

Navigating the Spiritual Life

Using the Means to Sanctity

Using Confession to Overcome Sin in My Life

A. First, use it frequently!

- a. Once a year is NOT frequent! Mother Teresa – weekly. Most religious congregations – weekly. Monthly at least for a lay person striving for sanctity

B. Next, 4 things:

- a. **First – Get in touch with the matter** - what I've done: "I will go to my Father and I will tell Him: 'Father, I have sinned against God and against you...'"
 1. Two most difficult words to say: "I have sinned!"
 - experience in Confession – we too often go to confession to excuse rather than accuse
 1. need sins to be confessed in order to have a valid confession
 2. problem of confessing other's sins rather than my own
 - New vs. old translations of the *Confiteor* – in old translation we didn't repeat three times *mea culpa, mea culpa, mea maxima culpa*. Once was already too much for us! But we do need to let it sink in, thus the blessing of the accurate new translation.
 - Against pride - we don't want Jesus to approach our sick souls because "surely there must be a stench!"
 1. wounds can't be healed if they are not shown
 - Confessing my sins actually brings health!
 1. psychologically stand more firmly as a person
 2. I'm embraced in a re-union and deeper union with God

b. Second – Get in touch with the One we offend

1. We're in relation to God
2. Problem of living as if God didn't exist
3. Secularism
 - Any offenses today are only against man
 - "Father, my mama didn't raise me like that!"
4. But sin, by definition, is an offense against God – we must come to experience our act of contrition in reality "but most of all, I have offended Thee, Who art most Good and deserving of all my love.."

c. Third – Get in touch with the One we approach in the Sacrament

1. We see the Crucified One with His merciful glance
 - Dual purpose of the Crucifix – seeing my sins and seeing His great Love for me!
2. We see the Father looking down the end of the road for His son
 - The Cross is, as it were, raised when the priest raises His hand in absolution - wounds of Christ flow freshly to remove guilt and sanctify

d. Fourth – Get "out of touch" with the sin forgiven

1. The required "firm purpose of amendment" requires a strategy to uproot this sin from my life
 - Stop the enemy at the gate! Put up some protection to avoid sin in the future
 - Identify and get a strategy to deal with the person, place, or thing that leads me to sin
 - Use the particular examen to monitor and labor to change my behavior to allow graces of Confession to be cultivated in my soul and life