

Presentation at all the Masses – St Teresa’s, SI, NY

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Date: 04/17/11

Words: 589

It is going to be a Holy Week like never before.

+ Tomorrow, beginning at three (the hour upon which Jesus died, where He refuses no one His mercy) and lasting at least until nine will be “A Day of Forgiveness.” A revolution of sorts – one of love, peace, healing and mercy. I am referring of course to the Sacrament of Penance – Confession. We can start to reclaim our lives – those of us who are away, and start living the way God intended us to be.

+ Call in sick and come, as the Doctor of all Doctors, Jesus will be present. Psalm 51 and Ezekiel 18 tells us we receive a new heart and a new Spirit when we repent. Ezekiel 18 also tells us that God will remember our sins no more. Why do we bring up what God already has forgotten? It is why this “Day of Forgiveness” is so important. We are retaking what the devil has tried to take away.

We just heard the greatest of all love stories in Jesus’ Passion. The devil removed eternal life when Adam sinned in the garden.

John 3:16 tells us “For God so loved the world, He gave His only Son, so that everyone who believes in Him might not perish, but have eternal life.”

Jesus took on the sins of all those past, present and future. As we just heard in (Matthew 27:52), “Tombs were opened, and the bodies of many saints who had fallen asleep were raised.” His love runs so deep; He paid a ransom for our sins, so no one is denied eternal life. Jesus repaired what the devil had thought was broken forever - forgiveness and eternal life.

+ I am here to tell you that I was away (from Confession) for thirty-five years. Five years ago, I returned to a Priest I never met – one who was kind, compassionate and forgiving. When he enters the confessional, he is acting on behalf of Jesus. I will never forget the words Father said to me after he heard my confession, “I have never been so humbled, thank you.” I guarantee you too will receive that same love and grace from all three of our Priests. I have never been the same. My new heart and spirit gave my wife a husband she never met – strengthening a thirty-seven year marriage to near perfect.

+ Our Blessed Mother will be standing in line with you, walking you into the confessional. “Do not be afraid.” She simply pray to her Son, “Jesus, there is someone here who so desperately wants to meet you.”

Don’t worry if you don’t know what to say. It is okay. The Priest will talk you through it. After all, Jesus knows everything. “Do not be afraid.” Did you know that phrase is in the bible 397 times?

The Holy Spirit will be present too. Perhaps you just want to show up and sit awhile. Ask Him for His help. He will lead you. You’ll feel the love of our living and truly present God. You may not know it, but the process when you arrive is just about completed. It is just a formality by then.

Jesus, thank you for enduring the agony and torment of my sins so I can take my life back. Almighty Father, bring so many of us here that the lines continue past midnight. Thank you loving us like You do.