



# Department of Communication

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*Archdiocese of San Antonio*

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## **As Lent begins, Archbishop Gomez calls on Catholics to seek God's healing power.**

Archbishop José H. Gomez has chosen Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, to issue his second Pastoral Letter, *The Tender Mercy of Our God*. At this time when Christians spiritually prepare for Easter, Archbishop Gomez encourages people to seek reconciliation with God as a way to find peace.

The letter, rooted strongly in the Holy Scripture and the teaching of the Catholic Church, provides the reader, regardless of their religious tradition, a clearer understanding of sin and forgiveness. The archbishop asserts that, "Only the sincere and mutual search for forgiveness and reconciliation can bring us the peace and satisfaction we seek in our world today."

"Our Father loves us in ways that we could never imagine possible. No matter how far you have wandered astray by sin, the Father is ready to forgive you—if you will only turn to him in repentance," he adds.

Gomez, completing his second year as Archbishop of San Antonio, reaffirms traditional teaching about the mercy of God and the need for personal confession. "Every confession is a very personal, private, and emotional encounter with God," he states.

"I can testify from my own life to the healing power of this sacrament received regularly," the archbishop writes in this, at times, deeply personal letter, "I invite you too, my brothers and sisters, to experience this for yourselves".

The letter's publication coincides with the closing of the Jubilee Year, declared by Pope Benedict XVI in celebration of the 275<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of San Fernando Cathedral. As the city of San Antonio shares the same anniversary, Archbishop Gomez points to the community as a place where people find "a true culture of peace and reconciliation", the archbishop continues that the city's deep Catholic roots, "Promote a belief in the dignity of the human person". There will be a special Mass at San Fernando Cathedral on March 4<sup>th</sup> at 5 p.m. to mark the end of the Jubilee Year.

The letter will be available in a printable version on the archdiocesan website, [www.archdiosasa.org](http://www.archdiosasa.org) and in the March 2<sup>nd</sup> issue *Today's Catholic* Newspaper, and in parishes throughout the archdiocese.