



## **GOD'S MERCY ENDURES FOREVER!**

**God's Mercy** comes to us in the three Sacraments of holy Reconciliation: Baptism, Eucharist, and Penance, which were instituted by Christ for his Church, as outward signs of inward spiritual grace for our salvation and sanctification.

- **Baptism** reconciles us to God by forgiving original sin, and any actual sins (mortal or venial) that we may have personally committed in thought, word, deed, or omission. Jesus instituted the Sacrament of Baptism at his own baptism in the Jordan and commanded his apostles to celebrate this holy Sacrament when he ascended into heaven.
- **Eucharist** reconciles us to God, by forgiving any venial sins that we may have personally committed in thought, word, deed, or omission. Jesus instituted the holy Sacrament of the Eucharist at the Last Supper when he commanded his apostles to "do this," that is, celebrate the Mass, the Eucharistic Liturgy, "in memory of him" as his first priests for all time.
- **Penance** reconciles to God by forgiving mortal sin primarily, but also any venial sins that we have committed in thought, word, deed, or omission. Jesus instituted the holy Sacrament of Penance on Easter Sunday evening, when he commanded his apostles, as his priests, to absolve or retain sins in his name through the grace of the Holy Spirit.

**God's Mercy** extends to both the eternal and the temporal consequences of our sins. Both of these dimensions of sin require God's intervention and healing power, as well as our willing cooperation with his grace through repentant faith.

### **THE PATHWAY OF GOD'S MERCY**

Repent of your Sins

Confess your Sins

Receive Absolution

Complete your Penance

Amend your Life

Obtain an Indulgence

Receive Holy Communion

The **eternal consequences of sin** are resolved by the **sanctifying grace** that Christ gives us to in the sacraments, so that we may inherit eternal life with him forever by living in his grace through faith that is active in love here and now.

The **temporal consequences of sin** are resolved by the **actual grace** that Christ gives us through the intercession of the church to repair the collateral damage of our sins that remains even after we are forgiven for those sins.

**Indulgences** thus help us to find peace of mind, by obtaining forgiveness for the temporal punishments for our sins that still need to be resolved, even after the eternal consequences for our sins have been sacramental absolved in Confession.

Here are the three conditions for obtaining an Indulgence as a path to spiritual closure in your personal life:

- 1) Go to Confession, with a commitment to be free from any and all attachments to sin, even venial sin.
- 2) Conscientiously perform one of the following activities, with the intention of obtaining the Indulgence: Recite the Rosary in church with a group of people or at home with your family, prayerfully meditating on five mysteries; spend a half-hour in reflective prayerful adoration before the Tabernacle in church; spend a half-hour in reflective prayerful reading of the Bible at home or in church; or meditate on the Stations of the Cross in church. Other examples of ways to obtain indulgences are contained in the book, *Enchiridion of Indulgences*.
- 3) Finally, go to Holy Communion, and pray the Our Father and Hail Mary for the special intentions of the Pope.

**God's Mercy** may be obtained on any day of the year, but one Confession can suffice for more than one Indulgence, either for oneself or for the faithful departed in purgatory.

**Spiritual Closure.** Through the intercession of the Church, we can obtain full and complete pardon of all our sins at any confession we make on any day of the year at any time, but especially during the Lenten season, in preparation for Easter.

Since Confession is such an important part of living a truly conscientious Christian life, please check the parish schedule for opportunities to receive this Sacrament, and to obtain all the merciful blessings that Christ offers us through our faith!



**LORD JESUS CHRIST,  
SON OF GOD,  
HAVE MERCY ON ME,  
A SINNER!**