

our all-merciful God and granted a totally new lease on life. In the Sacrament of Penance, our souls are healed, cleansed and made as holy as they were on the day of our Baptism.

No matter how grave the sin God can and will forgive us. No matter how long we have been away from this great sacrament, God is waiting, as the father of the Prodigal Son waited, for His children to come to Him and humbly ask His pardon.

There is no better gift that we can present to our Savior and Redeemer on the Day of His Birth than the gift of a soul, cleansed and purified by Him, through the priests of His Church, in the Sacrament of Penance. There is no better gift that we can give to one another than a soul made new through the Blood of the Innocent Lamb of God through the power of God's mercy and love made present in the Sacrament of Penance.

Tomorrow, Monday, December 15, at 7:00 p.m., in the cathedral, visiting priests from neighboring parishes will be joining me to hear confessions. In addition, I will hear confessions on Tuesday, December 16; Wednesday, December 17 and Friday, December 19 at 12:00 Noon until 1:00 pm. It would please our Lord very much if all of us made a good and holy confession before Christmas. Imagine the joy and peace of waking up on Christmas morning knowing that you, and everyone in your household and everyone in our parish is ready to welcome our Newborn King with souls washed clean and made pure in this most compassionate of ways.

If you are hesitant to go to confession, simply ask the Holy Spirit to open your mind and heart to His infinite love and wisdom and He will give you the courage to come to the Mercy Seat of God and know that peace which only Christ can bring.

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A Prayer for the Third Sunday of Advent

Lord Jesus Christ, You reign in the joy of eternal life, in the complete fullness of life without end. But in Advent You invite us to think of You as newborn child, as an infant, and as a little boy. Help us to know in this passing world that You can show us how to cherish forever the joys of this life so that they may not perish but be drawn into the joy of life without end. Amen.

--Father Benedict Groeschel, C.F.R.

May God grant you a peaceful and joyful week in His service.