

Divine Mercy Sunday 2009

This is going to be a fairly unique homily tonight.

Last week was Easter. That's kind of the busy season around here. This weekend is actually busier for me than Easter was. I'm not quite sure how that happened, but it did.

So my energy level is not the highest it's ever been. My ability, and my desire, to give a lengthy homily is not too great.

So this one's going to be short, sweet might not be the best way to describe it, that's not really my style, but it will be to the point.

Our Gospel reading today is from the 20th chapter of John's Gospel, where Jesus gives his apostles the authority to forgive sins. This is the core of Catholic teaching on the sacrament of reconciliation, on confession.

As Catholics we believe that this authority has been passed on from generation to generation of the church, and that it is and always has been exercised by the priests and bishops of the church. I could give a lengthy biblical and historical defense of that position, but tonight I'm just going to state it and move on.

Christ gave this gift to the church for a reason.

Because, we need it.

I personally try to go to confession every month, as with most good intentions I don't fully live that one out, so it ends up being more like once every two months.

But, I need confession, and you need confession.

At Sts. Peter and Paul parish people do a better job than at most places when it comes to making use of this sacrament, but, I know that the number of people who are going to confession is less than the number of people who need to go.

Tonight I'm not going to try to say anything that's meant to help people who do go on some sort of regular basis figure out if they need to go more often or not, that's an important thing to think about, but for now let's just kind of put that one aside.

If you're in that group, you're getting a free pass from me tonight.

Those who I do want to talk to are those who have not been to confession in more than, let's say, a year.

For some of you it's been more than 5 years, more than 10 for some, for others, I won't ask for a show of hands, but I'm sure it's been 20 or 30 or more years.

If you are in this is the situation then you need to go.

I don't care if you go here or at another parish.

I don't care what day of the week you go.

I don't care if you go to me or to another priest.

But you need to go.

Unless you are somehow exempt from the weaknesses of human nature, unless Christian biblical teaching on the reality of sin somehow doesn't apply to you, you need to go.

It might be hard.

It might be embarrassing.

I hope not, and actually, really, it will probably be surprisingly easy.

But no matter what, it will be worth it.

So go.