



# DIOCESE OF GRAND RAPIDS

*Office of the Bishop*

March 2019

Dear Friends in Christ,

To prepare our hearts for Easter, the season of Lent invites us to renew our practice of penance. Penance can take many outward forms, most notably prayer, fasting, and almsgiving. Yet all those varied outward forms proceed from the same inner conversion, a grace by which God gives us strength to begin anew. Accordingly, Lent calls us to entrust ourselves more completely to God's mercy, remembering the gift we first received in baptism and asking God to restore that grace through the sacrament of reconciliation.

God knows our struggles. He knows that we often fail. Yet His love never fails. No matter how many times we stumble, we find Him ready to receive us back. In the sacrament of penance, in fact, we encounter a God who does not simply wait for us but rushes out to meet us, eager to lead us into the joy of His house.

Although there are many opportunities to experience the joy of this sacrament throughout the year, our diocese provides a special opportunity each Lent through "The Light is ON for You: An Evening of Penance." During this event on **Wednesday, March 27**, almost every church in the diocese will be open for the sacrament of reconciliation from **5 - 8 p.m.** See the diocesan website [GRdiocese.org](http://GRdiocese.org) for locations and details.

I encourage you to join us for this special evening. It is never too late to seek the gift of God's mercy; there is no better time than now to receive the gifts of serenity and peace.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Most Reverend David J. Walkowiak  
Bishop of Grand Rapids