



OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

155 WEST PARKWAY POMPTON PLAINS, NEW JERSEY 07444

APRIL 6, 2025 | FIFTH SUNDAY OF LENT

OUR MISSION

"We, the Roman Catholic Community of Our Lady of Good Counsel Church, endeavor to create an environment of peace, joy and hospitality.

We are nurtured by the Word of God and the Eucharist.

We welcome each and every person to walk in our mission for the Father, as Disciples of Christ.

We celebrate God's mercy and compassion for all and honor His will as inspired by the Holy Spirit."



MASS SCHEDULE

Weekdays

8:00am

Saturday

8:00am, 5:00pm Vigil

7:00pm Spanish Mass

Sunday

8:00am, 10:00am, 11:30am

Holy Days

8:00am, 12:00pm and 7:00pm

Confession

Saturday 3:30-4:30pm

Or by appointment

CONTACT US

Phone

973-839-2447

Web

goodcounsel.org

Address

155 West Parkway
Pompton Plains, NJ 07444



5TH SUNDAY OF LENT

Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." - Jn 8:6b-7

Excerpts from the Lectionary for Mass ©2001, 1998, 1970 CCD.

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PARISH INFORMATION

2 | APRIL 6, 2025

SACRAMENTAL LIFE

Please contact the office at
973-839-2447 or
churchoffice@goodcounsel.org

Marriage: Arrangements must be made at least 6 months in advance.

Baptism: Usually celebrated on the first and third weekends each month. Saturday at 12 Noon or Sunday at 12:30 pm. Requests for other dates and/or times will be honored as possible. Arrangements should be made at least three months in advance.

Anointing of the Sick: Those of advanced age and those seriously ill should be prepared to receive this Sacrament. Please contact the parish office to make arrangements.

PASTORAL STAFF

Pastor

Rev. Darwin Lastra

frdarwin@goodcounsel.org

Pastor Emeritus

Msgr. Patrick J. Scott

Deacon

Marc Mackin

deaconmarc@goodcounsel.org

Parish Secretary

Jennifer Herd

churchoffice@goodcounsel.org

Parish Sacristan

Nadine Petryna

sacristan@goodcounsel.org

Ministry Assistant/Bookkeeper

Patti Perugino

ministryassistant@goodcounsel.org

bookkeeper@goodcounsel.org

Spanish Mass Secretary

Carolina Guevara

spanishmass@goodcounsel.org

Music Director

John Zisa

musicministry@goodcounsel.org

Parish Maintenance

Edward Bachorik

maintenance@goodcounsel.org

**Coordinator GIFT Ministry
and Youth Protection**

Laura Shamber-Coordinator

973-839-5247

youthministry@goodcounsel.org

MASS INTENTIONS

Saturday, April 5th

5:00PM Ed Zahn † Kathleen Sciarra † Grace Manganello † Jeanne Moskal †
Special Intentions for Cadence Dabice, Mariella Vargas,
and Mary Treuer Delojo

Sunday, April 6th

8:00AM Special Intentions for Cadence Dabice, Mariella Vargas,
and Mary Treuer Delojo

10:00AM

Joan Cronin †
Special Intentions for Cadence Dabice, Mariella Vargas,
and Mary Treuer Delojo

11:30AM

Plato Stoukas † Kathy Sciarra † Special Intentions for Cadence Dabice,
Mariella Vargas, and Mary Treuer Delojo

Monday, April 7th

8:00AM Anthony Calamito † Special Intentions for Cadence Dabice,
Mariella Vargas, and Mary Treuer Delojo

Tuesday, April 8th

8:00AM Megan Bancroft † Special Intentions for Cadence Dabice, Mariella Vargas,
and Mary Treuer Delojo

Wednesday, April 9th

8:00AM Special Intentions for Jim Mann, Cadence Dabice, Mariella Vargas,
and Mary Treuer Delojo

Thursday, April 10th

8:00AM Ryhor Ivanets † Special intentions for Cadence Dabice, Mariella Vargas,
and Mary Treuer Delojo

Friday, April 11th

8:00AM Special Intentions for Edward Barbarito, Cadence Dabice, Mariella Vargas,
and Mary Treuer Delojo

Saturday, April 12th

8:00AM Special intentions for Cadence Dabice, Mariella Vargas,
and Mary Treuer Delojo

