

# Our Lady of the Sacred Heart Church Newsletter

## March 21, 2021

My Dear Parishioners,

Grace, by definition, is a share in the life and the love of the Blessed Trinity. So, if we're to try to sum up the work of the Church, we would say that the work of the Church is to help us to grow in Grace, or in other words, to grow in the Love of God. It then becomes the responsibility of priests and deacons to preach and teach us on what leads us to a greater share in the Love of God and also what deprives us from receiving that Love. So this week I am fulfilling my obligation and reminding all that one of those works which lead us to a greater share in the Love of God is the Sacrament of Confession, and the voice of someone making a good Confession is heard in today's Psalm: *Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness; in the greatness of compassion wipe out my offense. Thoroughly wash me from my guilt and of my sin cleanse me. 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. Give me back the joy of your salvation, and a willing spirit sustain in me.*

As to how often we should go to Confession, we can begin with "the Precepts of the Church," which require us to Confess our sins once of year. Then, of course, we must Confess whenever we may be in danger of mortal sin. Above and beyond the Precepts of the Church, many Catholics have that good practice of going to Confession in Advent and Lent, and many spiritual directors encourage a more regular Confession, such as a quarterly or a monthly Confession. All of this, we remember, is to help us grow in Grace, to grow in the Love of God.

In fact, in a recent address, Pope Francis compared going to Confession to an act of Love. He went on to say that it was an act of abandoning oneself to Divine Love, that it was also an act of allowing oneself to be transformed by Divine Love, and finally that it was an act of corresponding to Divine Love. I have included excerpts of the Pope's remarks in this week's newsletter.

To assist you in growing in Grace and in Love of God, we will be having our Lenten Confessions this Thursday, March 25 from 4:00-5:00 PM and again from 7:00-8:00 PM. There will be several additional Confessors present besides myself to help you to abandon yourself to the Love of God.

This final full week of Lent concludes with Palm Sunday and our remembrance of Our Blessed Lord's entrance into Jerusalem during that very first Holy Week of almost 2000 years ago. We will be having our regular Mass schedule on Palm Sunday with the distribution of Blessed Palm after each Mass. In addition, I will be distributing Blessed Palm in the church parking lot, after the last Mass, from 12:00-12:30 PM, for those who cannot yet be with us for Mass because of the pandemic.

Let us continue to pray our Rosaries and Chaplets for the end of the pandemic and that day when we will all be together again and as a family of God sharing in His Grace, sharing in His Love.

Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, pray for us!  
St Joseph, Patron of the Church, pray for us!

Fr. Michael J Pawelko





# *Lenten Confession Schedule*

OUR LADY OF THE SACRED HEART CHURCH

Thursday, March 25<sup>th</sup>

4:00 – 5:00 PM

7:00 – 8:00 PM

# *Palm Sunday* *March 28, 2021*

Palms will be blessed and distributed at All Masses:

4:00 PM Vigil,  
8:00 AM, 9:30 AM, 11:00 AM

Blessed Palm will also be distributed in the  
Church Parking Lot from 12:00 - 12:30 PM

# *Pope Francis* *Address to Priests and Seminarians* *on the Sacrament of Reconciliation* *March 12, 2021*



I would like to reflect with you on three expressions, which explain well the meaning of the Sacrament of Reconciliation; because going to confess is not like going to the dry cleaner's to have a stain removed. No, it is quite different. Let us think hard about what it is. The first expression that explains this sacrament, this mystery, is "to abandon oneself to Love"; the second, "to let oneself be transformed by Love", and the third, "to correspond to Love". But always Love: if there is no Love in the sacrament, it is not as Jesus wishes it to be. If it is functional, it is not how Jesus wants it to be. Love. Love for the forgiven brother, a sinner - as the Cardinal said - towards the brother and the sister who are forgiven sinners. This is the fundamental relationship.

To abandon oneself to Love means to carry out a true act of faith. Faith can never be reduced to a list of concepts or a series of affirmations to believe in. Faith is expressed and understood within a relationship: the relationship between God and humanity, and between humanity and God, in accordance with the logic of the call and the response: God calls and the human person responds. The reverse is also true: we call to God when we are in need, and he always answers. Faith is the encounter with Mercy, with God himself who is Mercy - the name of God is Mercy - and it is abandoning oneself in the arms of this Love, mysterious and generous, of which we are greatly in need, but to which, at times, we are afraid of surrendering ourselves.

