

ANSWERING BASIC QUESTIONS OF FAITH "FROM ZERO TO THE EUCHARIST"

Taken from the Italian series presented by Friar Volantino.

Catechesis No. 6

Why confess oneself with a Catholic Priest ?

Respecting Orthodox, Protestant-Evangelicals, Jehovah W., etc...



EVERY LAST THURSDAY
of EACH MONTH at 6.30 pm
BEGINNING THURSDAY 27th OF MARCH

OUR LADY OF THE HOLY ROSARY CATHOLIC CHURCH
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- Why listen to Mary the Mother of Jesus? - 9.
To gear up ones pace towards heaven.
- Why recognize the Body of Jesus
in the Living Eucharist? - 8.
- Why feed on the Eucharist? - 7.
- Why confess oneself with a Catholic Priest? - 6. 6
- When God sees our hearts all the same?
- Why go to Church? - 5.
Rather than pray at home.
- Why be Catholic? - 4.
Respecting Orthodox, Protestants, and Jehovah's W., etc.
- Why be Christian? - 3.
Respecting Jews, Buddhists, Muslims, etc.
- Why and How to trust the S. Scripture? - 2.
- Why and How to believe in God? - 1.
- Why is there Suffering? - 0. ↑

In these evenings, we'll read and try to explain some passages of the

- **Word of God (AT, NT)**
- **Teaching of the Catholic Church (from the Fathers of Contemporaneity)**
- **Personal experiences ...**

Introduction: Introductory note on the Remission of sins:

"Other than Baptism¹, the Holy Confession is the "Ordinary way" of the full remission of our sins" Naturally the "Extraordinary way (after death) is Purgatory (cf. CCC 1030-32; 1472)

Practical example with a question:

"Have you ever seen a sheep wash itself?"

If your answer is "no" then we can always begin to walk with sincerity towards the objective truth!

a. **Word of God**

Old Testament

Illusions of purity

1. "There are some pure in their own eyes, yet not cleansed of their filth" (Prov 30:12)

Too sure about being always forgiven

2. "Do not be so confident of forgiveness that you add sin upon sin. Do not say, "His mercy is great; my many sins he will forgive." For mercy and anger alike are with him: his wrath comes to rest on the wicked. Do not delay turning back to the Lord, do not put it off day after day. For suddenly his wrath will come forth at the time of vengeance, you will perish". (Sir 5: 5-7)

What happens to those who do not want to purify themselves?

3. "Those who become unclean and fail to purify themselves will be cut off from the assembly, because they defile the sanctuary of the Lord. The purification water has not been splashed over them; they remain unclean. This will be a permanent statute for you". (cf. Num 19:20-21).
4. "After he is again clean, ... on the day he enters the inner court to serve in the sanctuary, he shall present a purification offering for himself". (cf. Ezek 44:27).

All have sinned (Except for the case of Jesus and Mary – Cf. Luke 23:4, 1Pt 2:22, Wis 4:2, Rev 12,1)

5. "Listen! I will judge you on that word of yours, "I have not sinned". (Jer 2: 35b).
6. "For there is no one who does not sin". (1Kgs 8:46). (cfr Rom 3: 9-12).
7. "All have gone astray; each one is altogether perverse. There is not one who does what is good, not even one". (Psalm 53:4).
8. "The more they sinned against me, I will change their glory into shame" (Hos 4: 7).

And it's also clear that only in the New Testament these are fully understood, as for example when Saint Paul says in regard to such: "All have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God. They are justified freely by his grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus, whom God set forth as an expiation, through faith, by his blood, to prove his righteousness because of the forgiveness of sins previously committed" (Rom 3: 23-25).

The difference between the immediate repentance of David and Saul's denial of sin.

9. "Then Saul explained to Samuel (after disobeying the voice of the Lord -1Sam 15: 2-3.14-19) 'I did indeed obey the Lord' (1Sam 15: 20-23).
'Then David said to Nathan' (after disobeying the voice of the Lord -2Sam 12: 7-9ss): 'I have sinned against the Lord'... (2 Sam 12: 13-14).