PRAYER REQUESTS *For the Sick*

Sheridan Anne
Luca Ataide
Emma Avis
Edward Barbarito
Bill Baxter
Sandra Bellomo
Marilyn Beneventine
Ben Beneventine
Tony Bertuna
Giacomo Biancamano
Carol Bierwas
Anastasia Borovskis
The Bower Family
Barbara Brady
Gavin Brady
Larry Brincka
Thomas Burns
Melissa Finn Cabreja
Connie Callaghan
Evelina Capelli
Mark Cardigno
Michael Casapulla
Lou Ceretta
Patricia Cheff
Yolanda Chevitz
Albert Cjalone
Richard Cronin, Jr.
Tom Crowe
Cadence Dabice
Frank Dalton
Debbie Deignan
Steve Deignan
Mary Treuer Delojo

Joseph DeLuca
Valie DeMaria
Joyce De Muro
Mary DeWitt
Kira Dilley
Traci Dyer
Dr. Daniel Edwards
Frank Elfante
Adelaide Elliott
Joyce Englehardt
Anthony Florio
Debby Flower
Nancy Faro
Candelario Garcia
Angie Gorman
Mary Ann Greff
Micheline Guliano
Mr & Mrs. B Guliano
Kathleen Hart
Mikayla Hatfield
Ryder Heckman
James Horvath
Bo Huda
Margaret Ingenito
Jen Jacobs
Ted Jantas
Ethel Jachera
Steve Janowicz
Daria Jebbia
Maureen Karsen
Richard Kennedy
Zeke Kilbride
Nancy Klein

Jennifer Kraft
Mary Larkin
Carol Lembo
Sienna Leone
Christine Luciano
Holly Lyons
Don Malone
Mary Ann Maloney
Barbara Marszelewska
Regina McAloney
Ken McCaffrey
Nancy Meenen
Deanna Meloche
Thomas Meola
Al Mercier
Michelle Michalak
Tiffany Miniere
Donald Moore
Geraldine Moore
Jane Moore
Barbara Moran
Jesse Morella
Maureen Morella
Camille Motta
Bill Neurouter
Charlie Nisvoccia
Megan O'Neill
James O'Neill
Lisa Pacosa-Scillian
Karen Palestini
Max Peters
Lisa Pfeiffer
Edwin Reder

Philip Ribaudo
Geri Robinson
Debra Romberger
Bill Rowan
Jeanne Sabido
Tricia Sampson
Emily Sancyk
Bernice Sauers
Rosemarie Saviello
Scott Scarfale
Elizabeth Scriffignano
Ken Scholts
Lorraine Sekera
Katie Sido
Kara Skafalstad
Pat Smithling
Antonio Stella
Philip Teresi
Ronald Tomko
Donna Torok
Jeff Van Grover
Edward Vannelli
Mariella Vargas
Marilyn Vasta
Mark Waldele
Charlie Waller
Teri Waller
Marion White
Jessica Whitehorne
Alice Woodson



PRAYERS FOR THOSE SERVING OUR COUNTRY

SSGT Christopher J Bachorik

PFC Christian Baxter

MAJ Daniel J. Ciccarelli

SGT Andrew Tucker

1st Lieutenant Kevin P. Keaveney

Warrant Officer Megan Cobb

LT Col Makoto Jacobs

Pvt James Koller

Officer Anthony Saveriano

FC Petty Officer Jake Rothman

PO Russell Bonadonna

SSGT Francis M Duras

HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST?

When requested, names will be included on the "Pray for the Sick" list for 4 weeks.

If you would like the name added again or, if someone's name can be removed sooner, please contact us. Also, let us know if you have a loved one serving in the armed forces.

Call 973-839-2447 or email churchoffice@goodcounsel.org.



Gospel Meditation

Encourage Deeper Understanding of Scripture

"The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery and made her stand in the middle" (John 8:3).

Why do they make her stand in the middle? Why not expose her on the periphery? The reason is something that affects us practically every day.

The center is what stabilizes a community's identity. We humans tend to center ourselves around an accused and condemned victim — though we rarely admit it. This renews our fragile communities and our power as those who weaponize the accusation. This is effective because it is often a victim who represents something truly dangerous for the group. In this case, adultery stands for the breakdown of a community and those within it, because it forces questions like: who is my father? Whose child is this? Is this child one of us, or that of an outsider? The accusers place the adulteress in the center because their community, like most, is built around turning an enemy into a victim.