Experience teaches that those who do not surrender themselves to God end up, sooner or later, abandoning themselves to something else, ending up in the arms of the worldly mentality, which in the end leads to bitterness, sadness and solitude, and does not heal. So, the first step to a good Confession is indeed the act of faith, of surrendering oneself, with which the penitent approaches Mercy. And every confessor, therefore, must be capable always of being astonished by their brothers who, out of faith, ask for God's forgiveness and, again solely out of faith, surrender themselves to him, delivering themselves in Confession. Their suffering for their own sins is the sign of this trustful abandonment to Love.

To live Confession in this way means allowing oneself to be transformed by Love. It is the second dimension, the second expression on which I would like to reflect. We are well aware that it is not laws that save us - it suffices to read Chapter 23 of Matthew: the individual does not change as a result of a dry series of precepts, but rather for the appeal of Love perceived and gratuitously given. It is Love that was fully manifested in Jesus Christ and in his death on the cross for us. In this way Love, which is God himself, was made visible to men, in a way that was previously unthinkable, totally new and therefore capable of renewing all things. The penitent who encounters, in the sacramental exchange, a ray of this welcoming Love, allows him- or herself to be transformed by Love, by Grace, beginning to live that transformation of the heart of stone into a heart of flesh, which is a transformation that is given in every confession. It is thus also in the sentimental life: one changes as a result of the encounter with a great love. The good confessor is always called to see the miracle of change, to notice the work of Grace in the hearts of penitents, encouraging the transforming action as much as possible. The integrity of the accusation is the sign of this transformation that Love works: everything is given so that all may be forgiven.

The third and final expression is: to correspond to Love. Surrendering and letting oneself be transformed by Love have as a necessary consequence a correspondence of the love received. The Christian always has in mind the words of Saint James: "Show me your faith apart from your works, and I by my works will show you my faith" (2: 18). The real will to conversion becomes tangible in the response to the love of God that is received and accepted. It is a correspondence that manifests itself in the change of life and in the works of mercy that follow on from this. One who has been welcomed by Love cannot but welcome a brother. One who has surrendered him- or herself to Love cannot but console the afflicted. One who has been forgiven by God cannot but wholeheartedly forgive their brothers.

# Pope Francis

## Address to Priests and Seminarians on the Sacrament of Reconciliation

March 12, 2021



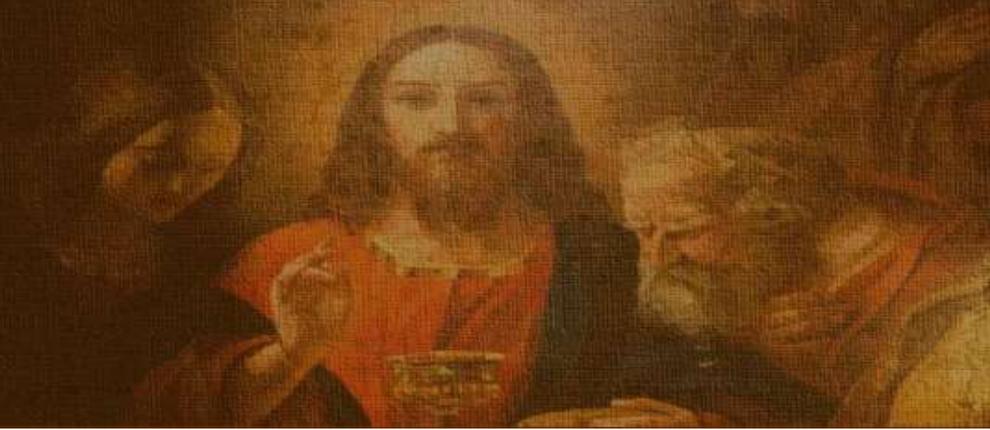
While it is true that we can never fully correspond to divine Love, because of the unbridgeable difference between the Creator and creatures, it is also true that God shows us a possible love, in which we can live out this impossible correspondence: love for our brothers and sisters. It is love for one's brother that is the place of real correspondence to God's love: by loving our brothers and sisters we show ourselves, the world and God that we truly love him and we correspond, always inadequately, to his mercy. The good confessor always points out, alongside the primacy of love of God, the indispensable love of neighbor, as a daily gymnasium in which to train our love for God. The present intention not to commit sin again is a sign of the will to correspond to Love. And many times people, even we ourselves, are ashamed of having promised, of committing the sin and coming back another time, another time... I am reminded of a poem by an Argentinean parish priest, a good one, a very good parish priest. He was a poet, he wrote many books. A poem to Our Lady, in which he asked Our Lady, in the poem, to look after him, because he would have liked to change but didn't know how. He made her a promise to change, to Our Lady, and ended like this: "Tonight, Lady, the promise is sincere. But just in case, leave the key on the outside of the door". ["Esta tarde, Señora, la promesa es sincera. Por las dudas, no olvide dejar la llave afuera"]. He knew that there will always be the key to open, because it was God, the tenderness of God, who left it outside. Thus, the frequent celebration of the sacrament of Reconciliation becomes, both for the penitent and for the confessor, a way of sanctification, a school of faith, of abandonment, of change and of correspondence to the merciful Love of the Father.



