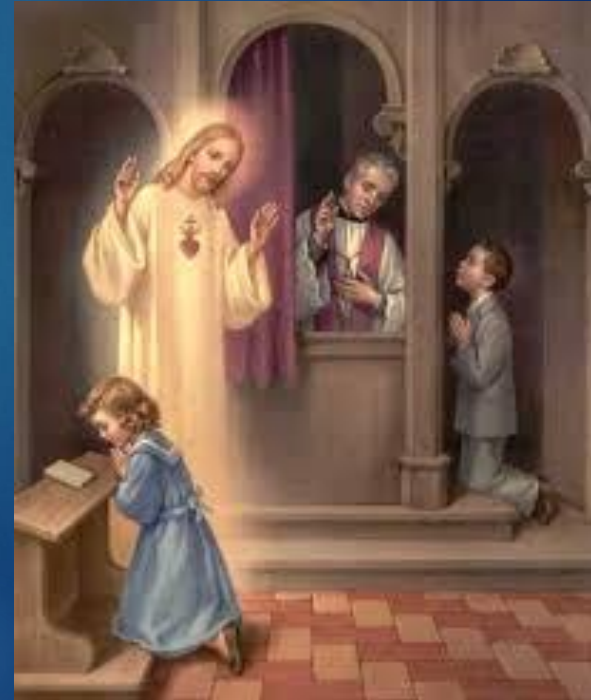


The Sacrament of Reconciliation

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Opening Prayer: The prodigal son

- ▶ Ignatian Meditation
- ▶ Luke 15:11-24



Let's pick it apart...

- ▶ 1. The son leaving his father
- ▶ 2. Without the support of his Father, he needs what he does not have
- ▶ 3. He came to his senses and realized his fault, and his need
- ▶ 4. He goes to his father with a humble heart to ask for forgiveness
- ▶ 5. The Father sees him from far off and runs to him
- ▶ 6. The Father rejoices, gives Him the proper clothing and throws a party for his return
- ▶ 7. "My son was dead, but is alive again, he was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found."

1. We leave God when we sin
2. When we leave God, we end up in need -- We end up wanting and we lack necessities
3. We realize our faults, our needs and run to the father in the sacrament of confession
4. We go to confession with a humble and contrite heart seeking forgiveness
5. God runs to us with a joyous heart when He sees us returning to Him
6. When we return to Him, there is great rejoicing and like a party in heaven. He goes out for His lost sheep
7. When you return to Him in the sacraments He no longer remembers the offenses, but rejoices that you have returned to Him. You are alive once again, after being dead from sin.

What is a sacrament?

- ▶ CCC - 1131 “ a sacrament is an efficacious sign, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the church, by which divine life is dispensed to us through the work of the holy spirit.”
- ▶ Purpose and necessity of the sacrament?
- ▶ CCC - 1123 “ The purpose of the sacrament is to sanctify men, to build up the body of Christ and, finally, to give worship to God.”
- ▶ CCC - 1129 “The Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are necessary for salvation.”

What is sin?

▶ What are the effects of sin on a soul?

- ▶ Definition of Sin: an offense against God.
- ▶ Sin ruptures our communion with Him and damages our communion with the church.
- ▶ “The whole power of the sacrament of penance consists in restoring us to God’s grace and joining us with him in an intimate friendship. Reconciliation with God is thus the purpose and effect of this sacrament.” CCC -1468

What does sin do to a soul?

- ▶ It cuts the soul's union with God.
- ▶ It makes the soul ugly in the spiritual life.
- ▶ “While the soul is in mortal sin nothing can profit it; none of its good works merit an eternal reward, since they do not proceed from God as their first principle, and by Him alone is our virtue real virtue. The soul separated from Him is no longer pleasing in His eyes, because by committing a mortal sin, instead of seeking to please God, it prefers to gratify the devil, the prince of darkness, and so comes to share his blackness. I knew a person to whom our Lord revealed the result of a mortal sin and who said she thought no one who realized its effects could ever commit it, but would suffer unimaginable torments to avoid it. This vision made her very desirous for all to grasp this truth, therefore I beg you, my daughters, to pray fervently to God for sinners, who live in blindness and do deeds of darkness.” - St. Teresa of Avila – *The Interior Castle*
- ▶ Sin is like a huge mortal open wound. If you don't show the doctor, he can't heal it. It is like a land mine in your heart that will go off when you die and leads to your eternal ruin. Why not have the bomb technician diffuse the bomb in your heart before its too late???



