

## Lenten Penance Service -

March 10 – 7:00 P.M.

The Gospel so often remember the encounter of those who experienced God's forgiveness in the person of Jesus. Perhaps we can place ourselves in their particular situation; be it the lost son away from home, the woman with seven husbands, the rich man in search of more, or the Roman soldier who wondered if his son would live. All of these people were in search of the healing power of God's love and some reconciliation with the community – something that would give a renewed meaning to their lives.

Take for example those who were blind and deaf, the speechless and lame; each person a symbol of humanity's struggle for wholeness of body, mind, and spirit – salvation. Each represents a segment of humanity, blind to the vision of God's love for all creation; deaf to the sound of God in the voiceless mass of humanity; speechless before the principalities and powers of discord that rule the world; crippled and unable to walk this earth with dignity and grace.



How often humanity finds itself disfigured by the reality of sin rather than reflecting the love and compassion, mercy and justice of the one in whose image we are created.

We distort our image and that of others and strive to create a reflection that our culture imagines to be more genuine. Such false images are created by the consumer-marketing and advertising "gods" of our time and sold to people who are hungry for meaning and wholeness.

For the Church, each season of Grace serves as an appropriate time to turn from the false pretensions and distortions of our culture; to truly become a living presence of healing and wholeness within our families and community. In a word, we become Servants of Christ.

Lent is a time of renewal, a time of transformation, a time of conversion, and a time of new life – a time to recognize God's unconditional love, and in turn enable others to encounter God through us – the Body of Christ. LGaetano