

SACRAMENTS

Unfortunate but Common Excuses for Not Going to Confession

By Laura Hensley

Being a 2nd grade Catechist, I absolutely love teaching the kids about God's forgiveness and mercy. As a bonus, I am able to catechize to the parents who may not have gone to reconciliation in a while. No one likes to admit when they are wrong, but the parents often are a bit lazy on this subject. We have a merciful God who despite our sinfulness, gave us his only Son to save us from our sin. Here are some common objections to going to reconciliation and why they are not valid arguments.

1. A Priest Is Just a Man

Yes, a priest is a man, but they are given the power to forgive by the command of Jesus. God gave Jesus the power to forgive and after his death, he gave the power of forgiveness to the Apostles (John 20:23). They in turn, gave it to other priests who, for 2000 years, have continued to hand down the power Jesus handed down from his Father. When we talk to a priest, we are actually speaking with Jesus through that priest. The priest is just the vessel through whom Jesus forgives us.

2. I Can Talk Directly to God

Yes, you can talk directly to God in prayer, always. But confessing our sins to a priest is a requirement of forgiveness. Jesus is the Second Person in the Trinity and he was able to discern the faith and sins of the people around him, and could forgive without "seeing their faith" (Mark 2). The priest, a man, does not know our sins as Jesus could and must actually hear them. The priest also has to discern if that person is truly sorry for those sins and give them absolution or if they should retain those sins and give the person the time and mercy to be sincere in their confession and change their life.

3. My Sins Are Private

No, they are not. Sin always harms another, even if the sin is against our own body. Just think about someone who drinks too much. They are not only harming their own body, but can also be abusive or neglectful, which harms relationships and children. Because our sins do not only affect us, but also affects others and our relationship with God, we must go to a priest to ask for forgiveness from God, just as we need to go to a friend to repair a broken friendship. Rest assured, the priest has the "seal of the confessional" in which he has to keep our sins private, therefore we know that a priest will never tell another our sins.

4. I'm A Good Person who Goes to Church Every Week

Awesome! And guess what? During the Penitential Rite all of our venial sins are forgiven so that we are sinless to receive Christ in the Eucharist. BUT if we are guilty of a mortal sin, we are required to go to reconciliation before receiving the Eucharist. A priest or Extraordinary Minister of the Eucharist isn't going to know if we have a mortal sin, and they will still present the Blessed Sacrament to us. Therefore, we must take responsibility to go to reconciliation when we know we have a mortal sin, so that we do not add to the sin by also taking the Eucharist. It is recommended that we go to Confession often, and we may be encouraged to go before Easter since that is the celebration of Christ's victory over sin. We are only obligated to confess any mortal (grave) sins at least once a year, although it is recommended that we also go and confess our venial sins.

5. Even if God Forgives Me, I Can't Forgive Myself

This is actually a mortal sin! There is only one sin in the Bible that Jesus states is unforgivable, and that is blasphemy against the Spirit. If we are unwilling to repent and accept the forgiveness that God has offered to us through reconciliation, then we are turning our backs on God and telling Him that our sin is bigger than Him. One of the sins where someone may feel like God cannot forgive them is abortion. God is even bigger than that sin, and if someone needs help finding forgiveness, please go and talk with a priest about it. They will not condemn, but will help you to find forgiveness.

6. I Don't Know The Format

Don't let a format prevent you from going to Reconciliation. If you let the priest know it's been awhile since you've been to confession, they will help guide you along the way. Basically, the steps are:

Confession: Say "hello", tell the priest how long its been since your last confession, and say, "I am in need of God's forgiveness when..." and state your sins. You don't even need to tell the priest every sin you've done in your life since your last confession, but just the most serious (mortal sins) and most frequent (those bad habits that cause you to sin the most).

Contrition: Say the Prayer of Sorrow.

Penance: Listen to the words of advice the priest gives you and pay attention to the penance you need to do in order to repair the damage caused by the sin.

Absolution: Pray along with the priest as he lays his hand over your head and prays the words of absolution. This is the prayer that frees us of our sin and allows us to go out of the confessional white as snow. We should thank the priest and complete our penance as soon as possible.

What a blessing to be free of all that sin and darkness, so that we can now live in total communion with God!