Why confess?

- ▶ In confession the effects of sin are reversed.
- ▶ We are forgiven and reconciled by God and the church.
- ▶ “For it is now, in this life, that we are offered the choice between life and death, and it is only by the road of conversion that we can enter the Kingdom, from which one is excluded by grave sin. In converting to Christ through penance and faith, the sinner passes from death to life and ‘does not come into judgement.’” CCC – 1470
- ▶ When a soul is in the state of grace, all baptized participate in each others good works. Like a vine to the other parts of the vine. If one part receives sun the whole vine benefits. So let's get in the state of grace y'all. 😊
- ▶ If you want to see it just from a solely human perspective, check out CCC -1455. Why do you say sorry to your friends?

Isn't Jesus the only one who can forgive sins?

- ▶ Well... Yes, that is correct.
- ▶ Say what???
- ▶ Actually, it is Jesus who is giving you absolution in the confessional. The priest is *in persona Christi* (in the person of Christ) in the confessional. So when he absolves you, it is Christ's hand giving you absolution.
- ▶ This is why his hand is anointed with oil at his ordination. Because when he celebrates reconciliation, it is Christ himself who absolves you.
- ▶ Also, sometimes the priest will say exactly what you need to hear in the confessional. Because it is Christ speaking through the priest. In asking priests if they remember what is said in the confessional, they often say they have no recollection.
- ▶ CCC -1466 "The confessor is not the master of God's forgiveness, but its servant."

Well... Why confess to a priest?

- ▶ When does Jesus give His disciples the power to forgive sins?
 - ▶ **Matthew 16:13-20**
 - ▶ **John 20:19-23**
 - ▶ **Matthew 3:5-6**
- ▶ Jesus sends out His disciples and gives them the authority that they need, and He promises His help through all ages. Matthew 28:16-20
- ▶ CCC 1467 - The priests are under the sacramental seal of confession. Which means that they cannot ever, under any circumstance reveal anything anyone said in confession. He cannot even make use of the knowledge received in a confession. They will never tell a soul of anything from your confession.

Matthew 16:13-20

- ▶ “When Jesus went into the region of Caesarea Philippi he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that the Son of Man is?” ¹⁴ They replied, “Some say John the Baptist, others Elijah, still others Jeremiah or one of the prophets.” ¹⁵ He said to them, “But who do you say that I am?” ¹⁶ Simon Peter said in reply, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” ¹⁷ Jesus said to him in reply, “Blessed are you, Simon son of Jonah. For flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but my heavenly Father. ¹⁸ And so I say to you, **you are Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church, and the gates of the netherworld shall not prevail against it. ¹⁹ I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.**” ²⁰ Then he strictly ordered his disciples to tell no one that he was the Messiah.”



Some Cool effects of confession

- ▶ St. Francis De Sales in the *Introduction to the Devout Life* says this of frequent confession even if you are no longer committing mortal sins...
- ▶ “For in Confession you do not only receive absolution for your venial sins, but you also receive great strength to help you in avoiding them henceforth, clearer light to discover your failings, and abundant grace to make up whatever loss you have incurred through those faults.”

Wait, but why not just my neighbor Joey? Why the priest?

- ▶ Jesus didn't just give this power to anyone. He gave it only to His disciples. He didn't just go and give it to the crowds that came to see Him or the men he healed. He gave it to the disciples and gave them the authority to pass it down. This is indicated with the keys to the kingdom.
- ▶ CCC -1445 – Reconciliation with God is inseparable from reconciliation with the church.

So.... As a Catholic how often should I receive this super awesome sacrament?

- ▶ You are right to call it super awesome. The catechism says that one should receive it at least once a year. If you are in the state of mortal sin you should go to confession without delay, but you must go before receiving communion. A soul in the state of mortal sin should not receive the Eucharist.
- ▶ But why not make it a healthy habit?
- ▶ As a sister we go once a week. 😊 Wahoo!!!
- ▶ You are a living saint when you come out of confession... So why wait. I wanna be a saint. Don't you?!? Of course you do! 😊
- ▶ St. Francis de Sales recommends weekly confessions

Ok, so... What makes a valid confession?

- ▶ "Penance requires . . . the sinner to endure all things willingly, be contrite of heart, confess with the lips, and practice complete humility and fruitful satisfaction." – CCC1450
- ▶ Confess all mortal sins, and have true contrition (Sorrow for your sins), then let the priest do his thing (give you absolution), then go and do your penance and gaze in the light of perfection, joy, and peace.