Figure of the future forgiveness of sins

10. "I will sprinkle clean water over you to make you clean; from all your impurities and from all your idols I will cleanse you" (Ezek 36: 25).

Call to beatitude through the remission and forgiveness of sins

11. "Blessed is the one whose fault is removed, whose sin is forgiven" (Ps 32: 1).

¹ Baptism (administered according to the intentions of the Universal Church).

But through whom will the full expiation of our sins be complete? (prefigured here)

12. *"The Lord said to Moses: Tell the Israelites: If a man or a woman commits any offense against another person, thus breaking faith with the Lord, ... that person shall confess the wrong that has been done, make restitution in full, ... However, if there is no next of kin, one to whom restitution can be made, the restitution shall be made to the Lord that reverts² to the priest³; this is apart from the ram of atonement with which the priest makes atonement for the guilty individual". (cf. Nm 5: 5-8).*
13. *"The priest shall make atonement on the person's behalf before the Lord, so that the individual may be forgiven for whatever was done to incur guilt" (Lev 5:26).*
14. *"Now Joshua was standing before the angel, clad in filthy garments. Then the angel said to those standing before him, "Remove his filthy garments." And to him he said, "Look, I have taken your guilt from you, and I am clothing you in stately robes" (Zech: 3-4).*

Here the figure of the Lord's angel who remits sins serenely recalls the future figure of the Universal Priest of the Lord (as says also Saint Ambrose⁴); and this Priest, who leaving everything just as the Gospel says, is already similar to an Angel (Lk 20,34-36), and, has also received in Saint Peter and the Apostles the ministry of remitting sins from Jesus who was sent from the Father (Cf. Jn 20, 21-23; II Vatican Council PO n. 2-b. 5)

Why recognize and confess one's own sins?

15. *"Those who conceal their sins do not prosper, but those who confess and forsake them obtain mercy" (Prov. 28:13).*
16. *"Never speak against the truth, but of your own ignorance be ashamed. Do not be ashamed to acknowledge your sins, and do not struggle against a rushing stream" (Sir4:25-26).*
17. *"I acknowledge my guilt and grieve over my sin" (Ps 38: 19).*
18. *"Thoroughly wash away my guilt, and from my sin cleanse me. For I know my transgressions ... Cleanse me with hyssop, that I may be pure; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow" (cf. Ps 51: 1-9).*

Mercy in your Temple (or rather within his traditional rules)

19. *"We ponder, O God, your mercy within your temple" (Ps 48:10).*

The breath over the dead who're to live (figure of Jesus' breath in the mandate of Confession that returns one the life of Grace)

20. *"Then he said to me: Prophecy to the breath, prophecy, son of man! Say to the breath: Thus says the Lord God: From the four winds come, O breath, and breathe into these slain that they may come to life" (Ezek: 37:9).*
21. *"All of us once lived among them in the desires of our flesh, following the wishes of the flesh and the impulses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like the rest. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of the great love he had for us, even when we were dead in our transgressions, brought us to life with Christ" (Eph: 2:3-5).*

New Testament

The remission of sins sometimes coincides also with physical healing

22. *"When Jesus saw their faith, he said to the paralytic, 'Child, your sins are forgiven'. Which is easier, to say to the paralytic, 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Rise, pick up your mat and walk'? But that you may know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins on earth"- he said to the paralytic, 'I say to you, rise, pick up your mat, and go home.' He rose, picked up his mat at once, and went away in the sight of everyone. They were all astounded and glorified God" (Mark: 2:5. 9-12).*
23. *"As he was entering a village, ten lepers met [him]. They stood at a distance from him and raised their voice, saying, 'Jesus, Master! Have pity on us!' And when he saw them, he said, 'Go show yourselves to the priests.' As they were going they were cleansed. And one of them, realizing he had been healed, returned, glorifying God in a loud voice; and he fell at the feet of Jesus and thanked him" (Luke 17:12-16).*

Spiritual healing is sometimes also physical healing, we have not only seen several times coinciding in the New Testament, but it was already prefigured in the Old Testament, as in fact we read in the Prophet Isaiah: *"My illness has turned into health! ... Behind your back you cast all my sins" (Is 38: 17).*

If you don't wash your feet (figurative especially of the Holy Confession⁵) you can't have any part with Jesus

24. *"Peter said to him, 'You will never wash my feet.' Jesus answered him, 'Unless I wash you, you will have no inheritance with me.' Simon Peter said to him, 'Master, then not only my feet, but my hands and head as well.' Jesus said to him, 'Whoever has bathed has no need except to have his feet washed, for he is clean all over; so you are clean'..." (John 13: 8-10).*

For whom find's themselves at the feast of Heaven but had not earlier washed their cloths.

