

Confession



The Catholic Church requires each of the faithful beyond the age of discretion to participate at least once a year in the Sacrament of Reconciliation to confess serious sins. Lent is an excellent time to experience this healing encounter with God's infinite love and mercy.

Confession to a priest does not cause God to forgive our sins—God's forgiveness is freely given, undeserved, and unearned. Confession is not for God. The sacrament is for us!

The experience of confessing our failures prayerfully, confidentially, but out loud and honestly, begins the healing process. Burdens of shame and secrecy are lifted, and we are prepared to receive God's mercy. As St. Augustine prayed, "Empty me, O Lord, of all that is not from You, so that I may be filled with all that is You."

When the priest speaks the words of absolution, he speaks in the person of Jesus Christ—it is Christ who forgives, Christ who heals, Christ who reconciles the penitent to Himself and to His Church. And that is very good for us to hear:

"God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

See page 8 for opportunities to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation this Lent.