A couple of weeks ago, I passed along an urgent message from our Bishops concerning the dangers of the "Equity Act." As written, the "Equity Act" is anything but "equal" and will actually strip away Religious Liberty in our country and will strip away the civil rights of good and faithful Christians while preventing good and faithful Christians from exercising our Faith in public. This cannot be allowed for the Gospel demands that we practice our Faith in public for the good of our own souls and for the good of the souls of others. The link to the Bishop's Conference with an opportunity to educate and evangelize our public officials is here: [Action Center \(voterveice.net\)](https://www.voterveice.net)

This week I am also including a link with some additional information from the Catholic News Agency on how "gender ideology" will further endanger the free speech and the free expression of good and faithful Christians and will also endanger the financial stability of Catholic and Christian schools: [How a new executive order would promote gender ideology and silence free speech at schools \(catholicnewsagency.com\)](https://www.catholicnewsagency.com)

Through the intercession of Our Lady of the Sacred Heart, may we stay untied and courageous in proclaiming the Truth, which is Jesus Christ Himself, for it is only through, with, and in the Truth that the human race can be set free.



# Sunday Mass Readings

## Fifth Sunday of Lent

### Reading 1: [Jeremiah 31:31-34 \(35B\)](#)

The days are coming, says the LORD, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and the house of Judah. It will not be like the covenant I made with their fathers the day I took them by the hand to lead them forth from the land of Egypt; for they broke my covenant, and I had to show myself their master, says the LORD. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, says the LORD. I will place my law within them and write it upon their hearts; I will be their God, and they shall be my people. No longer will they have need to teach their friends and relatives how to know the LORD. All, from least to greatest, shall know me, says the LORD, for I will forgive their evildoing and remember their sin no more.

### Responsorial Psalm: [Psalm 51:3- 4, 12-13, 14-15](#)

R. (12a) Create a clean heart in me, O God.

- ▶ 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. **R.**
- ▶ 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. **R.**
- ▶ Give me back the joy of your salvation, and a willing spirit sustain in me. I will teach transgressors your ways, and sinners shall return to you. **R.**

### Reading 2: [Hebrews 5:7-9](#)

In the days when Christ Jesus was in the flesh, he offered prayers and supplications with loud cries and tears to the one who was able to save him from death, and he was heard because of his reverence. Son though he was, he learned obedience from what he suffered; and when he was made perfect, he became the source of eternal salvation for all who obey him.

### Gospel Acclamation

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory.

▶ Whoever serves me must follow me, says the Lord; and where I am, there also will my servant be.

R. Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ, King of endless glory.

### Gospel: [John 12:20-33](#)

Some Greeks who had come to worship at the Passover Feast came to Philip, who was from Bethsaida in Galilee, and asked him, “Sir, we would like to see Jesus.” Philip went and told Andrew; then Andrew and Philip went and told Jesus. Jesus answered them, “The hour has come for the Son of Man to be glorified. Amen, amen, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls to the ground and dies, it remains just a grain of wheat; but if it dies, it produces much fruit. Whoever loves his life loses it, and whoever hates his life in this world will preserve it for eternal life. Whoever serves me must follow me, and where I am, there also will my servant be. The Father will honor whoever serves me. “I am troubled now. Yet what should I say? ‘Father, save me from this hour?’ But it was for this purpose that I came to this hour. Father, glorify your name.” Then a voice came from heaven, “I have glorified it and will glorify it again.” The crowd there heard it and said it was thunder; but others said, “An angel has spoken to him.” Jesus answered and said, “This voice did not come for my sake but for yours. Now is the time of judgment on this world; now the ruler of this world will be driven out. And when I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw everyone to myself.” He said this indicating the kind of death he would die.