Once you understand this, you'll see it almost anywhere humans group together (families, politics, workplaces, sports, schools, etc.). The good news is Jesus exposes this dynamic by deftly pointing out the sin-infected hearts of everyone besides the woman. They all leave, symbolizing the breakdown of the old order, and she is **"left alone before him."** A new community has begun, structured around the merciful love of Christ.

What is in your center? What is in the center of our parish and family communities? Strive to center on Christ's forgiveness, and we experience the new, lasting community we call the Church.

— Father John Muir

Thank you for your generosity!

WEEKLY COLLECTION:

March 30, 2025: \$6,573.00
WeShare: \$1,708.00
Candle Offerings: \$101.00
Pennies for the Poor: \$17.00

All donations to the Candles and Pennies for the Poor will be included in the Good Counsel Cares Fund, used to assist those in need from our local area.

DIOCESAN ASSESSMENT:

\$73,634.00
Total Diocesan Assessment
Collected To Date: \$15,867.00
Balance Owed to Diocese: \$57,767.00

The next collection for this year will be taken up on April 27, 2025.

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Dear Parishioners,

Patrick Brennan, the CFO of the Diocese of Paterson, was informed today by the Morris County Prosecutor, that the alleged embezzlement of OLG Funds occurred in a three month time frame in 2020 by former employee Melissa Rivera. Three misappropriated checks totaled \$5,242.00, *not* the original amount stated.

The Pastoral Finance Committee, along with Father Darwin, will work closely with the Diocese Finance Team moving forward to update Financial Policies and Procedures as needed.

We thank all of you for the continued support and prayers for peace.

In Him,
Fr. Darwin Lastra



For the Family and Friends of

ELLEN DEL GATTO

May She Rest in Peace.



DID YOU KNOW YOU CAN GIVE TO GOOD COUNSEL THROUGH [VENMO](#)?

If you have an account, just scan the code and it will take you to our page. When giving, please specify that it is a CONTRIBUTION. Thank you for your generosity and parish support!



FINAL GIFT CLASSES:

- Grades K-2 meet Sunday, 4/6 from 8:45-9:45am
- Grades 3-5 meet Monday, 4/7 from 6:15-7:15pm
- Grades 6-8 meet Wednesday, 4/9 from 7-8:15pm
- Grades 9 and 10 meet Sunday, 4/6 from 7-9pm



CONFIRMATION & GOOD FRIDAY

All 10th grade Confirmation Candidates should sign up to serve at the

Good Friday prayer service on April 18 at 3pm.

A HubSpot message was sent out last week; here's the link to sign up: <https://goodcounsel.org/confirmation-2>

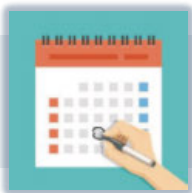


VBS

REGISTRATION OPEN NOW!

Register now for our 2025 Vacation Bible School: True North the week of August 11-15!

Join us for a week of games, music, snacks & crafts and of course, *Trusting Jesus in a Wild World!* Register on our website; Campers in pre-school through grade 5, counselors in grades 6-12: <https://goodcounsel.org/vacation-bible-school-1>



DATES TO REMEMBER!



SACRAMENT OF CONFIRMATION REHEARSAL 4/23

The rehearsal for Confirmation candidates and their sponsors will begin at **7pm on Wednesday, April 23** in the church. If the sponsor is not available, a parent should attend in their place.



FIRST COMMUNION REHEARSALS

Second grade students and at least one parent are scheduled to attend a rehearsal for First Communion as follows:

- For families signed up for the 10:30am First Communion Mass on May 3rd, the rehearsal is on Tuesday 4/29 at 6:30pm in the church.
- For families signed up for the 1pm First Communion Mass on May 3rd, the rehearsal is on Wednesday 4/30 at 6:30pm in the church.

Please bring your child's banner to the rehearsal.



Jesus bent down and began to write on the ground with his finger. But when they continued asking him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." — Jn 8:6b-7

(PRACTICING) CATHOLIC

Mini Reflection: Too often, we don't care about righteousness or truth. We just care about being right. We have a terrible tendency to see only decisions, and in doing so we dehumanize the people behind them. But when God looks at us, he sees more than the worst decisions we've ever made.

The Allure of Being Right

It wasn't a real question.