25. *"But when the king came in to meet the guests he saw a man there not dressed in a wedding garment. He said to him: 'My friend, how is it that you came in here without a wedding garment?' But he was reduced to silence. Then the king said to his attendants: 'Bind his hands and feet, and cast him into the darkness outside, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth. Many are invited, but few are chosen!'" (Matt 22: 11-14).*

The knowledge of Salvation in the remission of sins

26. *"To give his people knowledge of salvation through the forgiveness of their sins" (Luke 1:77).*

² In the Italian Bible approved by the Italian Episcopal conference the translation reads *"the restitution shall be made to the Lord that, THAT IS to the priest"*

³ Also Saint Francis of Assisi saw in a certain way his Lord in the Consecrated hands of Priests, also when some were accused of having a mistress; kneeling down before them and kissing their hands because according to him, the Catholic Priests were the only ones who'd received the immense power from God to give total absolution from sins and that of transforming a piece of bread into the Body of the Lord who gives Eternal Life. (cf. OMNIBUS OF FRANCISCAN SOURCES 2253-2254; 124; 176; 194).

⁴ *"Alongside the fountain you saw the Levite, you saw the priest, you saw the high priest. Do not stop a person's external appearance, but at the charism of the Sacred ministry. You spoke to angels as written: the lips of priests must preserve knowledge and from his mouth one receives instruction, because he is an angel of the Lord of hosts (cf. Mt: 2:7). You make no mistake, you cannot deny it. He is an angel!" (SAINT AMBROSE, Beginning of the tract "On Mysteries", No. 1-7, SC 25., 156-158, in Office of Readings, Sunday of the 15th week of O.T.)*

⁵ *"Washing of feet"... What does that mean? 'to wash ones feet', to wash oneself from the sins of every day, and for this reason we are in need of the Confession of sins.. the direction given by the words of Jesus to Peter is obvious: to be able to participate at the sociable community of Jesus Christ.. we have to recognize that we sin even in our new identity as baptized. We are in need of Confession as it has taken shape in the Sacrament of reconciliation. By means of it the Lord washes our dirty feet over and over so that we can sit down at table with Him" (BENEDICT XVI, Homily Cena Domini, 20th March 2008, held in the Basilica of Saint John in Lateran).*

Forgiveness of sins in the right way (as Jesus indicates)

27. "Jesus said to them again, 'Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me⁶, so I send you.' And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained'". (John 20: 21-23).

If we say to be without sin

28. "If we say, 'We are without sin,' we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing. If we say, 'We have not sinned,' we make him a liar, and his word is not in us" (1 Jn1:8-10).
29. "All have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God, they are justified freely by his grace through the redemption in Christ Jesus ... by his blood, to prove his righteousness because of the forgiveness of sins previously committed" (Rom 3:23-25). (Rom 3: 9-12; Jer 2: 35b; 1Kgs 8:46; Ps 53:4; Hos 4:7).

Teaching of the Catholic Church

PATRISTIC ERA

Grace leaves us with sin

30. ST. AMBROSE OF MILAN (Bishop, 339 - † 397): "My Spirit will not remain always in men, for they are flesh (Gen 6:3). God thus shows that spiritual grace ill repelled by uncleanness of the flesh and by the stain of more serious sin." (ST. AMBROSE, *Off. of Read.*, Mon. XVth week O.T.).

