7 is included it starts on the second line of the music.

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# Blessed are the merciful

## Psalm 145 (146)

Music by Martin Foster

The musical score is written in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. It consists of two systems. The first system has a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The vocal line begins with the lyrics 'Bless - ed are the mer - ci - ful for \_\_\_ they shall re - ceive \_\_\_ mer - cy.' The piano accompaniment features a steady bass line and a treble line with chords. The second system continues the piano accompaniment with more complex chordal textures and a final melodic flourish in the vocal line.

1. It is the Lord who keeps faith for ever,  
who is just to those who are oppressed.  
It is he who gives bread to the hungry,  
the Lord, who sets prisoners free,
2. It is the Lord who gives sight to the blind,  
who raises up those who are bowed down,  
the Lord, who protects the stranger  
and upholds the widow and orphan.
3. It is the Lord who loves the just  
but thwarts the path of the wicked.  
The Lord will reign for ever,  
Zion's God, from age to age.

### Psalm 145 (146): 7-10. R. Matthew 5:7

- cf. 4th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A

Another psalm, in an even more explicit way, attests to the concrete signs of his mercy: "He secures justice for the oppressed; he gives food to the hungry. The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind. The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down; the Lord loves the righteous. The Lord watches over the sojourners, he upholds the widow and the fatherless; but the way of the wicked he brings to ruin" (Ps 145:7-9). In short, the mercy of God is not an abstract idea, but a concrete reality through which he reveals his love as that of a father or a mother, moved to the very depths out of love for their child. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that this is a "visceral" love. It gushes forth from the depths naturally, full of tenderness and compassion, indulgence and mercy. [MV6]

The response taken from the Beatitudes is based on the use of this psalm with the response 'How happy are the poor in spirit...'

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The Lord, a God of mercy and compassion  
 Exodus 34 with verses based on Psalm 50

Martin Foster

$\text{♩} = 84$

The Lord, the Lord, a God of mer-cy and com-

C F C G C G F C Dm C

pas-sion, slow to an-ger, a - boun-ding in love.

G Dm Em Am G4 G C

Last time

Verses *a little faster*

1. Have mer-cy, O God in your kind-ness. In love now blot out my of-fence.  
 2. For tru-ly I know my of-fen-ces; My sin is al-ways be-fore me.  
 3. In-deed you love truth in the heart; and now in my heart teach me wis-dom.  
 4. So give me the joy of your help; and now with your spi-rit sus-tain me.

Am Em Dm G/D Dm Am Em

*rit.* **D.S.**

O wash me from all of my guilt and cleanse me from my sin. The  
 A - gainst you a - lone have I sinned; for in your sight I did ev - il.  
 O cleanse me, O pu - ri - fy me. for I shall be whi-ter than snow.  
 To show to trans-gres-sors your ways and sin - ners re - turn to you.

Dm C F Dm G Em Dm7 G4 G C D.S.

# Rejoice with me

Luke 15

Martin Foster

Capo 1 G Em A D Em A D4 D

Re -

A $\flat$  Fm B $\flat$  E $\flat$  Fm B $\flat$  E $\flat$ 4 E $\flat$

D G A/C# D G A D G Em

joice with me what was lost is found. Re - joice in

E $\flat$  A $\flat$  B $\flat$ /D E $\flat$  A $\flat$  B $\flat$  E $\flat$  A $\flat$  Fm

A D Em A Last time D4 D

heav'n for the mer - cy of God.

B $\flat$  E $\flat$  Fm B $\flat$  Last time E $\flat$ 4 E $\flat$

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Verses  
D4 D Bm Em/G A

God. 1. A sheep which is lost from the flock and the fold.  
 2. A coin which is lost from the mon - ey she saves.  
 3. A son who is lost, who has spent all he can.  
 4. A son stays at home hard at work on the land;  
 5. The an - gels in hea - ven re - joice at the news:

Verses  
E♭4 E♭ Cm Fm/A♭ B♭

D Em A Bm Em A4 A D.S.