"The law of Moses says we should stone her. What do you say?" the Pharisees asked Jesus as they brought the adulterous woman before him. But they weren't *really* asking. They didn't care what Jesus' answer was. They didn't ask his opinion because they wanted to know. They asked because they wanted to use his words against him.

Righteousness, truth — that wasn't the goal. The goal was being right.

And in the middle of the whole scene, dragged before Jesus, used as a literal prop in this staged drama, is a woman. A real flesh-and-blood woman.

I find myself wanting to know more about her. She had been "caught in the act," they claimed, but I wonder what that even means. With whom was this act committed, and what were the reasons for her participation in it? Was she coerced? Was she scared? Was she confused? Was it really a cut-and-dry, black-and-white situation of adultery, of lust, of making the wrong decision?

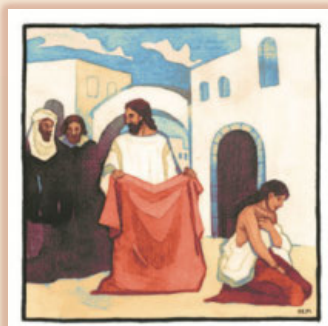
We will never know the answers to these questions, and it doesn't matter — it's not our business. God knows the answers. God knows the truth of the matter: what she did, what she chose, what she felt. Because she wasn't a prop to Him. She was a person.

When God looks at us, he sees more than the worst decisions we've ever made.

I worry that we use one another as props even today, when we try like the Pharisees to illustrate "What is Right." We have a terrible tendency to see only decisions, and in doing so we dehumanize the people behind them.

Too often, we don't care about righteousness or truth. We just care about being right.

— Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman



Why do we do that?

Catholic Life Explained

Question:

If someone is interested in becoming a priest, how does he go about it?

Answer:

Discerning a vocation can happen in any number of ways. It might come as a surprise to the person called or to family or friends. Sometimes it is a gradual process, and other times it is as quick and bright as lightning. Regardless of how it starts, a vocation to the priesthood or religious life requires a process of discerning, testing, and preparing. The best place to begin would be with lots of prayer, receiving the sacraments, and attending daily Mass whenever possible. Then talk to your pastor or a priest you know and trust. Your diocese may have a vocation director who can provide you with guidance and information. The Serra Club is also a great resource for information and contacts to help you discern if indeed God is calling you.

Remember that many young Catholic men have considered the priesthood. Some are ordained and others realize this is not their calling. However, we are all called to be of service to others as we practice our faith. These are extraordinary times in which we live, and they require an extraordinary witness to faith and to God's presence in the world. Our work, our ministry as Catholics, is to be the body of Christ with and for others. The Church needs priests. If God calls you to ordained service in the church, He will provide the grace, direction, and support you need. Just listen and respond with all your heart, mind, and soul.



Life! What a beautiful choice.



Walking with Moms in Need Celebrates 5th Anniversary

This year, beginning on March 25, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, we celebrate both the thirtieth anniversary of Evangelium vitae (The Gospel of Life), St. John Paul II's pro-life encyclical, and the fifth anniversary of Walking with Moms in Need, which was inspired by that landmark encyclical.

Since the launch of Walking with Moms in Need, Catholics in dioceses and parishes across the country have put the Gospel of Life into action, uniting in a shared mission to surround pregnant and parenting mothers in need with loving support and personal accompaniment. Heroic volunteers have stepped forward to make our parishes places where a mother can be connected with meaningful resources and assistance and, most importantly, know that she and her baby are not alone.

The Annunciation reminds us that our Lord Jesus came to earth as a vulnerable child in the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Our Catholic faith calls us to value every mother and child in the name of Christ. Our faith compels us to be active, making the needs of others our own. Every parish has something unique that God is calling them to contribute to the Church's efforts to transform our society into a culture of life and civilization of love.

Please join me in praying that Walking with Moms in Need will continue to become embedded in the very fabric of every parish and diocese as a natural expression of Jesus's call to serve the most vulnerable. May every mother know that she can turn to her local Catholic parish for help in her time of need.

Watch video reflection here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B1tGr_bz3ns

Most Reverend Daniel E. Thomas Bishop of Toledo Chairman, USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities



May God Richly Bless You!

Heather



SPRING INTO SAFE FOODS

Girl Scout Troop 96488 is collecting **allergy conscious** food items for the Pequannock Food Pantry to spread awareness for the month of May, Allergy Awareness Month.