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MASSES & SERVICES

Saturday: 5pm
(Anticipated Mass)
Sunday: 9am, 11am & 5pm
Monday – Wednesday 8am
Thursday Mass/Novena:
8am & 7pm
Friday, Saturday, Holidays: 9am
(Fridays in July & August: 8am)
Reconciliation
Saturday: 4-4:45pm
Adoration
Saturday 9:30-10am
Library Hours
Sunday: 10-10:45am, 4:30-5pm

OFFICE HOURS

Monday-Friday: 9am-4pm

STAFF

Pastor
Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R.
Associate Pastor
Joseph Horo, C.Ss.R.
Office Manager
Virginia Fong
Pastoral Coordinator
Bertilla Watanabe
Bookkeeper
Corinna Siy
Youth Ministry Coordinator
Theresa Barao

OLPH School Principal

Lora Clarke

IN RESIDENCE.

William Comerford, C.Ss.R.

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olphchurchvancouver



OUR LADY OF PERPETUAL HELP PARISH

April 9, 2017

Palm Sunday

Dear Parishioners,

Holy Week is finally here. This is the climax of our Lenten season of prayer, sacrifice and almsgiving. I hope these Lenten preparations have been going well for you. Our eyes are now fixed on the final days leading up to the death and resurrection of Jesus. It starts with the procession of palms today when Jesus was hailed as the Messiah, only too soon to be reviled and treated like a criminal for the crucifixion. The Passion reading today prepares us for the solemnity of the events of this week.

In liturgical terms the three days leading up to Easter is called the Easter Triduum. It begins on the evening of Holy Thursday and goes to the evening of Easter Sunday. Though chronologically three days, they are liturgically one day unfolding the Paschal mystery for us. This three-day celebration marks the end of the Lenten season, and leads to the Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord at the Easter Vigil. The liturgical services that take place during the Triduum are Thursday's Mass of the Lord's Supper, Good Friday of the Lord's Passion and the Mass of the Resurrection of the Lord which begins as a vigil on Holy Saturday.

Holy Thursday is when we reenact the Lord's Last Supper which he shared with his Apostles. On this evening, recalling how Jesus washed the feet of his Apostles, the priest will wash the feet of 12 people. Priests everywhere will also renew their vows at this Mass because this is the day Jesus instituted, not just the Mass but also the ministerial priesthood. On Good Friday, we immerse ourselves in recollecting the Passion of Jesus. In solemn thanks for his act of love, we will also kiss the Cross. On the evening of Holy Saturday we begin the vigil to solemnly celebrate the Lord's victory over sin and death. This year, we have 20 people in RCIA who will be joyfully welcomed into the Church as well that evening.

Let us remember the sanctity of these days and continue our prayers and practices of self-denial before we burst forth into celebration at Easter.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Babu Mathew, C.Ss.R



Sunday April 9
Palm Sunday Blessings of Palms
and Procession at all Masses

Mon – Wed April 10-12
8am Mass as usual

Holy Thursday April 13
(No morning Mass)
Mass of the Lord's Supper 7pm
Exposition of the Blessed
Sacrament till 10pm

Good Friday April 14
Noon Prayer/Soup & bread: 12 noon
Celebration of the Lord's Passion: 3pm
Stations of the Cross: 7pm

Holy Saturday April 15
9am Morning Prayer
Confessions: 4-5pm
Easter Vigil 8:30pm

Easter Sunday April 16
Usual Mass Times
9am (Children's Mass)

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? - Psalm 22

NEWS & NOTICES

Readers: If you would like to be a lector at our Masses, please let us know. Guidelines will be provided, as well as training if needed. Please contact our Coordinator Roger Poirier for more information. Email: rogerlpoirier@yahoo.ca.

Easter Holidays: OLPH School students will be dismissed at noon on Holy Thursday. Easter Monday is a holiday. Mass is at 9am that day. Happy Easter!

OLPH Youth Ministry: Grade 7s and teens! If you would like to help with reading and ushering at the Sunday 5pm Mass, please contact us. We would love to hear from you. Contact Theresa for info. Email: olphyouthmin@gmail.com.

Quilters Wanted: Sancta Maria House is Healing/ Recovery House for women in Kitsilano is looking for quilters to assist our women on Friday afternoons from 1:30 pm to 4:00 pm. Please consider sharing your time and skills with our ladies. Please call Sharon @ 604-590-2460

Lenten Liturgy and Lunch Series 2017: Join our friends at St Mark's for faith, food and fellowship every Wednesday during Lent till April 12, after the 12:10pm Mass at St. Mark's Parish. After Mass, homemade vegetarian soup and bread will be served free of charge at Plato's Cave Café in the company of good speakers - A different topic every week during Lent!

