

“You can catch more flies with honey than you can with vinegar.”

Not long ago I spoke with a person who will be taking a life changing step in his life. I mentioned that the Sacrament of Reconciliation would be available. He responded with a nervous laugh and said he hadn't been to Confession for years. He's not the only one. When I was first ordained a priest there were long lines of people waiting to go to the Sacrament every Saturday afternoon and evening but now the number of people going to the Sacrament are few. What happened?

Too often in the past we presented God as a harsh judge. Too often people became ashamed and in their guilt shied away from God. But God is not a tyrant. He is not a monster. Look at what Jesus has done for us. He went to the cross. He rose from the dead. He loves us dearly. He wants to heal us, forgive us, to embrace us.

Jesus Himself has said to us, “I have come that you may have life and have it in great abundance.” And God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world might be saved through Him.”

Sister Faustina whose writings are so popular today writes that Jesus told her “Today I am sending you with My mercy to the people of the whole world. I do not want to punish aching mankind, but I desire to heal it, pressing it to my merciful heart.”

I believe that God loves each of you with love far beyond anything you can imagine. God doesn't want you to go through life with heavy burdens. He wants to free you from your burdens, your fears, your sins. God wants you to know how loveable you are. He says to you, “I love you, I hold you in the hollow of my hand.”

This is true, you can let go of your past sins, any bitterness you hold in your heart. You can even let go of your hurts all the way back to childhood.

And I'll tell you a secret, I love to hear Confessions, to reassure people that they are forgiven, that they can begin anew, that I can be part of God's forgiveness.

Surely God is a loving God, a merciful God.

You can catch more flies with honey than you can with vinegar!