



# CATHEDRAL of the EPIPHANY

1000 Douglas St., Sioux City, IA 51105

February 2023

## WHEN WAS YOUR LAST CONFESSION?

*Very Rev. J. David Esquiliano, JCL, JV*

**B**less me, Father, for I have sinned. My last confession was... What follows after those words varies greatly among penitents. Some say it has only been a few days, a couple weeks, months, or even years. The Church teaches that, "After having reached the age of discretion, each member of the faithful is obliged to confess faithfully his or her grave sins at least once a year." (CIC 989)

Lent, which this year will begin on February 22 with the celebration of Ash Wednesday, is considered a penitential season. For that reason, many parishes offer Lenten penance services. While we do not host them here in the parish, we assist hearing confessions at other parishes' penance services. One of the things that most priests have noticed is that often people state that their last confession was the last time the parish held a penance service. That, of course, aligns with the requirement to go to confession at least once a year, but is that enough?

From a legalistic point of view, that could be enough assuming we do not want to receive Communion at Mass. Church law says that, "A person who is conscious of grave sin is not to [...] receive the body of the Lord without previous sacramental confession." (CIC 916) Saint Paul even warns that, "whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord unworthily will have to answer for the body and blood of the Lord." (1Cor. 11:27) I believe most of you would prefer to receive Communion every time you go to Mass, so is confession once a year enough?

Saint John says, "If we say 'we are without sin,' we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," (1Jn 1:8) and adds, "If we say, 'we have not sinned,' we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." (1Jn. 1:10). So, if Saint John is right, we are all sinners, and therefore should not be going regularly to Communion, unless we are also going to confession regularly.

Deciding to go to confession frequently should not be because of legalistic reasons, though. Confession is a way to receive grace,

which is something we should be always looking forward to. If we did our examination of conscience every night, we would soon see that we are always falling into sin. As Saint Paul says, "where sin increased, grace overflowed all the more," (Rom. 5:20) so once we recognize there is sin in our life, we just need to go to the confessional, where we will receive an abundance of grace.

Now, I am not saying everything is a sin, much less that everything is a grave sin. If we try to live holy lives, we may only find small or venial sins most of the time. In those cases we are not required to go to confession, but once again, we should not just approach the sacrament when it is absolutely necessary. The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches, "Without being strictly necessary, confession of everyday faults (venial sins) is nevertheless strongly recommended by the Church. Indeed the regular confession of our venial sins helps us form our conscience, fight against evil tendencies, let ourselves be healed by Christ and progress in the life of the Spirit. By receiving more frequently through this sacrament the gift of the Father's mercy, we are spurred to be merciful as he is merciful." That does not mean we are to go to confession every day, as that could be a sign of other problems, like scrupulosity or lack of trust in God's mercy. A good rule of thumb would be about once a month, unless we are aware of mortal sin, in which case we would need to go right away.

As we begin this penitential season of Lent, I would encourage you to ask yourself when was the last time you went to confession and how often you approach the sacrament. If you are already going to confession frequently, keep rejoicing in God's mercy. If you have only been going once or twice a year, let's change that.



### ASH WEDNESDAY SCHEDULE

February 22, 2023

7:30 am – Cathedral (English)  
9 am – Cathedral (Spanish)  
11 am—St. Joseph (Vietnamese)  
12 pm – Cathedral (English)  
5:30 pm – Cathedral (Spanish)  
7 pm – Cathedral (Spanish)

This is not a holy day of obligation. Ashes will not be distributed outside of these Masses.

### ADDITIONAL OPPORTUNITIES FOR CONFESSION

#### THE LIGHT IS ON FOR YOU

Confessions will be heard and the Blessed Sacrament will be exposed from 5 to 7 pm at all three churches on Tuesday, February 28.

#### HOLY WEEK CONFESSIONS

There will be no scheduled confessions during the Easter Triduum. Priests will be available for individual confessions at Cathedral on Tuesday of Holy Week, April 4, starting at 6pm, and until the last confession is heard.



In a world that increasingly lacks a sense of sin and the difference between right and wrong, it can become necessary to remind ourselves of what the Sacrament of Penance really is meant to be. Cardinal Mauro Piacenza is the Major Penitentiary of the Apostolic Penitentiary—the Vatican office that deals with penance and the forgiveness of sins. The Cardinal commented several years ago: “If one

does not have a sense of sin, it’s difficult to seek reconciliation, obviously. One would then confuse confession with a psychiatrist’s couch.” In other words, the Sacrament of Penance is not intended to be psychotherapy.

The Sacrament of Penance is a healing sacrament in which we encounter the unfathomable mercy of God, in which our relationship with God is restored, and in which one receives grace in order to strengthen our will to choose right over wrong. The Sacrament of Penance is not a forum in which one seeks advice for every aspect of life. Though the priest may give brief practical, spiritual advice and encouragement, the sacrament is not intended to solve all our daily trials or problems, nor is it intended to magically bestow on us the firm purpose to root out sin from our lives. Rather, we must be intent on following the commandments of God and unreservedly enter into the struggle for holiness, supported by the grace of the sacrament which we must receive with an open and willing heart.

