



LIGHT OF MERCY

DIOCESE OF PEORIA

During this Jubilee of Mercy, the Catholic Diocese of Peoria is delighted to present the “Light of Mercy” Lenten Reconciliation Initiative. Bishop Jenky has asked that every parish, as much as possible, to be open for the Sacrament of Reconciliation every Wednesday evening during Lent 2016. Our hope in this endeavor is to draw Catholics into a deeper relationship with Christ by experiencing His mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We especially hope this initiative creates an opportunity for those who have been far from the Sacrament or away from the practice of their Catholic faith.

We’ve created several resources to make this program easy to implement in your parishes. We thank you in advance for your participation and your efforts to have the lights on for the faithful to come and encounter the mercy of God.

If you have questions, please contact Shirley Plaag in the Office of Evangelization and Faith Formation splaag@cdop.org

In this packet we’ve included:

- Timeline for the Light of Mercy Campaign 2016
- Ideas for implementing the Light of Mercy at your parish
- Materials for a Reconciliation Workshop and Steps for Confession
- Sample Pulpit announcements (English and Spanish)
- Sample Bulletin announcements (English and Spanish)
- Sample intercessions (English and Spanish)

Timeline for Light of Mercy Lent 2016

Ash Wednesday	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add the pulpit announcement to your announcements• We're having yards signs made. They can be picked up at the Spalding Pastoral Center in early 2016 and displayed at your parish!• If you have a parish website or Facebook page: include a link to www.cdop.org/light-of-mercy
1 st -5 th Sundays of Lent	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Include bulletin announcement• Include spoken announcement at Masses• Include intercession in Prayers of the Faithful

How to implement the Light of Mercy?

We've compiled some suggestions for you to help implement this program in your parish in the most efficient and friendly way.

1. Environment! So much of our experience is based on how comfortable we are with our surroundings.
 - Lent begins in winter. Turn the heat on 30 minutes before confession begins if your church gets cold
 - Have the church well lit (literally showing the LIGHT of Mercy)
 - If possible, have some doors wide open (even if it's the interior ones) to make people feel welcome
2. Change your exterior confession times to match what is happening during Lent on Wednesday evenings
3. Consider having the Blessed Sacrament exposed during this time
4. Does your parish have a hospitality or welcoming team? Invite them to be a part of the campaign to make those who come feel welcome in the parish
5. Offer the possibility of a refresher on a how to go to confession refresher before the confessions begins
6. Invite different ministry groups at the parish to be present in the church during confession to pray for continued renewal in the parish and to create a an environment of active prayer
7. Consider one on one personal invitation to come to The Light of Mercy. Encourage parish disciples to do the same.

“How to Go to Confession” Workshop Guide

Why? Many who have been away from the Sacrament of Reconciliation often do so because of embarrassment or anxiety at not remembering how to go! This is an easy problem to solve with a simple workshop.

Program: We invite you to consider offering this opportunity on one of the Wednesday evenings in Lent or before your Reconciliation Service.

The steps to a successful workshop are:

- Identifying the workshop leader
- Choosing the day and time (connected to the availability of the sacrament)
- Promoting the workshop through the parish bulletin, website, pulpit announcements
- Choosing a space to set up chairs
- Preparing to use role-play or walk-through to demonstrate the steps in the sacrament
- Allowing time for questions
- Invite people to make their way to the church for Confession

*The next page contains an outline of the steps for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

**Note: Catholic Diocese of Peoria Guide to Confession (including examination of conscience) for Adults and Children is available at www.cdop.org/light-of-mercy and can be printed for your church use

Outline of the Steps for Sacrament of Reconciliation

For use during the “How to Go to Confession” Workshop

There are three basic components to consider in preparing for the Sacrament of Penance: sorrow for our sins, an examination of conscience followed by naming the sins brought to light to a priest, and finally the desire to make up for our sins and amend our lives.