Search for the one and — shep - herd him back: for what's lost now is found. Re  
 Look for the coin, light the lamp, sweep the floor: for what's lost now is found. Re  
 Seek out the son on the road com - ing home: for the lost will re - turn. Re  
 does not re - gard that his fa - ther should say that the lost now shall live. Re  
 sin - ners find mer - cy, re - turn to God's love: for the lost will be found. Re

E♭ Fm B♭ Cm Fm B♭4 B♭ D.S.

In the parables devoted to mercy, Jesus reveals the nature of God as that of a Father who never gives up until he has forgiven the wrong and overcome rejection with compassion and mercy. We know these parables well, three in particular: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and the father with two sons (cf. Lk 15:1-32). In these parables, God is always presented as full of joy, especially when he pardons. In them we find the core of the Gospel and of our faith, because mercy is presented as a force that overcomes everything, filling the heart with love and bringing consolation through pardon. [MV9]

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## Jesus, Son of David

Martin Foster

Dm G B♭ Gm6 A F G7 C Dm/A A4 A Dm

Je - sus, Son of Da - vid, have mer - cy on me. Je - sus Son of Da - vid, have mer - cy on me.

A number of times in the gospels people seek mercy from Jesus hailing him as Son of David. This chant could be used as an ostinato.

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**Introduction**  
♩ = c.56

The musical score is written in 4/4 time with a key signature of two flats (B-flat and E-flat). It begins with an introduction of approximately 56 measures. The first system of music features a vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are: "Je - sus, face of the Fa - ther's mer - cy, look with com - pas - sion, look with love. Je - sus,". The second system continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The third system shows the piano accompaniment continuing. The fourth system is marked "Last time" and features the lyrics "turn your face to us." with a fermata over the word "us". The score concludes with a final piano accompaniment system.

Jesus Christ is the face of the Father's mercy. These words might well sum up the mystery of the Christian faith. Mercy has become living and visible in Jesus of Nazareth, reaching its culmination in him... Whoever sees Jesus sees the Father (cf. Jn 14:9). Jesus of Nazareth, by his words, his actions, and his entire person reveals the mercy of God. [MV1]

The verses offer examples from across the gospels where Jesus looks with mercy/compassion. The last two verses are drawn from Matthew 25. The verse could be sung straight through by a cantor but the choir parts suggest a dialogue with perhaps the last phrase being sung by all.

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Verses

us. 1. To the ones who fol - lowed him; Je - sus looks at them with com -

pas - sion: 'What do you seek? Now come and see.' Lord Je - sus, call our name.

D.S.

D.S.

Additional Verses

2. To the crowds who heard him teach; Je - sus looks at them with com -  
 3. To the wo - men who lost her son; Je - sus looks at her with com -  
 4. To the chil - dren who came to him; Je - sus looks at them with com -  
 5. To the sick man be - side the pool; Je - sus look at him with com -

pas - sion: 'Take bread and fish, e - nough for all.' Lord Je - sus, nou - rish us.  
 pas - sion: 'Weep not, your son shall rise and live.' Lord Je - sus, give us life.  
 pas - sion: 'For bless'd are those who wel - come them.' Lord Je - sus, care for them.  
 pas - sion: 'Take up your bed, get up and walk.' Lord Je - sus, raise us up.

us. 6.To the wo - man they wished — to — stone; Je - sus looks at — her — with com -  
 7.To the sis - ters who bur - ied his friend; Je - sus looks at — them — with com -  
 8.To the thief hung — by — his — side; Je - sus looks at — him — with com -  
 9.To his mo - ther be - side — the — cross; Je - sus looks at — her — with com -

pas - sion: 'No one con - demns you, sin — no more.' Lord — Je - sus, set us free.  
 pas - sion: 'O - pen the tomb, un - bind, — set free.' Lord — Je - sus, call us forth.  
 pas - sion: 'To - day in heav'n you will — come home.' Lord — Je - sus, think of me.  
 pas - sion: 'Be - hold your son, a - bide — with him.' Lord — Je - sus, bring us home.

us. 10.To the stran - ger, the hun - gry, the sick, let us wel - come, — feed - them, —  
 11.To the thir - sty, the na - ked or in pris'n let us help them, — clothe — them, —

care for them. In them we find the face — of Christ. Lord — Je - sus, help us see.  
 vis - it them. For Christ we meet a - mong — the least. Lord — Je - sus, help us see.

