

Confession is coming back to the embrace of Beloved!

Sin is merely running away from God instead of towards God (whom I like to refer to as Beloved from Song of Solomon 6:3).

Sin is merely violating our covenants of love (with God and others).

Confession & forgiveness are central elements of love

Lent is a 40-day, solemn Christian season of reflection, prayer, fasting, and almsgiving leading up to Easter. Beginning on Ash Wednesday, it serves as a "second chance" for spiritual renewal, repentance, and examining one's life to align with God's desires. It is a journey toward the Cross, ultimately focused on preparing the heart for the joy of the Resurrection.

Traditionally, Lent is marked by three main practices:

- **Prayer**: Deepening one's relationship with God.
- **Fasting**: Self-denial (e.g., giving up luxuries or bad habits) to focus on spiritual growth.
- **Almsgiving**: Sharing with others and performing acts of charity.

Lent is A Journey of Repentance: It is a time for "sober reflection" on the cost of sin and a conscious turning back to God.

The "3 R's": Reflection, Repentance, and Reconciliation.

Preparation for Easter: The purpose is to prepare spiritually for the celebration of Christ's victory over death, to realize our need for a Savior, and to come back to God.

Repentance is a time for us to root out the things in our lives (the things we do) that keep us from God, that hurt ourselves and others. Confession is a time to relieve ourselves of the heavy weight we carry of the things we do that hurt others and the things we carry because we have not come to Beloved (God) and entrusted Beloved with them. It is about having more of Beloved and love in our lives.

Before Easter on April 5 I pray you can find ways to make this time of Lent a time of renewal in your spiritual life. I pray you can take time grow closer to Beloved, who is the source of all life and love, and adores you deeply.

May Beloved enfold you in an embrace always,

Pastor Dan