Donation Locations

Pequannock Library 477 Newark Pompton Turnpike, Pompton Plains, NJ 07444	Pequannock Township High School 85 Sunset Rd, Pompton Plains, NJ 07444	Our Lady of Good Counsel 155 W Parkway, Pompton Plains, NJ 07444
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Residence
3 Hanna Court, Pompton Plains, NJ 07444

Safe Items to Donate

Canned Soups: • French Onion • Vegetables • Chicken and Rice • Tomato Other labeled food as Gluten, Dairy or Nut Free	Coffee Tea Toilet Paper Tissues Juice Spam Jelly Canned Tomatoes Carrots Asparagus Gluten Free Pasta Canned Vegetables Pasta Sauce Canned Fruit	Jello Apple Sauce Paper Towels Ketchup Sugar Vienna Sausage Salted Popcorn Rice Cakes Wax Beans Rice Instant Mashed Potatoes Canned Beans
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COLLECTION BASKET IN THE VESTIBULE!

Pequannock UNICO presents

TASTE OF THE TOWN 2025

LOCATION: HOLY SPIRIT SCHOOL PEQUANNOCK, NJ

TASTE OVER 25 LOCAL RESTAURANT SPECIALTIES!

Tuesday, May 6th
5:30 PM - 7:30 PM

For Tickets, call: 201-534-7802
or email: UNICOpeq@gmail.com

Or Scan QR code

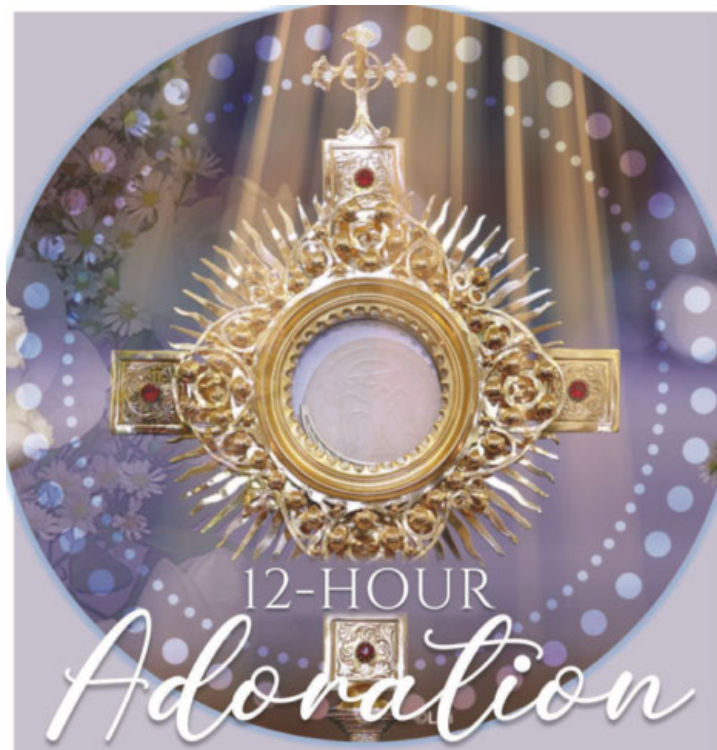
**\$40 adults advance
\$45 adults at door
\$20 children under 13**

www.pequannockunico.com



Living Stations of the Cross

APRIL 11 | 7PM
IN THE CHURCH



PLEASE SIGN UP FOR A SHIFT TO HELP MAKE THIS POSSIBLE!

There are volunteers in the gathering area or sign up online!



This Lent, we invite you to join us for spiritual opportunities to rekindle your relationship with our Lord. All are welcome!

