

circumstances. If something like this is keeping you away, you can come back, tell the pastor, and he will connect you with the people who will be able to prepare you for reception of the sacraments.

It really is simple, but sometimes not easy

The biggest obstacle you may be encountering is your shame, or guilt. But God and His Church are uniquely fitted for helping you with these. All you have to do is come back home! We are anxious to have you back. The Lord is also looking for you! That is why you picked up this pamphlet or came by or phoned the office to find out what could be done. It is the Holy Spirit moving in your heart that is drawing you back. Just say yes, and let's get going. There is no time like the present to make this wonderful reconciling change in your life!

### 3 simple steps

- *Come back to the Mass on Sunday*
- *Talk to the Father or Deacon*
- *Follow his directions*



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Serving Catholics in  
Western Otero County

## Coming Back



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There's room for you! Don't you think its just about time for you to come on home? We do!

## Coming Back To Church

Despite what you think, or what others tell you, it is very easy to come back to church, even after decades of absence.

People say all kinds of things to explain why they haven't even tried. But they still go on with that 'thing' in the pit of their stomachs and the nagging thought that maybe they should return.

Others have had their feelings hurt, or even been abused, but still want to have the sacraments again. Our Catholic faith is something that is in our bones, and those bones won't rest until they have the need to be back to the sacraments satisfied.

If this is true for you, there is good news!

Coming back to church is as easy as getting in your car or walking down the block to go to Mass. Getting back to the Sacraments

may take a little bit more, but those who do what it takes are almost always VERY satisfied and happy, often saying "Why did I wait so long?"



### If all you did was 'just stop going'

People who just stop going out of nothing more than just "I don't wanna" make up the largest portion of those who have 'fallen away' from the practice of their faith. If this is you, all you need to do is tell the priest you want to return to the church, and confess this and other sins you may have committed, and you will be restored to the state of grace by absolution. Then you can go to communion and all the other sacraments!

### If you stopped because of a marriage issue

The Sunday and Holy Day obligation still exists, whether or not you are divorced. So attending Mass, even if you are divorced is a 'must' Many times people who divorce think that they cannot go to Mass. Although divorce is a big issue, as long as you don't start up a 'boyfriend-girlfriend' relationship, all you have to do is come back and go to confession.



If you have remarried, or married a divorced person, you should still come to Mass, and ask the priest whether or not an annulment of the prior marriage(s) for either of you

are possible so that you can come back to the sacraments. It happens more often than you think!

### If you experienced abuse

Lamentably, some are abused by clergy or other church members and have a lot of pain to overcome before they feel that they can come back to Church. If this is you, we are here to help. Your

parish priest has available to him many resources that have been put in place since the abuse scandal broke in the early 2000's. Contact a priest, or deacon who can begin the healing process with you. The Diocese provides psychological care for victims of abuse, and an array of options for you to pursue, if you want to, in order for this grievous crime against you to be addressed.

Not all abuse is sexual, however. Some abuse is done by a harsh word, or a thoughtless act on the part of a parishioner, a staff member, or a member of the clergy. The parish priest, again, has an array of options for you to exercise to help you get back to the Church.

What if you just 'missed' the sacraments when it was time?

Many people have parents who, through the circumstances of their lives failed to give you all the spiritual care available through the sacraments. These could have included a sudden need to move, mid-course, from the parish and then just 'not getting back to church.' Others might include more difficult

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