So, with all of this in mind, what does confessing our sins actually look like? What are the ritual parts of the Sacrament of Penance?

There are four parts to the Sacrament of Penance: Contrition, Confession, Absolution, and Satisfaction (Penance). **Contrition** is what brings us to the confessional in the first place—we are truly sorry for our sins and we come to confess, not out of pressure or habit, but out of true sorrow for having broken our relationship with God and with others.

Once we have sufficiently taken the time in prayer and reflection to examine our conscience, we are then ready for **Confession**. This is when we confess to Jesus, through the priest, the objective sins we have committed and the approximate number of times. When we confess, we only confess our sins and not the sins of others. We do not try to contextualize or make excuses—we only need to confess the specific sin and humbly own the fact that we have committed it.

**Absolution** follows after confessing our sins, in which the priest gives us a penance and then prays the prayer of absolution over us that assuredly forgives and wipes away our sins. This is guaranteed to us by John 20:23 and the power of the keys — “Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.” It is in this moment that God the Father rejoices in his prodigal sons and daughters and in which the Holy Spirit re-sanctifies us or more fully dwells within us.

The last step of this sacrament is **Satisfaction**, or Penance. Even with sin removed, the wound of sin still remains. Therefore, the Church invites us to make satisfaction by a) praying an Act of Contrition in which we resolve to amend our life, b) praying our penance, and c) repairing any damage that has been done. And so, in these four steps of Contrition, Confession, Absolution, and Satisfaction (Penance), we are reconciled to the Lord and his Body, the Church. Give thanks to the Lord, for his mercy endures forever!

## HOW TO PREPARE FOR A GOOD CONFESSION

Mrs. Santa Fernandez



Parents, once your children have celebrated the sacrament of the Eucharist (First Communion) you need to regularly bring them to confession and remember that as parents you must be the first teachers in the education of the Catholic faith, guiding them with your example and the consistency of you attending Sunday Mass to receive the Eucharist. I have noticed that many parents

do not help their children to create the habit of coming to confession, and when they bring them back to catechism to prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Confirmation, many of them no longer receive communion, because they have not been to confession since they celebrated their First Communion and they no longer remember how to confess correctly.

Here are some tips to do before going to confession: you must prepare with a good examination of conscience about the sins that have been committed. Remember that we sin, in thought, word, deed and omission. A good way to help analyze sins is to focus on the ten commandments so that you don't deliberately forget any sins. When you're ready for confession, state the sins directly rather

than explain how and when they occurred (if you need a advice, it is better to make an appointment with the priest outside the confessional).

### 6 steps to make a good confession:

1. What sins have you committed since your last confession?
2. Being sincerely sorry for your sins.
3. Confess all sins to the priest.
4. Be sure to confess all mortal sins.
5. After confession, do the penance that the priest gave you.
6. Pray daily to avoid falling into sin, especially in the sins you have committed before.

### What to do when you are inside the confessional:

- Make the Sign of the Cross together with the priest.
- Say: “Bless me, Father, for I have sinned, my last confession was (mention the approximate date of the last confession).
- Say all the sins and how often you have committed them.
- Listen to the priest as he gives you penance.
- When you finish, say the act of contrition, whichever one is known, or the priest will give it to you to read.
- Make the sign of the cross while the priest absolves you of your sins, and then answer “Amen.”

# PARISH UPDATES

## SPECIAL COLLECTIONS

- Building Maintenance Fund, February 4 & 5.
- Together As One [Spanish Only], February 18 & 19.
- Aid to Global Churches, February 25 & 26.

## CHANGES TO THE SCHEDULE

- Tuesday, February 7. No evening confessions nor Mass in Spanish.
- Tuesday, February 14. No evening confessions nor Mass in Spanish.
- Sunday, February 19. No Sung Vespers.
- Monday, February 20. No regular confession nor Mass schedule. Mass only at 9 am. Office closed.
- Wednesday, February 22. No confessions.

## FAMILY OF FAITH (RELIGIOUS EDUCATION)

- Wednesday, February 1. 6:15 pm at Cathedral - Family Night (parents and students).
- Wednesday, February 8. 6:15 pm - First confession for First Communion students. Confirmation students off.

## BUSY PERSONS LUNCH

Join us for lunch on Wednesday, February 1, after the noon Mass. No cost, just a free-will offering. If you would like to volunteer to serve this luncheon, please contact Julie Krogh at [jkrogh@sccathedral.org](mailto:jkrogh@sccathedral.org).

## THE FINANCIAL CORNER

INCOME		November
Weekly Offerings	\$	53,246.00
Loose Offerings	\$	18,068.84
Prog. Support	\$	9,583.00
Other income	\$	17,026.42
<b>Total Parish Income</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>97,924.26</b>
<b>EXPENSE</b>		
Salaries & Wages	\$	34,855.44
Administrative Expenses	\$	5,689.65
Ministry Expenses	\$	6,209.54
Utility Bills & Repairs	\$	20,273.84
Assessments	\$	7,832.00
Other Expenses	\$	2,474.93
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>77,335.40</b>
<b>NET INCOME</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>20,588.86</b>

## PARISH BREAKFAST

Our parish breakfast organized by the Knights of Columbus will take place on February 5 at the Cathedral Hall.