STATIONS OF THE CROSS
FRIDAYS DURING LENT
AFTER THE 8AM MASS, IN THE CHURCH

SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION
MONDAYS DURING LENT
7-8:30PM, IN THE CHURCH,
STARTING MARCH 10

STATIONS OF THE CROSS:
HOPE IN THE CROSS · APRIL 4
7PM, IN THE CHURCH

LIVING STATIONS OF THE CROSS
APRIL 11
7PM, IN THE CHURCH

PALM SUNDAY
APRIL 13
5PM VIGIL, 7PM SPANISH MASS
SUNDAY AT 8AM, 10AM, 11:30AM

12 HOUR ADORATION
APRIL 17
10PM HOLY THURSDAY - 10AM GOOD FRIDAY

HOLY WEEK TRIDUM 2025
APRIL 17-19

HOLY THURSDAY · APRIL 17TH
MASS AT 7PM

GOOD FRIDAY · APRIL 18TH
SERVICE AT 3PM SPANISH SERVICE AT 6PM

EASTER VIGIL · APRIL 19TH
MASS AT 8PM STARTING IN FRONT OF THE CHURCH

EASTER SUNDAY MASSES AT
8AM, 10AM, AND 11:30AM
1PM SPANISH MASS



MISA EN ESPAÑOL

OUR LADY OF GOOD COUNSEL

4° DOMINGO | DE LA CUARESMA



5° DOMINGO DE LA CUARESMA



Jesús se agachó y se puso a escribir en el suelo con el dedo. Pero como insistían en su pregunta, se incorporó y les dijo: "Aquel de ustedes que no tenga pecado, que le tire la primera piedra". - Jn 8, 6-7

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HORARIO DE LAS MISAS

Misa semanal los Miércoles a las 7 pm seguido con la exposición del Santísimo Sacramento

Sábado Misa en Español a las 7 pm

Confesiones: Sábado 3:30 pm -4:30 pm y 6:15 -6:45 pm

Para las intenciones por favor contactar a Carolina Guevara: spanishmass@goodcounsel.org



MEDITACIÓN DEL EVANGELIO – ALENTAR UN ENTENDIMIENTO MÁS PROFUNDO DE LA ESCRITURA

6 de abril de 2025

V Domingo de Cuaresma

Estamos llegando al final de la Cuaresma. Se termina el Jueves Santo con la Misa de la Cena del Señor. “En la Cuaresma, la Iglesia renueva la llamada a la conversión. El hombre nuevo nace en el Bautismo. Dios nos hace sus hijos y nos incorpora a Cristo y a su iglesia. Del corazón del hombre renovado, según Dios, proceden los comportamientos buenos. Estamos llamados a abandonar los comportamientos del pecado y a fijar la mirada en lo esencial” (Papa Francisco).

¿Qué sería lo esencial? Lo primero sería buscar dentro de nosotros mismos para dar respuesta, comenzando con mis actos y los de los demás. A veces, somos tan duros para juzgar. Aplicamos la ley de la piedra sin piedad. Duros de corazón, difíciles para practicar el perdón. Sin embargo, Tú, Señor, me perdonas con la blandura de un Evangelio escrito en el suelo, es decir, en tierra blanda. Aprovechemos hoy para pedir a Jesús la enseñanza de la misericordia. Esa misma misericordia aplicada a la mujer sorprendida en adulterio. ¿Qué debió haber sentido aquella persona acusada a la pregunta de Jesús? “Mujer, ¿dónde están? ¿Ninguno te ha condenado? Ella contestó: Ninguno, Señor. Y Jesús le dijo: Tampoco yo te condeno. Vete y en adelante no vuelvas a pecar” (Juan 8:10-11). Pues bien, el reto de la conversión es no volver a pecar. Es aprender día a día a ser buenos, con nosotros mismos y con los demás.

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¡Devociones, explicadas! Coronilla a la Divina Misericordia

Mini Explicación — Ideal para las redes sociales o en su boletín: La Coronilla a la Divina Misericordia se reza con un rosario ordinario de cinco decenas, es una oración de intercesión invocando la misericordia de Dios sobre el mundo entero, utilizando palabras extraídas de El Diario de Santa Faustina María Kowalska.

Coronilla a la Divina Misericordia, ¡Explicada!

La Coronilla a la Divina Misericordia es una oración de intercesión invocando la misericordia de Dios sobre el mundo entero, utilizando palabras extraídas de El Diario de Santa Faustina María Kowalska. Santa Faustina fue una monja polaca que recibió visiones de Cristo implorándole que divulgara el mensaje de su Divina Misericordia, específicamente mediante la recitación de esta coronilla.

La coronilla se reza usando un rosario ordinario de cinco decenas, se comienza recitando el Padre Nuestro, el Ave María y el Credo de los Apóstoles. Las cuentas que se usan normalmente para rezar el Padre Nuestro se usan para recitar esta oración: “Padre eterno, te ofrezco el Cuerpo y la Sangre, el Alma y la Divinidad de Tu amadísimo Hijo, nuestro Señor, Jesucristo, como propiciación de nuestros pecados y los del mundo entero”, luego se recita en las cuentas de las diez Ave Marías: “Por su dolorosa pasión, ten misericordia de nosotros y del mundo entero.” Al finalizar las cinco decenas se recita tres veces: “Santo Dios, Santo Fuerte, Santo Inmortal, ten misericordia de nosotros y del mundo entero”.