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God of com- passion, for- giveness and healing show us your mer- cy, grant pardon and peace.

C G Dm C F C Am G<sub>4</sub> G

1. The Lord is com- pas- sion and love, slow to an- ger and rich in mer- cy.  
 2. As far as east is from west so far does he re- move our sins.  
 3. The love of the Lord lasts for ev- er. My soul give thanks to the Lord.

The Lord is com- pas- sion and love, slow to an- ger and rich in mer- cy.  
 As far as east is from west so far does he re- move our sins.  
 The love of the Lord lasts for ev- er. My soul give thanks to the Lord.

C Dm/C G Am Dm G C F Dm6 C Am G<sub>4</sub> G

The music takes some Handel as its starting point. The refrain may be used on its own as a response or an ostinato. The verses, taken from Psalm 102 (103), are optional and can either be sung in 2 parts or choose one of the parts. They may even be sung over the top of the refrain. Alternatively they may be played by instruments.

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Penitential Act 'Misericordiae Vultus'

Martin Foster

Cantor

[Underneath spoken text - repeat if necessary]

Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy.

Em D Am/C B Em D

Guitars - single strum in these sections

flute

All

Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy. Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy. Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy.

Am B Em D Am B Em

Cantor

[Underneath spoken text - repeat if necessary]

Christ, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy.

D Em D/F# G Am D G/B

All

Christ, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy. Christ, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy. Christ, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy.

Am/C B D G/B Am/C B4 B

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Cantor

[Underneath spoken text - repeat if necessary]

Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy.

Em D Am/C B Em D/F#

All

Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy. Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy. Lord, \_\_\_\_\_ have mer - cy.

Am B Em D/F# Am B Em

Cantor

[Underneath spoken text - repeat as necessary]

A - men, a - men, a -

D Am/C B Am D B

All

men. \_\_\_\_\_ A - men, a - men, a - men. \_\_\_\_\_

Em Am D B Em

The 3rd form of the Penitential Act is a litany of praise for the love and mercy of God. The sentences are praise to Christ for his saving acts of mercy. (cf. *Celebrating the Mass* 145). This may be used with the following invocations:

Lord Jesus, you came to seek out and save what was lost:  
 You gave your life as a ransom for all:  
 You gather together the scattered children of God:

Lord Jesus, you are the image of the unseen God:  
 You are the firstborn of all creation:  
 You are the head of the body, the Church:

Penitential Act 'Misericordiae Vultus'

Choir parts

Martin Foster

Musical score for the first system. It consists of three staves: a vocal staff for the Cantor and two piano accompaniment staves. The time signature is 4/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "Lord, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer-cy." The Cantor part is marked with a '4' above the first measure. The piano accompaniment has a '4' above the first measure. The second system of the piano accompaniment is marked with an 'A' above the first measure.

Musical score for the second system. It consists of three staves: a vocal staff for the Cantor and two piano accompaniment staves. The time signature is 4/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer-cy. Christ, have mer - cy. Christ, have mer-cy." The Cantor part is marked with a '4' above the first measure. The piano accompaniment has a '4' above the first measure.

Musical score for the third system. It consists of three staves: a vocal staff for the Cantor and two piano accompaniment staves. The time signature is 4/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "Lord, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer-cy. Lord, have mer - cy. Lord, have mer-cy." The Cantor part is marked with a '4' above the first measure. The piano accompaniment has a '4' above the first measure. The second system of the piano accompaniment is marked with 'SA' above the first measure.

Musical score for the fourth system. It consists of three staves: a vocal staff for the Cantor and two piano accompaniment staves. The time signature is 3/4. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The lyrics are: "A - men, a - men, a - men. A - men, a - men, a - men." The Cantor part is marked with a '3' above the first measure. The piano accompaniment has a '3' above the first measure. The second system of the piano accompaniment is marked with 'A' above the first measure.

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