



My Dear Parishioners,

Praised be Jesus Christ! As we enter this last full week of Lent, I re-run a column that I originally wrote in 2017. It's as valid as ever. With penance services being held in various Churches this week and Holy Week drawing near, now is the time to receive the Mercy of God so as to know the gift of His Easter.

Peace,

Fr. Rogers

The Sacrament of Confession

Recently, I spoke about the Sacrament to the parents of our children who are preparing to receive it for the first time. And I want to share a few things from that presentation.

1) It is no exaggeration to say that for many adults it's been a **long time** since they've seriously considered the topic of confession. In fact, for many, they've never seriously thought of the Sacrament as an adult. Combine that lack of thought with the shame or hurt that can surround one's experience of the Sacrament and this makes for a rather shallow understanding of what is a **VERY IMPORTANT Sacrament**. So let's claim that ignorance and seek an adult understanding of the Sacrament.

2) Why is the Sacrament so important? **Because it is the only way after Baptism that we know of, for Mortal Sins to be forgiven.** Yes, God can forgive apart from the Sacrament, but we can't be sure that He has. So what if we could be 100% sure that our sins have been forgiven? Well, we can be...How? Simply: be sorry for one's sins, confess them to a priest, receive absolution and do your penance. No matter the sin, it can be forgiven. The only sin that cannot be forgiven is the sin that we don't want forgiven. God desires so much for us to experience His mercy, but we refuse, resist or write-it-off. Please do not do this! Without His Mercy, we risk the fire of Hell.

3) Many people refuse Confession because they think of it as a "spiritual car wash". They think why go, if "the car" is only going to get back on "the dirty road" and the cycle of sin begins again. That's many peoples excuse for never going to confession. **BUT DID YOU KNOW....the Sacrament is NOT a Spiritual Car Wash!** When you go to confession, yes sins are "washed away" but something else happens...God's grace, His Life is poured into your soul! So unlike the car, you go forth in and with the Lord, with new power, strength and healing. And that makes all the difference in the world: Living in the grace of God, His life in us restored!

4) For many adults, there can be difficulty in making a good examination of conscience. Most of us were taught to confess as a 2nd grader: i.e. I fight with my brothers and sisters, don't listen to mom and dad, etc. What do we say as adults?? Good question! And I would point to some good online resources. The **Laudate app or Iconfess app** are handy resources that can help an adult do a good examen. Another handy tool is 1 Corinthians 13: The Hymn to Love. Read that descriptive of Love and let it convict you in regards to the many ways that you have failed to love. Then go and be loved by the Mercy of Jesus in the Sacrament.

I could go on and on about this Sacrament, but I'm running out of room. Allow me to cut to the point and ask each of you to please **GO TO THE SACRAMENT**. It is not only a precept of the Church that every Catholic go to the Sacrament once a year, it is necessary. Necessary for a full, abundant and God-filled Life. And now is the time.