Prayer and reflection before getting in line will help you to make a sincere and complete confession.

1. Begin with a prayer to be open to the Holy Spirit speaking in your heart.
2. Examine your conscience – consider your actions in light of Christ’s teaching. In light of Christ’s moral teaching be mindful of both the things you have done, and the things that you have failed to do. Remember sins are not merely broken rules, but are those actions that rupture our relationship with God and others. If you need more guidance, there are many models of examination of conscience based on the Beatitudes and/or Ten Commandments.
3. Enter the confessional and begin by making the Sign of the Cross and saying “Bless me Father for I have sinned,” followed by stating how long it has been since your last confession.
4. After the priest acknowledges your greeting, confess your sins and their frequency. The priest may ask clarifying questions or give you counsel.
5. The priest will ask you to make an Act of Contrition. If you have not memorized one of the Acts of Contrition of the Church, simply make a statement that acknowledges your sorrow for your sins and expresses your commitment to amend your life.
6. Receive the words of absolution from the priest. Listen carefully to this beautiful prayer of forgiveness, when it is complete, you respond, “Amen.”
7. The priest will dismiss you with a sign of peace.
8. In a spirit of thanksgiving perform your penance as soon as possible.

If, at any point during your confession you have questions, ask the priest for guidance! He is here to help you in this conversation.

Pulpit Announcements

- We are happy to announce the launch of the Light of Mercy Lenten Initiative. During Lent, Catholic parishes throughout Diocese of Peoria, including our own, will offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Wednesday evenings from [TIME] to [TIME]. God created us for relationship with Him and one another. Come renew and strengthen your relationship with the Lord through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. See the bulletin for more information.
- God doesn't need us to be perfect in order to love us; but he does need us to trust him in order to reach us with his love. This week we continue The Light of Mercy Lenten Initiative. During Lent, Catholic parishes throughout the Diocese, including our own, will offer the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Wednesday evenings from [TIME] to [TIME]. See the bulletin for more information.

Anuncios Desde el Púlpito

- Estamos felices de anunciar el lanzamiento de la Luz de la Iniciativa de Cuaresma Misericordia. Durante la Cuaresma, las parroquias católicas de toda la Diócesis de Peoria, incluyendo la nuestra, estarán ofreciendo el sacramento de la Confesión todos los miércoles en la noche de [hora] a [hora]. Dios nos ha creado para tener una relación personal con él y entre nosotros. Ven, renueva y fortalece tu relación con el Señor por medio del Sacramento de la Confesión. En el boletín de la parroquia encontrarás más información.
- Dios no necesita que seamos perfectos para así poder amarnos, sin embargo, si quiere que confiemos en El para poder alcanzarnos con su amor. Esta semana continúa la campaña Luz de la Misericordia. Durante la Cuaresma, las parroquias en toda la Diócesis de Peoria, incluyendo la nuestra, estarán ofreciendo el sacramento de la Confesión todos los miércoles en la noche de [hora] a [hora]. En el boletín de la parroquia encontrarás más información.

Bulletin Announcements

The LIGHT OF MERCY is shining for you.

On Wednesdays during Lent from [TIME] to [TIME], the doors of [PARISH NAME] are open and the lights are on for you! Bring a family member or friend to stop in for quiet prayer or to rediscover our heavenly Father's heart of mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

The LIGHT OF MERCY is shining for you.

God doesn't need us to be perfect in order to love us; but he does need us to trust him in order to reach us with his love. Visit [PARISH NAME] on Wednesdays between [TIME] and [TIME], and experience anew God's mercy in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

Anuncios Para el Boletín Parroquial

¡La Luz está Encendida para ti!

Los miércoles de [hora] a [hora], las puertas de [nombre de la parroquia] estarán abiertas y ¡la Luz está encendida para ti! Invita a algún amigo o un familiar a que venga a la iglesia a tener un momento de oración en silencio, o a redescubrir el corazón misericordioso de nuestro Padre Dios en el Sacramento de la Confesión.