The danger of not considering venial sins

31. ST. AUGUSTINE OF HIPPO (Bishop, 354 - † 430): "A man, so long as he bears the flesh, cannot but have some at any rate light sins. But these which we call light, do not thou make light of. If thou make light of them when thou weighest them, be afraid when thou countest them. Many light make one huge sin: many drops fill the river; many grains make the lump. And what hope is there? Before all, confession." (cf. ST. AUGUSTINE, *Epistulam Johannis ad Parthos tractatus*, 1.6).

Efficiency of Confession

32. SAINT LEO THE GREAT, (Pope from 440 to 461): "God brought about the reparation and sanctification of believers by the remission of sins. Once sin is removed strict vengeance stops and the cessation of all punishment, the guilty man was restored to innocence and the end of wickedness becomes the beginning.. of holiness" (SAINT LEO THE GREAT, *Off. of Read.*, 34th week O.T.)

The secret of Confession

33. SAINT LEO THE GREAT, (Pope from 440 to 461): "In regards to the confession that is required of the faithful; written proclamations regarding the kind of individual sins shall be omitted in public, because it is sufficient that the fault of the conscience be manifested only to the priests in secret confession" (SAINT LEO THE GREAT, *Letter Magna indignatione*, c. 2)

MEDIEVALE ERA

Christ does not want to remit anything without the Church

34. BLESSED ISAAC, abbot of the monastery of Stella (1110 - † 1169) : "The Church is incapable of forgiving any sin without Christ, and Christ is unwilling to forgive any sin without the Church... Christ will not forgive the sin of one who despises the Church... Christ indeed is never complete without the Church, nor is the Church complete without Christ." (BLESSED ISAAC, abbot of the monastery of Stella, *Off. of Read.*, Fri. XXIII Week O.T.).

To those who do not want to confess with a Catholic Priest

35. SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI (1182 - † 1226) : "Enough, brothers !.. Don't praise diabolic tricks. You shall know with certainty that it is a temptation of the devil and a malicious deception. I am sure and the proof most sure is that one does not want to confess [with a Catholic Priest]." (FRANCISCAN OMNIBUS OF SOURCES 615. [53] cf. also 205).
36. FRANCISCAN OMNIBUS OF SOURCES (A friend of St. Francis of Assisi, in an exceptional situation, thanks be to the merits of Saint Francis, affirmed when she woke up): " 'When I died, I had to be thrown into a horrible prison because I did not confess my Sin !.. However Saint Francis, whom I have always served with devotion, has prayed for me and so I was granted to come back in the body, to confess that sin and to deserve eternal life. After having confessed it, here, I will hasten to the promised peaceful rest.' Trembling she confessed to the trembling priest and once she received her absolution she laid down in her bed and happily fell asleep in the Lord." (FRANCISCAN OMNIBUS OF SOURCES, 1263 ; SLC pg. 405).

Those who die unrepentant in mortal sins:

37. FRANCISCAN OMNIBUS OF SOURCES: "With the man's body sick, death was near, and relatives and friends hastened and say, 'Give up your things'. Here, his wife, children, relatives and friends pretend to cry. And he, raising his eyes, he saw them cry and, and moved by a bad feeling, thinking within himself he said: 'Behold, I place my soul and my body and all my things in your hands.' Truly this man is cursed, because he places and entrusts his soul, his body and all his belongings in such hands. Thus says the Lord through the prophet: 'Cursed the man who trusts in man.' And immediately they called the priest. The priest asked him: 'Do you want to receive penance for all your sins?' He answered 'Yes.' 'Do you want to give satisfaction through your means, just as you can, for all your faults and for those things that you cheated and in which you deceived the people?'. He answered: 'No'. And the priest: 'Why not?..' 'Because I have delivered everything I own into the hands of all my relatives and friends.' And then he could no longer speak and that miserable man died. But we all know that wherever and in whatever way a man dies in mortal sin without offering sacramental satisfaction though he could but did not, the devil snatches his soul away from his body with a distress and suffering so great that no one can know except those who experience it. And all the talents and authority and knowledge that he thinks he possess, are taken away from him. He leaves them to relatives and

