

# Jesus Keeps on Loving You, No Matter What

Bishop Daniel E. Thomas

Chairman, USCCB Committee on Pro-Life Activities

As we approach Lent, please allow me to speak to all who carry the unbearable sadness and guilt of an abortion experience. Be assured that Jesus keeps on loving you, no matter what.

The blessed ashes distributed on our foreheads on Ash Wednesday remind us that we are all sinners; broken, imperfect, yet very precious in the eyes of God and so well loved by Him. The ashes are both a reminder of our need for repentance and the graces that flow from our Lord's death and resurrection.

Some stay away from the Church because they fear judgment of past sins. Yet as Pope Francis reminds us in his letter announcing the Jubilee of Hope, '[Judgment] is meant to bring us to a definitive encounter with the Lord' (*Spes non confundit*, 22). Jesus' voice is calling out to you as His beloved daughters and sons, and He is waiting to meet you in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. He desires a relationship with you. This Lent, I personally invite you to come home to Jesus, who eagerly awaits your return, and come home to the Church.

God's gift of hope allows you to expect His comfort as you grieve for the loss of your aborted children. It also provides assurance that 'you can with sure hope entrust your child' to the Father and His mercy (St. John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae*, 99).

I pray that God plants a seed of hope in every heart that is overwhelmed by sadness and despair from participation in abortion. This Lent, the Lord's mercy awaits you. Allow Him to heal you and lift your sadness into joy.

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Nonjudgmental, compassionate help is available from experienced clergy and laypeople through the Church's diocesan abortion healing ministry, most often called Project Rachel Ministry. All who suffer from abortion can find a listening ear, comfort, and help. Visit [www.HopeAfterAbortion.org](http://www.HopeAfterAbortion.org) or [www.EsperanzaPosAborto.org](http://www.EsperanzaPosAborto.org) to find help near you.



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