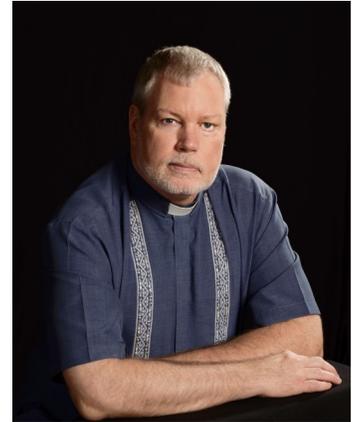




## Pastor's Page



Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Lent began with our hearing anew the words of Jesus, “Repent and believe in the Gospel!” The Lenten disciplines that Christ himself urged the people to carefully and humbly adhere to—prayer, fasting and almsgiving—were ways in which the people could outwardly manifest their sorrow for their sins (repentance) and show their willingness to faithfully conform their lives to the message of Jesus (Gospel).

There have always been multiple ways in which Christians can manifest sorrow for their sins and obtain God’s mercy. Various forms of prayer—including the celebration of the Mass—acts of self-denial and self-sacrifice, expressions of charity and kindness, are all ways in which the mercy of God can be experienced when we have committed sins. Of course, the inner attitude that motivates us, and the genuineness of our sorrow are also key elements, as Jesus also taught. The interior and heartfelt sorrow for sin, together with that “firm purpose of amendment”—that genuine intention and effort to do better—along with the outward expression of the sorrow are all essential aspects of the matter.

One of the ways the Catholic Church strives to engage us helpfully in this reality of repentance and belief is by celebrating Reconciliation Services, liturgies that involve our prayerful listening to and reflecting upon God’s Word, our sincere examining of our consciences, and some kind of verbal and/or symbolic expression of our sorrow and of the Church’s assurance to us of God’s mercy and forgiveness. The highest form of such services is what we know as the Sacrament of Reconciliation—a.k.a., Penance or Confession—but there are also forms of reconciliation that are still meaningful and efficacious, but that don’t involve the full celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation through the private and individual confession of one’s sins to a priest and the reception of sacramental absolution.

**On Thursday, March 18<sup>th</sup>, at 7:00pm, we will celebrate a Communal Lenten Reconciliation Service at OLG.**

While this liturgy itself will NOT be a celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, I will be available following the conclusion of the Reconciliation Service (at about 8:00pm) to hear private, individual confessions and to offer sacramental absolution. I will also be available for the Sacrament of Reconciliation on three other occasions, and to hear individual and private confessions. The dates and times for these opportunities are:

Wednesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> (4:00 – 6:00pm)

Wednesday, March 31<sup>st</sup> (4:00 – 6:00pm)

Saturday, April 3<sup>rd</sup> (11:00am – 1:00pm)

Hope to see you at one of these celebrations as we repent and believe in the Gospel.

Grace and peace,

*Fr. Kevin*