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(PRACTICANDO) CATÓLICA: RECONOCE A DIOS EN TUS MOMENTOS ORDINARIOS

Por Colleen Jurkiewicz Dorman

Mini Reflexión: Dios no necesita nuestro arrepentimiento. Nosotros necesitamos nuestro arrepentimiento.

La Disculpa

Me gusta imaginar al Hijo Pródigo practicando su disculpa en el espejo.

No lo habría hecho, por supuesto. Los espejos no eran exactamente una moneda de diez centavos la docena en ese entonces. Pero me lo imagino de todos modos, ensayando las palabras mientras contempla su propia reflexión: "Padre, he pecado contra Dios y contra ti. Trátame como tratarías a uno de tus trabajadores contratados."

En otras palabras, he hecho mal. No merezco nada de ti. Pero por favor, no dejes que me muera de hambre. Sálvame.

La disculpa no era necesaria para conmover el corazón del padre. Lo sabemos porque antes de que se encuentren, antes de que se diga nada, el padre se siente abrumado por la compasión, no porque haya obtenido su satisfacción, ese tan esperado "Lo siento, me equivoqué." No, simplemente está muy contento de ver a su hijo con vida. Incluso sin disculpas, sabemos que el padre le rogará a su hijo que se quede.

Entonces, ¿por qué el hijo se disculpa?

El padre no necesita el "lo siento." No se está muriendo de hambre ni perdido. Siempre supo que era una mala idea. No necesita aprender ninguna lección.

Pero qué tragedia habría sido si el hijo nunca hubiera dicho que lo sentía. Sin duda, su padre le habría dejado quedarse como trabajador asalariado, y habría tenido comida para comer. Habría sobrevivido. Pero no habría sido lo que había nacido para ser.

A menudo pienso en la disculpa del hijo mientras estoy arrodillada en el confesionario, recitando torpemente pecados que Dios ya conoce y está ansioso por perdonar. ¿Por qué estás haciendo esto? Algunas personas preguntarían. Dios no necesita esto.

Es la disculpa, ¿ves? La disculpa lo es todo. El hijo pródigo había muerto. La disculpa lo devolvió a la vida.

Dios no necesita nuestro arrepentimiento. Nosotros necesitamos nuestro arrepentimiento.

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EL SACERDOCIO

Pregunta:

Si alguien está interesado en convertirse en sacerdote, ¿cómo lo hace?

Respuesta:

El discernimiento de una vocación puede ocurrir de diferentes maneras. Puede ser una sorpresa para la persona que recibe el llamado, así como para sus familiares o sus amigos. Algunas veces es un proceso gradual y en otras ocasiones es tan rápido y brillante como un rayo. Independientemente de cómo inicie, una vocación al sacerdocio o a la vida religiosa, requiere de un proceso de discernimiento, prueba y preparación. La mejor manera para iniciar sería orar mucho, recibir los sacramentos y asistir a Misa a diario, siempre que sea posible. Después, conversa con un pastor o un sacerdote que tú conozcas y en quien confíes. Tu diócesis puede tener un director de vocaciones quien puede brindarte orientación e información. El Club Serra también es una importante fuente de información y de contactos para ayudarte a discernir si en verdad Dios te está llamando.

Recuerda que muchos jóvenes católicos han considerado el sacerdocio. Algunos se han ordenado y otros se dan cuenta de que ésta no es su vocación. Sin embargo, todos nosotros somos llamados a servir a los demás para poner en práctica nuestra fe. Hoy en día, vivimos tiempos extraordinarios y estos requieren de un testimonio extraordinario de la fe y de la presencia de Dios en el mundo. Nuestro trabajo, nuestro ministerio como católicos, es ser el cuerpo de Cristo con y para los demás. La Iglesia necesita sacerdotes. Si Dios te hace un llamado al servicio consagrado para la Iglesia, Él te dará la gracia, la dirección y el apoyo que necesitas. Solo escucha y responde con todo tu corazón, mente y alma.

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