

2020-2021 RCIA #17

2/1/21

# Part III: The Sacraments and Prayer (Chapter 29)

- Penance
  - The Sacrament of Penance
  - Preparing for Confession

# Penance

- Penance is a:
  - **Virtue** that makes us hate our sins
  - **Sacrament** in which sins committed after baptism are forgiven through the words of absolution spoken by a priest in *persona Christi*
- This sacrament reunites the soul to God and restores sanctifying grace
- The power to forgive sins is a part of the power of the priesthood as established in scripture

# Penance

- Scriptural basis for the Sacrament of Penance
  - Lk 5:18
  - Mt 9:1
  - Lk 7:36
  - Mk 3:28
  - Lk 5:12
  - Lk 17:11
  - Mt 16:17
  - Jn 20:19
  - James 5:14
  - 1 Jn 5:16-17

# Penance (Cont)

- The sin is forgiven, eternal punishment is wiped out, and a portion of the “temporal punishment” is removed but some of the “**temporal punishment**” remains
- Temporal punishment
  - A broken window
  - Paying the debt – prayers, penances, good works

# Penance (Cont)

- “Catholic guilt” is a good, as it is to the soul what the sense of touch is to the body
- “**Contrition**” is from a Latin word meaning to “grind” or “pulverize” and it means being sorry for our sins

# Part III: The Sacraments and Prayer (Chapter 30)

- Contrition
  - When is Sorrow Real?
  - Thank God For Confession

# Contrition

- When we receive penance our sorrow must be genuine
- Two kinds of contrition:
  - **Perfect** – sorrow for our sins which springs from a **perfect love for God**
  - **Imperfect** – hatred of sin as being essentially evil or a **fear of incurring God's justice** (the loss of heaven and eternal exile to hell)



# Contrition (Cont)

- The four qualities for true contrition include:
  - **Interior sorrow** – being sorry for having offended God (an act of the will)
  - **Supernatural sorrow** – our reason for being sorry is based on a belief in a truth of God (we have been told that we must love God)
  - **Supreme sorrow** – we see the moral evil of sin as the greatest evil that exists (with Grace we will do anything rather than offend Him again)
  - **Universal sorrow** – we are sorry for all our mortal sins without exceptions

# Contrition (Cont)

- There can not be a valid act of contrition without an accompanying **purpose of amendment** which is the commitment to avoid “the near occasion of sin”
- We use a specific formula in the sacrament of Confession because that is the way God wants it done based on Jesus’ promise to the Apostles that they could forgive sins

# Contrition (Cont)

- This formula:
  - Is used by everyone in the Church including the pope
  - Protects us against the universal human weakness of self-justification
  - Often provides us with skilled advice for spiritual problems
  - Provides a psychological release from the burden of sin

# Contrition (Cont)

- After the sacrament of Baptism only a **mortal sin** can separate us from God and must be confessed
- For a sin to be **mortal** it must be:
  - A serious matter
  - Which we know is against God's law
  - We choose to do it anyway
- We are never required to confess doubtful mortal sins

# Contrition (Cont)

- We are obliged, to the best of our ability, to confess the number of times we committed each mortal sin
- We need to indicate the kind of mortal sin we have committed not just listing the broken commandment
- We should not list all of the details
- We should confess in humility and sincerity

# Contrition (Cont)

- An un-confessed **mortal sin** results in the eternal loss of God
- The **temporal punishment** resulting from a mortal or venial sin may remain after the sin has been forgiven
- The debt (temporal punishment) may be paid:
  - By making works of penance in this life
  - In Purgatory
- Adult Baptism wipes out all sins and temporal punishments

# Contrition (Cont)

- The size of the penance assigned by the priest may depend on the gravity of the confessed sin but will never be something that is impossible to accomplish
- One is obliged to accomplish a given penance
- Our acts of penance only have value in the infinite sacrifice of Jesus who atoned for all our sins
- Penance brings us in union with Christ as we share in the act of redemption as God wills