¡La Luz está Encendida para ti!

Dios no necesita que seamos perfectos para así poder amarnos, sin embargo, si quiere que confiemos en El para poder alcanzarnos con su amor. Visita [nombre de la parroquia] los miércoles de [hora] a [hora] y ¡empieza de nuevo con el Sacramento de la Reconciliación!

Prayers of the Faithful

Ash Wednesday

That as we begin this Lenten season Catholics across the Diocese of Peoria will seek to renew their relationship with the loving God through the Sacrament of Reconciliation offered through The Light of Mercy initiative, let us pray to the Lord. **R.** Lord, hear our prayer

1st Sunday of Lent

That we may recognize God's blessings in our lives, trust that He desires abundant life for us, And draw closer to his unconditional love in the Sacrament of Reconciliation this Lent, let us pray to the Lord. **R.** Lord, hear our prayer

2nd Sunday of Lent

That through the Sacrament of Reconciliation we may set aside the sin and brokenness that divides us and bring peace to our hearts, our homes, and our world. let us pray to the Lord. **R.** Lord, hear our prayer

3rd Sunday of Lent

That all those carrying the heavy burden of sin will have complete trust in the never-ending mercy of God and His constant desire to forgive each of us through the Sacrament of Reconciliation this Lenten season, let us pray to the Lord. **R.** Lord, hear our prayer

4th Sunday of Lent

That in this penitential season the experience of God's forgiveness will lead us all to conversion of heart and action, to renewing our relationship with Him, and to sharing His forgiveness with those around us, let us pray to the Lord. **R.** Lord, hear our prayer

5th Sunday of Lent

That as we come to the end of the season of Lent we may worthily prepare our hearts to welcome the joy of the Resurrection by allowing Jesus to free us from our sins through the Sacrament of Reconciliation let us pray to the Lord. **R.** Lord, hear our prayer

Oraciones para el Tiempo de Cuaresma

Miércoles de Ceniza

Que al iniciar éste tiempo de Cuaresma, los católicos en la Diócesis de Peoria busquen renovar su relación con el Dios del amor por medio del Sacramento de la Reconciliación, ofrecido por medio de la campaña Luz de la Misericordia. Roguemos al Señor. **R.** Te rogamos, Señor.

1o Domingo de Cuaresma

Que reconozcamos las bendiciones de Dios en nuestras vidas, confiando en que Él desea una abundante vida en nosotros, y que en ésta Cuaresma nos acerquemos a su amor incondicional en el Sacramento de la Reconciliación. Roguemos al Señor. **R.** Te rogamos, Señor.

2o Domingo de Cuaresma

Que por medio del Sacramento de la Reconciliación podamos dejar a un lado el pecado y los quebrantos que nos dividen y traiga la paz a nuestros corazones, a nuestros hogares y a al mundo. Roguemos al Señor. **R.** Te rogamos, Señor.

3o Domingo de Cuaresma

Que todos los que estén agobiados por el gran peso del pecado tengan la completa confianza de la infinita misericordia de Dios y de su constante deseo de perdonarnos por medio del Sacramento de la Reconciliación en éste tiempo de Cuaresma. Roguemos al Señor. **R.** Te rogamos, Señor.

4o Domingo de Cuaresma

Que en éste tiempo de penitencia, la experiencia del perdón de Dios nos lleve a todos a la conversión de corazón y acción para renovar nuestra relación con Él y compartamos su perdón con las personas que nos rodean. Roguemos al Señor. **R.** Te rogamos, Señor.

5o Domingo de Cuaresma

Que al aproximarnos al final de la temporada de Cuaresma podamos preparar dignamente nuestros corazones para dar la bienvenida al gozo de la Resurrección, permitiendo que Jesús nos libere del pecado por medio del Sacramento de la Reconciliación. Roguemos al Señor.
R. Te rogamos, Señor.