Bishop Monroe Mass and Dinner: Bishop David Monroe will be celebrating his 50th Priestly Ordination Anniversary on Saturday, May 20th, 2017. Mass will be held at Holy Rosary Cathedral at 5:10 p.m., followed by a ticketed dinner at the Italian Cultural Centre at 7:00 p.m. If you are interested in booking a table of 10 for \$550 before tickets are open to all, please let us know.

Open House at Gardens of Gethsemani: Join us for our annual Open House on Friday, April 21, and Saturday, April 22, from 9-5 p.m. Come and explore our grounds with informative tours. Family Services Advisors will also be on hand to assist you with your arrangements. Pick up your invitation at the back of your church this weekend. For more information, contact Terry Whiteley at 604-531-2141 or visit www.rccav.org.

Insurance and Estate Planning: The Development Office at the Archdiocese of Vancouver is holding an informative workshop about how to use insurance as part of your financial and estate planning. Our speakers will provide a short talk and then take questions at the end of their presentation. Speakers from Rogers Financial Group (Patrick McGuire, Bryn Hamilton and Stefano Pannou) and Knights of Columbus (Joseph ven der Buhs) will present at the John Paul II Pastoral Centre on **Thursday, April 20, 2017, at 7:00pm – 8:00pm** (doors open at 6:30pm). Please sign up online at <http://rcav.org/epg/> or by calling Esther Jang, Associate Director, Planned Gifts at 604-683-0281 extension 50315.

MOTHER'S DAY DANCE!

6-9pm Saturday May 13, 2017 @ OLPH School Gym

Buffet Dinner | Dancing | Silent Auction | Door Prizes

\$40 Adults | \$15 Kids (3-12 Years) Tickets on sale
after weekend Masses and at the Parish Office!

IT'S ABOUT TIME MOM HAD SOME FUN!!

AN OLPH YOUTH MINISTRY FUNDRAISER!

Stewardship Reflection

As they were marching out, they came upon a man of Cyrene, Simon by name; this man they pressed into service to carry his cross." -- MATTHEW 27:32

The Lord calls us to love God and to love our neighbor. Every day we are presented with opportunities to love our neighbor and help him "carry his cross". These opportunities aren't usually big events, they are usually ordinary occurrences like helping someone carry their groceries or holding the door open for them. The key is putting the other person's needs before our own and not expecting anything in return.

Stewardship Office, Archdiocese of St. Louis

CALENDAR

APRIL

Food Bank

Food Bank will be on April 22 and 23 this month and items which we are donating are canned protein foods such as tuna/salmon, peanut butter, etc. Cash donations are also accepted.

Easter Egg Hunt



There will be an Easter Egg Hunt after the 9am Children's Mass and the 11am Mass on Easter Sunday.

MAY

Mother's Day Dance

Mother's Day Dance Volunteers
We need volunteers to help with ticket sales, set-up and clean-up for the Mother's Day Dance. Please contact our Volunteers' Coordinator Lara Garcia. You can reach her at olphchurchvolunteers@gmail.com

Mother's Day Auction Item Donations
We are also looking for donations of items for the Silent Auction which mothers would love – spa tickets, wine baskets, restaurant vouchers, a weekend at a cottage! Please contact Kathy or Jing at communications.olph@rcav.org if you can help.

Mother's Day Dance Ticket Sales
Tickets are available for sale after all weekend Masses as well as at the parish office during the week. School parents can also buy tickets on Fridays before and after the 9am School Mass as well as on Mondays before and after Assembly.

Praise & Worship: The OLPH Youth Ministry will hold their next Praise & Worship before the 5pm Mass on June 11. There is no P & W in April and May.

What is the Significance of Palm Sunday?

Palm Sunday began with Jesus and His disciples traveling over the Mount of Olives. The Lord sent two disciples ahead into the village to find an animal to ride. They found the unbroken colt of a donkey, just as Jesus had said they would. When they untied the colt, the owners began to question them. The disciples responded with the answer Jesus had provided: "The Lord needs it" ([Luke 19:31-34](#)). Amazingly, the owners were satisfied with that answer and let the disciples go. "They brought [the donkey] to Jesus, threw their cloaks on the colt and put Jesus on it" ([Luke 19:35](#)).

