

## **Communal Reconciliation Advent 2011**

Look around, what do you see? I see the image of God. Each of us uniquely and wonderfully made; holy in the sight of God.

Look around, what do you see? I see the temples of God, the very indwelling of the Holy Spirit present in each one of us. If we allow, the Holy Spirit animates us to be God like in our thoughts, words, and deeds.

Look around, what do you see? I see sinners. Each of us has fallen short in one way or another of being true to our calling as a believer. In failing to respond to God's, will through sins omission or commission we have defaced our temple, we have not respected our human dignity and the dignity of another. We have either hurt another or simply walked by.

Our sins affect everyone. Some are obvious, like in the video clip where the man was beaten. Often we beat another with cutting remarks, gossip, and put downs. What struck me in the video clip was that even the beaten man was afraid of the biker. Or how the receptionist at the clinic doubt the intention of the biker. How often do we allow our preconceived ideas about another lead to false judgments?

But even the sins we feel we commit in private affect others. Our sin can deprive us of our sleep, our full attention, of attending to more important matters.

Our sins create an ugly world where we ignore the needs of others and put ourselves first.. On our own strength, we cannot overcome. The good news is that God desires to heal us. He sent his Son into the world to bring us healing and sent the Holy Spirit to empower us. In this Sacrament of Reconciliation, our sins are forgiven and we commit ourselves to following the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

Through this sacrament we are renewed, refreshed to full fill our baptismal calling to be the image of God. The graces of this sacrament empower us to meet the needs of another, empowers us to say I am sorry or I forgive you, empowers us to welcome another, empowers us to journey in faith with another. Through this sacrament not only can we see Christ in others but hopefully others will see Christ in us.

I invite you to kneel, and the quiet of your hearts call to mind our sins ---things we did that we shouldn't, the times we could have acted but did not act....