

# Resource 1: Opening Prayer Service

**Reading:** Matthew 6:16-18

**Response:** Psalm 51

Reader:

Please respond: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Reader :

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness;  
in the greatness of your compassion wipe out my offense.  
Thoroughly wash me from my guilt  
and of my sin cleanse me.

All: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Reader:

For I acknowledge my offense, and my sin is before me always:  
Against you only have I sinned, and done what is evil in your sight.

All: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Reader:

A clean heart create for me, O God, and a steadfast spirit renew within me.  
Cast me not out from your presence, and your Holy Spirit take not from me.

All: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

Reader:

Give me back the joy of your salvation, and a willing spirit sustain in me.  
O Lord, open my lips, and my mouth shall proclaim your praise.

All: Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

All: Grant us mercy, O God, and out of your kindness show us your love.  
In your compassion forgive the times we have not listened to you or  
followed you. Create a pure heart inside us. Do not send us away from where  
you are. Send your Holy Spirit to accompany us. Give us a strong spirit that  
enables us to be our true self and to help others. Teach us your ways that  
we might grow closer to you in this Lenten season. Amen.