Why should I go to a Communal Reconciliation service?

You’ve got three days to pray over these reasons.

You have an opportunity to reconnect with the mercy and love of God. If you’ve been feeling distant from the Lord and are longing to be reconnected with Him, this is a great place for it – when the Body of Christ is gathered as Church asking God to show us His mercy, and you realize you’re not alone.

It’s cathartic. Acknowledging our sinfulness and having an experience of forgiveness and love is psychologically and spiritually healthy. The weight of what’s been on your mind (in terms of what you’ve been doing wrong, or what’s holding you back from God) is too much for your shoulders—but God’s got it all in the palm of His hand. Give it to Him.

It’s a long tradition, and even connects with our celebration of the Eucharist. Saying out loud that we’re not perfect is important. You already know you’re not, so why pretend otherwise? Gathering with others humble enough to acknowledge that in public strengthens us, and it’s not a new idea—each Sunday in the Penitential Act, we ask God for mercy because of our sinfulness. Come do it again, with intention.

It’s good for you. We live in a tangible, corporeal world. We need to physically hear, with our ears, the words straight from Jesus in the person of the priest saying, “I absolve you from your sins.” Christ knew what would best mend our broken hearts. Listen to Him. Join us Wednesday at 7:30.
This is a great chance during the busy Christmas season to stop, focus, and pray. Our celebrant and presenter will be Fr. John Mark Ettensohn, OMI, and the morning concludes with liturgy and a light lunch.

Give yourself a respite from your busy life, and then go back to your holiday preparations with renewed energy!

Sign up on the poster in the narthex if you’d like to join us!

**Advent Reconciliation Liturgy**

Mark your calendars now for our Advent Reconciliation liturgy – a great way to prepare for Christmas. Celebrate this healing Sacrament and be transformed by God’s mercy.

The date is set for Wednesday, December 11th at 7:30pm.

A reception will follow the celebration of the sacrament in the Parish Hall.

**Christmas Caroling**

On Monday, December 16th, members of our parish choir will be caroling at the Orinda Senior Village and the Orinda Care Center (formerly Orinda Convalescent Hospital). The morning of Christmas songs begins at 10am at the Orinda Senior Village. If you would like to sing with us, contact Tony at tmillette@smparish.org.

**Immaculate Conception**

This year the Solemnity of the Immaculate Conception of Mary falls on Sunday, December 8th. So, the solemnity will be celebrated on Monday, December 9th and will not be a holy day of obligation but, a holy day of opportunity, instead!

**ADVENT/CHRISTMAS**

**Come by for some Advent Spiritual Renewal**

The Women’s Guild is hosting a Spiritual Morning on Wednesday, December 11 at 9:30am in the Convent chapel.

**Christmas Poinsettias**

You are invited to help us decorate our church for the season of Christmas by making a donation for our Christmas Poinsettias. In the narthex you will find envelopes for your offering. Please place them in the Sunday collection or bring them by the Parish Office.

**PARISH LIFE**

**Your responses help us plan our mission in action**

As we begin a new church year, we are also looking ahead to the 2020 budget year. The pledges promised on your Commitment Cards help us budget for another year of ministry, service, education, faith formation, worship, and more for our parish community!

Thank you to the parishioners who have responded (as of this printing) with their Commitment Card for our His Heart, Our Hands program! We are humbled by your sacrifice and are grateful for your generosity.

This number includes those who have made a financial commitment to our parish as well as those who have pledged to pray for the program.
Bible Reading a blessing

A reflection by Mari Kay Breazeale

My part in the Pastoral Care Ministry of Santa Maria is the Bible Reading at the Orinda Care Center (formerly the Orinda Convalescent Hospital). Because I’ve long been interested in and involved in Scripture Study, this is a ministry that I greatly enjoy.

The patients, and sometimes even the staff, in attendance seem to appreciate my being there, so I feel doubly blessed. My participation is just one Wednesday a month, and other parishioners do the other weeks.

If you enjoy working with elderly people, whether Bible Reading or not, let Sister Mary Magdalene know. She will find something rewarding for you to do, too.

Contact Sr. Mary Magdalene at sistermn@smparish.org or at 925-254-2426.

Christmas Mass Schedule

Christmas Eve
Tuesday, December 24
Children’s Mass: 4:00pm in the Church
Youth Mass: 4:00pm in the Parish Hall
Mass: 6:00pm in the Church
Mass with Adult Choir: 10:00pm in the Church
(Christmas Carols begin at 9:30pm)

Christmas Day
Wednesday, December 25
Masses: 8:30am and 10:30am in the Church

Weekly Food Collection
1st/2nd Weekends: St. Cornelius School
3rd/4th Weekends: St. Peter Martyr Church Pantry
Please put all donations in the bins in the Narthex.
For the Sick
Liduvina Acosta, Sonny Acosta, Mary Beth Alban, Joan Artmann, Shoaib Aryan, Kristy Blackey-Taylor, Kathie Brady, Cara Bradbury, Mike Buzzell, Maria Carmen, Rosemary Catton, Delores Codde, Grace Parent DeBoodt, Rich Delany, Lorna Elliott, Anne Emery, Nora Enriquez, Emidio Fonseca, Liam Foley, Patricia Fox, Bridget Gallagher, Noreen Gillham, Paul Guess, Doris Hale, Florentino Ibabao, Brian Kelly, Mason Kelly, Aileen Kelly, Jim Kennedy, Jerry Kirk, Lawrence Knapp, Carol Koupus, Judy Lazarus, Jim Marchetti, Rose Mary McPhee, Robert Nick, Arsi Orihuella, Deacon Jim Pearce, Kathleen Pelz, Ann Powell, Mark Ricci, Ben Richey, Patrick Sheehy, Faye Young

Would you like to add yourself or someone else to the prayer list? Please contact Mirna in the Parish Office at 925-254-2426 or at mirnawong@smparish.org.

The offering of the Mass is “the perfect prayer.” Masses can be said for a living person’s intentions, or for the repose of the soul of someone who has died.

We encourage you to have Masses said for all of your loved ones, or for your own intentions!

Positive: $  786.85
Catholic Campaign for Human Development: $1,541.00

Positive: $ 1,767.98
Faith Formation: $1,283.00
Thanksgiving: $545.00
“Comfort, comfort, my people.”

~ Isaiah 40:1

Advent Communal Reconciliation
Wednesday, December 11
7:30pm in the Church