⁶ "As the Father sent me, so I send you..". Yes, just as the Father has sent Jesus to forgive sins on the earth, so also Jesus has sent his Apostles into the world and the Bishops etc.. to forgive sins until the ends of the earth. Indeed Pope Pius X says: "The Sacrament of Penance was installed by Jesus when he said to the Apostles, and in them to their successors: "Receive the Holy Spirit: to those who you forgive their sins they will be forgiven them and to those whom you retain their sins will be retained"! (cf. John 20:22-23)!" (SAINT PIUS X, Major Catechism No. 356). (cf. Vat. Council. II, PO No. 2.5)

friends and they take their heritage and they divide it and say: 'Cursed be his soul because he could have given us more and buy more than he bought.' The worms devour his body; and so that man loses his soul and his body in this short life and goes to hell where he will be tormented eternally." (FRANCISCAN OMNIBUS OF SOURCES, 205).

Only priests can absolve from sins:

38. SAINT FRANCIS OF ASSISI (1182 - † 1226) : "My blessed friars, clerics and laypeople shall Confess their sins to the Priests of our Religion. And if they cannot do it, they shall Confess to other prudent and Catholic Priests, certain and sure that from whatever Catholic Priest* they will receive Penance and Absolution, they will be without doubt Absolved from their sins, if they try to observe humbly and devotedly the Penance that was imposed to them. If on the other hand there is no Priest available, they shall confess to one of their brothers as the Apostle James says: Confess your sins to one another. However, for this reason they shall not omit to go to the Priests, because only the (Catholic*) Priests have the power to tie and to untie." (FRANCISCAN OMNIBUS OF SOURCES, 53).

Do not disguise your sins

39. ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA (1195 - † 1231) : "If the sinner.. is aware of his sins and recognizes them, believe me, 'he will live he will not die' (Ezek 33:15). However if.. he disguises them and confesses his sins hiding them and softening them, this is a sign and proof of eternal damnation." (SAINT ANTHONY OF PADUA, Sermons, Sunday III of Lent, 3).

The secret of Confession

40. IV LATERAN COUNCIL (1215): "Who would dare to reveal a sin to him expressed in the tribunal of penance, we decree that will not only be deposed from the ministry of priesthood, but even locked up under strict custody in a monastery, to do penance forever" (LATERANEN COUNCIL IV, Constitution XXI).
41. ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA (1195 - † 1231): "Those who discover or manifest for fun or seriously the secret of confession, are truly children of the devil, condemned by the living and true God, expelled by the Church .. and to be exposed to public infamy. I say expressly: Anyone who violates confession sins more grievously than Judah." (ST. ANTHONY OF PADUA, Sermons, 1st Sunday of Lent - 2, No.5).

MODERN ERA

Venial sins and mortal sins

42. ST. THERESE OF AVILA (1515 - † 1582): "With all your strength try to free yourself even from venial sins and to strive always to greater perfection." (ST. THERESE OF AVILA, Complete Works. Way of Perfection, chap 5, 3-4 , Pauline Edit., pg. 694).
43. SAINT FRANCIS DE SALES (1567 - † 1622): "Spiders do not kill bees, but they spoil and contaminate their honey. They entangle their honeycombs with the webs they spin, so that the bees cannot carry on their work. This happens when the spiders stay around the hive. In the same way, venial sin does not take away our spiritual life but it spoils devotion. It so entangles the powers of the spirit with evil habits and inclinations, that we can no longer practise charity with promptness in which devotion consists." (SAINT FRANCIS DE SALES, Philotea. Introduction to the devoted life, chap XXII).
44. ST. CURATOR OF ARS (1786 - † 1859): "Some say: 'I have done too many bad deeds, the Good Lord cannot forgive me.' It is a big blasphemy. You put a limit to the mercy of God and it has none, it is endless." (ST. CURATOR OF ARS, Magazine of the St. Curator of Ars, pg. 3)

Divine institution of Sacramental Confession

45. COUNCIL OF TRENT (1545-1563): "If anyone denies that sacramental confession was instituted by God .. let them be anathema ... If anyone denies .. Secret Confession only to a priest, as it was from the beginning always use and is use of the Catholic Church, if he is unrelated to the institution and the command of Christ and also says that it is a human invention, let him be anathema." (COUNCIL OF TRENT, Session XIV, Chap. III, 6).