## CATHEDRAL SACRED MUSIC SERIES

A brass quintet concert will be offered on Sunday, February 12 at 3 pm at the Cathedral Church. This is free and open to the public, so please join us for a short hour of quality music!

## LADIES LUNCH

Thursday, February 16, at 1pm at Red Lobster.

## RESCUE PROJECT

This program will be offered during Lent this year for any adult or mature high school student. The Rescue Project is a 7 week series that has a meal, a video, and group discussion. The Rescue Project focuses on preaching the Good News, the Gospel, with a provocative and compelling approach. The Rescue Project will be on Sunday's in the Cathedral Hall from 5 to 7 pm starting February 19. To register contact the parish office.

## PREACHED HOLY HOURS

Save the date. As part of our Lenten devotions, we will offer three preached holy hours on March 15, 22, & 29, at 6:15pm at the Cathedral. The topic will be different each night. Preaching will be in English and Spanish.

## KNIGHTS CORNER



**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 19TH AT ST. BONIFACE CHURCH** – All are cordially invited:

Eucharistic Miracles exhibits in the hall 9 am – 1 pm. It will surely deepen your faith as a Catholic.

Potluck after the 8:30 am Latin Mass in the hall.

Financial Benefits seminar by Field Agent Jeremy Borchers 10 – 11 am in the hall. Discuss topics like life insurance, retirement savings, mutual fund investments, long term care insurance, annuities, etc.

We will have a 1st, 2nd and 3rd degree initiation ceremony to join the KofC at St. Boniface Church at 11:45 am. [www.kofc.org/joinus](http://www.kofc.org/joinus)

**BREAKFAST** – Our next parish meal will be Sunday February 5th from 9- 2 pm at the Cathedral Hall. Based on the success of the Epiphany festival, we are extending this time to be breakfast in the morning and tacos in the afternoon.

**MONTHLY MEETING** – 2nd Thursday Feb. 9th at 7 pm in the Cathedral Hall. Rosary at 6:15 pm followed by potluck dinner. Reminder for all Knights to pay 2023 annual dues.

**DONATIONS** – Recently donated \$150 to American Wheelchair Mission; \$200 to Coats for Kids; \$1000 Cathedral Christmas Wish List. All these are possible due to your generosity.

**CONTACT** - Check out our Facebook page for activities and updates “Knights of Columbus Council 743 USA”. Email: [KofC743USA@gmail.com](mailto:KofC743USA@gmail.com). Phone: English - Noel 806-316-7628/ Brent 712-490-0410; Spanish - Osbaldo 712-501-0835/ Jorge 308-383-2517



## CATHEDRAL OF THE EPIPHANY

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# CATHEDRAL of the EPIPHANY

**Very Rev. J. David Esquiliano, JCL, JV, Rector**

**Very Rev. Andrew Galles, VF, Parochial Vicar**

**Rev. Jeremy Wind, Parochial Vicar**

**Rev. Travis Crotty, In Residence**

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### REGULAR MASS SCHEDULE

#### **MONDAY-FRIDAY**

12 pm – Cathedral (*English*)  
5:30 pm – Cathedral (*Spanish*)

#### **SATURDAY**

12 pm – Cathedral (*English*)  
4 pm – St. Boniface (*English*)  
6 pm – Cathedral (*Spanish*)

#### **SUNDAY**

8:30 am – Cathedral (*Spanish*)  
8:30 am – St. Joseph (*English*)  
10 am – Cathedral (*English*)  
10:30 am – St. Boniface (*Spanish*)  
12 pm – Cathedral (*Spanish*)  
12:30 pm – St. Joseph (*Vietnamese*)

### MASSES ON SPECIAL OCCASIONS

#### **HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION**

7:30 am – Cathedral (*English*)  
9 am – Cathedral (*Spanish*)  
11 am – St. Joseph (*Vietnamese*)  
12 pm – Cathedral (*English*)  
5:30 pm – Cathedral (*Spanish*)  
7 pm – Cathedral (*Spanish*)

#### **FEDERAL HOLIDAYS**

9 am – Cathedral (*English*)

### OFFICE HOURS

#### **MONDAY & WEDNESDAY**

10 am - 1 pm

#### **TUESDAY, THURSDAY, & FRIDAY**

10 am - 2 pm

### SUNDAY SUNG VESPERS

4 pm – Cathedral (*English*)

### CONFESSIONS

#### **MONDAY-FRIDAY**

4:30 - 5:15 pm – Cathedral

#### **FRIDAY**

11:15 - 11:45 am – Cathedral

#### **SATURDAY**

3 - 3:45 pm – St. Boniface  
5 - 5:45 pm – Cathedral

#### **SUNDAY**

7:45 - 8:15 am – Cathedral  
7:45 - 8:15 am – St. Joseph  
7:45 - 8:15 am – St. Boniface