As Jesus ascended toward Jerusalem, a large multitude gathered around Him. This crowd understood that Jesus was the Messiah; what they did not understand was that it wasn't time to set up the kingdom yet—although Jesus had tried to tell them so. The crowd's actions along the road give rise to the name "Palm Sunday": "A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road" ([Matthew 21:8](#)). In strewing their cloaks on the road, the people were giving Jesus the royal treatment—King Jehu was given similar honor at his coronation. John records the detail that the branches they cut were from palm trees.

There is coming a day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. -- Philippians 2:10-11

On that first Palm Sunday, the people also honored Jesus verbally: "The crowds that went ahead of him and those that followed shouted, 'Hosanna to the Son of David!' / 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!' / 'Hosanna in the highest heaven!'" ([Matthew 21:9](#)). In their praise of Jesus, the Jewish crowds were quoting Psalm 118:25-26, an acknowledged prophecy of the Christ. The allusion to a Messianic psalm drew resentment from the religious leaders present: "Some of the Pharisees in the crowd said to Jesus, 'Teacher, rebuke your disciples!' However, Jesus saw no need to rebuke those who told the truth. He replied, 'I tell you . . . if they keep quiet, the stones will cry out'" ([Luke 19:40](#)).

Some 450 to 500 years prior to Jesus' arrival in Jerusalem, the prophet Zechariah had prophesied the event we now call Palm Sunday: "Rejoice greatly, Daughter Zion! / Shout, Daughter Jerusalem! / See, your king comes to you, / righteous and victorious, / lowly and riding on a donkey, / on a colt, the foal of a donkey" ([Zechariah 9:9](#)). The prophecy was fulfilled in every particular, and it was indeed a time of rejoicing, as Jerusalem welcomed their King. Unfortunately, the celebration was not to last. The crowds looked for a Messiah who would rescue them *politically* and free them *nationally*, but Jesus had come to save them *spiritually*. First things first, and mankind's primary need is spiritual, not political, cultural, or national salvation.

Even as the coatless multitudes waved the palm branches and shouted for joy, they missed the true reason for Jesus' presence. They could neither see nor understand the cross. That's why, "as

A Mission on Mercy

It was a very busy week for Deacon Bob and his wife Joan. The mission experts brought with them powerful stories and good music to share the message of Jesus' mercy and the Eucharist. Each day's talk began with Pope Francis's prayer from the Jubilee Year of Mercy.

Deacon Bob reinforced this message, "We need constantly to contemplate the mystery of mercy. It is a wellspring of joy, serenity, and peace. Our salvation depends on it.

He summed up his message with the following words: Mercy reveals the very mystery of the Most Holy Trinity. Mercy is the ultimate and supreme act by which God comes to meet us. Mercy is the fundamental law that dwells in the heart of every person who looks sincerely into the eyes of his brothers and sisters on the path of life. Mercy is the bridge that connects God and man, opening our hearts to the hope of being loved forever despite our sinfulness.

The mission closed with Mass on Wednesday evening. Deacon Bob said, "We hope this Parish Mission has been a fruitful experience in your journey of faith. Thanks to all who came and all who supported us! We will keep you in our prayers. Please keep us in yours!

PARISH MISSION



The Redemptorist Associates had a chance to get together with Deacon Bob and Joan at their first meeting. Deacon Bob shared his experiences of growing up here and how he moved on to join the diaconate.

Palm Sunday...

[Jesus] approached Jerusalem and saw the city, he wept over it and said, 'If you, even you, had only known on this day what would bring you peace—but now it is hidden from your eyes. The days will come upon you when your enemies . . . will not leave one stone on another, because you did not recognize the time of God's coming to you'" ([Luke 19:41-47](#)). It is a tragic thing to see the Savior but not recognize Him for who He is. The crowds who were crying out "*Hosanna!*" on Palm Sunday were crying out "*Crucify Him!*" later that week ([Matthew 27:22-23](#)).

There is coming a day when every knee will bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord. The worship will be real then. Also, John records a scene in heaven that features the eternal celebration of the risen Lord: "There before me was a great multitude that no one could count, from every nation, tribe, people and language, standing before the throne and before the Lamb. They were wearing white robes and were *holding palm branches in their hands*" ([Revelation 7:9](#)). These palm-bearing saints will shout, "Salvation belongs to our God, who sits on the throne, and to the Lamb" (verse 10), and who can measure the sum of their joy?