

SUNDAY *to* SUNDAY

SAINT OF THE WEEK

PERPETUA AND FELICITY, MARTYRS

Third Century

Feast Day—March 7



One of the proofs of a really close friendship is when you can't say one person's name without thinking of the other. This shows up in history, with names like Lewis and Clark. It's in story books, with names like Hansel and Gretel, or Jack and Jill. When it comes to saints, there are many examples, but one of the most prominent duos is Perpetua and Felicity.

Perpetua was a young Christian noblewoman and Felicity was a young Christian slave. The two were arrested for their belief in Christ, during the persecution of Emperor Septimius Severus: at this time, Perpetua was a new mother, and

Felicity was eight months pregnant. Together, the two women helped each other through the heat, darkness, and brutality of the guards in the prison. Two days before their scheduled death, Felicity gave birth to her daughter in the prison, and the child was adopted by a Christian woman. Perpetua and Felicity were sent out to face the arena together, and after being exposed to the beasts, were killed by having their throats cut. These last days of the women were recorded by Perpetua, whose diary became one of the most famous accounts in the early Church of the suffering of the martyrs.

MOMENT OF MERCY

MARCH 2016

Though we often think of the Sacrament of Penance as a highly individualized and private sacrament, we must not forget its communal dimensions. In this sacrament, we are not only reconciling ourselves with God but also reconciling ourselves with our community and the Church as a whole. Every time we sin, we distance ourselves from God and neighbor. We may not have sinned against a particular person, but when our relationship with God is broken, our relationships with others suffer since we no longer have God as our guiding light. This sacrament helps us renew our lives to be witnesses of the Good News of Christ and builds us up as members of the Body of Christ.

1. Invite somebody, perhaps someone from a small faith-sharing group at your parish or a friend, to go with you to a reconciliation service at your parish this month before the celebration of Easter.
2. Begin to make amends with someone you are in conflict with. A perfect resolution does not have to occur, but approaching the conflict with an attitude of mercy and compassion will help ease the tension and help you to look on this person with the love of God.

PRAYER

In families striving to stay intact through adversity.
Let us see Christ.

In the poor and lowly of the world.
Let us see Christ.

In those forced to leave their homes because of war or famine.
Let us see Christ.

In children who go to bed hungry and who cannot attend school.
Let us see Christ.

In those who are living with HIV/AIDS and other diseases.
Let us see Christ.

In immigrants and refugees seeking freedom and hope.
Let us see Christ.

In those who are orphaned or abandoned.
Let us see Christ.

In the elderly who are forgotten.
Let us see Christ.

In those who struggle to find meaningful work.
Let us see Christ.

In those who work for justice and peace for all people.
Let us see Christ.

Let us pray.

Jesus, teach us to recognize your presence in those who are in need. May we give of ourselves in service to them and so hasten the coming of the Kingdom you have promised, where you live with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, forever and ever. Amen.

