



# welcome *all*

*Save the Date: An Evening of Confession*  
at all Catholic churches in the diocese.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 15 | 5 - 8 PM



*"God never ever tires of forgiving us!"* -POPE FRANCIS

Pope Francis encourages us to be welcomed into God's love, God's joy, through forgiveness through the words from the Angelus on September 15, 2013:

"In...chapter 15 of the Gospel of Luke, which contains three parables of mercy: the lost sheep, the lost coin, and then the longest of them, characteristic of St. Luke, the parable of the father of two sons, the "prodigal" son and the son who believes he is "righteous", who believes he is saintly. All three of these parables speak of the joy of God. God is joyful!

This is interesting: God is joyful! And what is the joy of God? The joy of God is forgiving; the joy of God is forgiving! The joy of a shepherd who finds his little lamb; the joy of a woman who finds her coin; it is the joy of a father welcoming home the son who was lost, who was as though dead and has come back to life, who has come home. Here is the entire Gospel! Here!

The whole Gospel, all of Christianity, is here! But make sure that it is not sentiment; it is not being a "do-gooder"! On the contrary, mercy is the true force that can save man and the world from the "cancer" that is sin, moral evil, and spiritual evil. Only love fills the void, the negative chasms that evil opens in hearts and in history. Only love can do this, and this is God's joy!

Jesus is all mercy, Jesus is all love: he is God made man. Each of us, each one of us, is that little lost lamb, the coin that was mislaid; each one of us is that son who has squandered his freedom on false idols, illusions of happiness, and has lost everything. But God does not forget us, the Father never abandons us. He is a patient father, always waiting for us! He respects our freedom, but he remains faithful forever. And when we come back to him, he welcomes us like children into his house, for he never ceases, not for one instant, to wait for us with love. And his heart rejoices over every child who returns. He is celebrating because he is joy. God has this joy, when one of us sinners goes to him and asks his forgiveness...

It is love of God and neighbor that brings fulfillment to all the Commandments. And this is the love of God, his joy: forgiveness. He waits for us always! Maybe someone has some heaviness in his heart: 'But, I did this, I did that...' He expects you! He is your father: he waits for you always!"

Through these words of encouragement from Pope Francis, please consider the opportunity for God's forgiveness and joy at the diocesan-wide Evening of Confession on March 15, 2017 from 5 - 8 pm at any church in the Diocese of Cleveland and invite a family member or friend to join you.

Joy of God  
is  
Forgiving