POST-MODERN (Or CONTEMPORARY ERA)

Divine Institution of the Sacrament of penance

46. Saint Pius X, Pope (from 1903 to 1914) says: "The Sacrament of Penance was installed by Jesus when he said to the Apostles, and in them to their successors: "Receive the Holy Spirit: to those who you forgive their sins they will be forgiven them and to those whom you retain their sins will be retained"! (cf. John 20:22-23)!" (SAINT PIUS X, Major Catechism No. 356).
47. II VATICAN COUNCIL (1963-1965): "The same Lord, however, has established ministers among his faithful to unite them together in one body in which, "not all the members have the same function" (Rom 12:4). These ministers in the society of the faithful are able by the sacred power of orders to offer sacrifice and to forgive sins, and they perform their priestly office publicly for men in the name of Christ. Therefore, having sent the apostles just as he himself been sent by the Father, Christ, through the apostles themselves, made their successors, the bishops, sharers in his consecration and mission. The office of their ministry has been handed down, in a lesser degree indeed, to the priests. Established in the order of the priesthood they can be co-workers of the episcopal order for the proper fulfillment of the apostolic mission entrusted to priests by Christ... 5. God, who alone is holy and who alone bestows holiness, willed to take as his companions and helpers men who would humbly dedicate themselves to the work of sanctification. Hence, through the ministry of the bishop, God consecrates priests, that being made sharers by special title in the priesthood of Christ, they might act as his ministers in performing sacred functions. In the liturgy they continue to carry on his priestly office by the action of his Spirit. By Baptism men are truly brought into the People of God; by the sacrament of Penance sinners are reconciled to God and his Church; by the Anointing of the Sick, the ill are given solace; and especially by the celebration of Mass they offer sacramentally the Sacrifice of Christ." (VATICAN COUNCIL II, Decree Presbyterorum Ordinis, No. 2.5).

Positive effects of frequent Confession and warning to the young clergy if they say that frequent confession should be avoided

48. PIUS XII, Pope (from 1939 to 1958): "To ensure more rapid progress day by day in the path of virtue, We will that the pious practice of frequent confession, which was introduced into the Church by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, should be earnestly advocated. By it genuine self-knowledge is increased, Christian humility grows, bad habits are corrected, spiritual neglect and tepidity are resisted, the conscience is purified, the will strengthened, a salutary self-control is attained, and grace is increased in virtue of the Sacrament itself. Let those, therefore, among the younger clergy who make light of or lessen esteem for frequent confession realize that what they are doing is alien to the Spirit of Christ and disastrous for the Mystical Body of our Savior." (PIUS XII, Enc. Letter, Mystici Corporis, third part, errors regarding sacramental confession).

The secret of Confession

49. CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: *"The Church declares that every priest who hears confessions is bound under very severe penalties to keep absolute secrecy regarding the sins that his penitents have confessed to him. He can make no use of knowledge that confession gives him about penitents' lives."* (CCC 1467).

Absolution of homicide (as for example in abortion etc.) .. if...

50. 1983 CODEX OF CANON LAW: *"A person who procures a completed abortion incurs a latae sententiae excommunication".* (CDC Can. 1398).
51. *"By virtue of office, the canon penitentiary of a cathedral church and of a collegial church has the ordinary faculty, which he cannot delegate to others, of absolving in the sacramental forum outsiders within the diocese and members of the diocese even outside the territory of the diocese from undeclared latae sententiae censures not reserved to the Apostolic See."* (CDC Can. 508 - §1).
52. *"Where there is no chapter, the diocesan bishop is to appoint a priest to fulfill the same function."* (CDC Can. 508 - §2).
53. *"The following can remit a ferendae sententiae or latae sententiae penalty established by a precept not issued by the Apostolic See: 1º the ordinary of the place where the offender is present; 2º if the penalty has been imposed or declared, the ordinary who initiated the trial to impose or declare the penalty or who personally or through another imposed or declared it by decree."* (CDC Can. 1356 - §1).
54. *"There is no offense, however serious, that the Church cannot forgive. "There is no one, however wicked and guilty, who may not confidently hope for forgiveness, provided his repentance is honest. Christ who died for all men desires that in his Church the gates of forgiveness should always be open to anyone who turns away from sin. Catechesis strives to awaken and nourish in the faithful faith in the incomparable greatness of the risen Christ's gift to his Church: the mission and the power to forgive sins through the ministry of the apostles and their successors: The Lord wills that his disciples possess a tremendous power: that his lowly servants accomplish in his name all that he did when he was on earth. Priests have received from God a power that he has given neither to angels nor to archangels ... God above confirms what priests do here below. Were there no forgiveness of sins in the Church, there would be no hope of life to come or eternal liberation. Let us thank God who has given his Church such a gift!"* (CCC 982-983).

