



The Saviour's Healing In Confession

Penance Service
Saturday, March 20th at 11 a.m.
St. Anastasia Catholic Church
5205 A1A South, St. Augustine, Florida
32080

**A number of
priests will be
on hand to hear
confessions.**

THE JOY OF BEING FORGIVEN

PREPARATION FOR EASTER

Lent reminds us to prepare a way for the Lord in our hearts. If there are scars and hurts in our poor lives, why not experience His healing power in the Sacrament of Penance? He loves us. He wants us, He longs for peace in our hearts, and through us, for peace in our homes and families, particularly at Easter.

THE LORD IS PATIENT

The Lord awaits us, ready to forgive all our sins. He never tires of waiting for our return. Do you recall the prodigal son – who the Father waited patiently for years for his wayward son to return home? (Luke 15:11)

THE LORD IS MERCIFUL

The Lord loves to forgive us and bring us happiness. To forgive our sins is His joy. In confession we ask the Lord to forgive our sins and we celebrate the merciful love of God. Did He not forgive Mary Magdalen with the comment, “Many sins are forgiven her, because she loved much”? Did He not forgive Peter who denied him three times? Did he not forgive the Good Thief on the Cross with the famous words: “Today you shall be with me in Paradise”?

THE LORD IS LOVE

The Lord died for our sins so that we might have new life in Him. “I have come into the world not to save the righteous but to save poor sinners” (Mark 2:17). The Good Shepherd leaves behind the ninety-nine and goes off in search of the one sheep that is lost; and when He has found the sheep, He puts it on His shoulders and brings it home safely to the flock (Luke 15:4).

SIN HURTS

Sin, all sin, hurts us and so often our sins hurt others. It takes away our inner peace and joy. It is Jesus – depending on our belief and trust in Him – who alone can take away our sins and bring us what we are really looking for, namely, peace, joy, and happiness.

THE LORD IS OUR TRUE FRIEND

The Lord is our friend and Saviour. He knows our human weakness. He knows our hopes, our restless desire for peace. He knows our joys and sorrows. He knows our failures and our sins. He is not so much worried by our sins; rather he is concerned that we do not turn to Him in our human needs. He wants us to experience His friendship, His forgiveness, His mercy and His love.

Examination of Conscience: The Psalms of Lent

Be merciful, O Lord, for we have sinned.

(Ps 51:3)

In addition to my own sins, am I aware of sinful structures in my community and my relationships? Do I bring all these sins to the throne of grace? What steps can I take to make my relationships and my community more Christ like?

Have mercy on me, O God, in your goodness.

(Ps 51:4)

Do I have God's goodness of heart to look beyond others' faults? Am I willing to help or walk with those who struggle to overcome some sinful behavior? Can my family, friends, coworkers or classmates see God's mercy in my daily life?

Let your mercy be on us, as we place our trust in you.

(Ps 33:22)

Is my attitude toward God one of trust? Do I really believe that God's mercy is freely given, or do I think I have to perform penitential acts in order to "make" God act mercifully? Can I rely on the Lord and not myself?

If today you hear God's voice, harden not your hearts.

(Ps 95:8)

Have I truly opened my ears, mind, heart and life to the voice of God? Do I take time to discern the many ways that God speaks to me and to others? Will I keep God's voice selfishly to myself, or will it spur me on to my own acts of mercy, compassion and forgiveness?

The Lord is my shepherd, there is nothing I shall want.

(Ps 23:1)

How tied down am I by the things of this world? Do I mistakenly think of my position or possessions as signs of God's favor? What do I need to surrender in order to be more aware that the Lord alone is everything I need, that all else is a gift?

With the Lord there is mercy, and fullness of redemption.

(Ps 130:7)

Do I completely and joyfully accept and believe in God's mercy? Or do I think that God somehow always holds on to my sins, even when I've been forgiven? Can I celebrate God's mercy by giving joyful witness to the gospel?