Psychology and sacrament of penance:

55. POPE BENEDICT XVI (Pope from 2005 to 2013) : *"Today.. psychotherapy is so widespread.. Yet the possibilities of psychotherapy are very limited: it.. cannot provide true renewal, the overcoming of these serious diseases of the soul. It is therefore always temporary and never definitive. The Sacrament of Penance gives us the opportunity to be renewed through and through with God's power - ego te absolvo -, .. I think there is a great need of this especially today. We can be healed. Souls that are wounded and ill, as everyone knows by experience, not only need advice but true renewal, which can only come from God's power,.. We must recover them ourselves and so bring them once again within our people's reach."* (POPE BENEDICT XVI, Osservatore Romano, Saturday 9 February 2008, pg. 4).

The washing of the feet, recalls especially Holy Confession:

56. POPE BENEDICT XVI (Pope from 2005 to 2013): *" 'Washing the feet'. What does 'to wash ones feet' ? To wash oneself from the sins of every day, and for this reason we are in need of the Confession of sins.. the direction given by the words of Jesus to Peter is obvious: to be able to participate at the sociable community of Jesus Christ.. we have to recognize that we sin even in our new identity as baptized. We are in need of Confession as it has taken shape in the Sacrament of reconciliation. By means of it the Lord washes our dirty feet over and over so that we can sit down at table with Him"* (BENEDICT XVI, Homily Cena Domini, 20th March 2008, held in the Basilica of Saint John in Lateran)."

Experiences

EXAMPLES and WITNESSES

- "The example of the good thief who has confessed to Jesus, a man of flesh and blood, and not directly with the Eternal Father (cf. Luke 23:39-43)
- "The example of the parable of the king's banquet, in which one of the guests did not wear a white dress!" (cf. Matt 22:1-14; Zech 3:3-4) ...
- "The example of the body, if one does not wash it sooner or later it begins to smell bad" (cf. also Sac. Pass. pg. 87)
- "The example of someone who, several times distractedly said: 'So at the end of our life all have to do a bit of purgatory.'" But are we so sure? (cf. Luke 23:39-4 3; CCC 1022)

IN CONCLUSIONE:

- After all these passages from the Scriptures and from the Teaching of the Church, the Eternal Father may very well say in his Blessed Son, "My children, not yours but my will be done, that is to make you rise", both from sin and to Eternal Life and to the glorious Immortality even with the body. Your human will instead without the guidance or the intercession of Jesus, will lead only to death!!!

IN SYNTHESIS:

- After having read and meditated all this, who does not want to Confess or purify oneself - stubbornly - through the Catholic Priest, sooner or later stinks so much that everyone would turn away from him, even God! (cf. Matt 22:11-14; "Sacred" Passport of the Christian, pg. 87)...
- In the end: We wish you a GOOD MEDITATION and GOOD WALK towards the Eucharistic and Heavenly SUPPER of the LORD. All this: Ad Maiorem Dei Gloria et Salutem animarum ! Amen !

NB. In regards to all the passages that we didn't read nor explain, if you're interested in having a deeper knowledge of the topic, according to God and the Church and experience ... you can make an appointment with us at the end of the teaching or through e-mail, and we'll come to your house as far as it's possible. We only have to coordinate and unite some people, who thirst for truth!. You find the e-mail on: www.poorfriars.net – with Christian love "Little Friars of Jesus and Mary".