

CONFESSION OBJECTIONS

*Replies to Objections Regarding
Frequent and Regular Confession*



♦*"I don't want to confess my sins to a priest."*

Confessing sins to a priest is called for in the Bible. The Epistle of St. James says, "Let him bring in the priests of the church, and let them pray over him, . . . if he be in sins, they shall be forgiven him. Confess your sins one to another, and pray for one another that you may be saved" (James 5:14-16).

The priest in the Confessional acts in the person of Christ. Jesus gives you absolution through the priest.

♦*"I am too ashamed to confess my sins."*

The devil often tries to make us be unashamed so as to commit sins and then too ashamed to confess them. Don't fall for this. Examine your conscience. Discern and detect the number and kind of your sins, any aggravating or mitigating factors. Confess them simply and be done with the shame.

♦*"I am afraid the priest will think less of me."*

You should strive to be detached to the opinion of your confessor. Also, the priest need not know who you are and won't remember later. And you are manifesting the wondrous power of God's grace to effect the conversion of your heart. If you had the power from God to heal any illness or injury, wouldn't you be all the more pleased to do so for a grievous disease or a terrible injury? So the priest rejoices to bring you Christ's healing mercy for your sins.

♦*"I don't want to bother the priest."*

After the offering of the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass, the administering of the Sacrament of Reconciliation is the greatest and noblest act of the priesthood. It is the priceless opportunity to be an ambassador of God's Infinite Mercy (cf. 2 Cor. 5: 17-20).

The priest participates in the graces you receive from the Sacrament of Confession. Our Lord Jesus loves you, shed His blood for you, died for you, rose again for you, calls you to be His beloved son or daughter. Do you suppose that Our Lord would not reward the priest for his service to a beloved son or beloved daughter?

♦*"I don't want to take up too much time from other penitents."*

If you prepare adequately, prayerfully, you will have a succinct list of sins, clearly expressed by number and kind, for which you are heartily sorry. This need not take long. Your soul is worth the time. Do not complain about the time it takes for the other penitents, and they ought not to complain about you.

♦*"It has been a long time since my last confession so my confession may take a long time."*

Then it is all more urgent that you go to Confession promptly at the soonest opportunity. You may seek an appointment if you will need help with making a good confession and you expect that it will take especially long. Do not imperil your immortal soul by lingering in sin.

♦*"Confession times are not available at my parish."*

Have you asked your priest to be available for Confession? Many parishes which fail to offer regular Confession times will say that Confessions are available by appointment.

Have you written kindly and respectfully to your pastor requesting expanded opportunities for the Sacrament of Reconciliation? Sometimes it is difficult for a pastor to know what time would be most opportune for his parishioners. Include in your letter times that you

suggest would work well for you and for other parishioners. Also, you might check the Confession times of nearby parishes.

♦*"I am not able to get to church due to limited mobility."*

Let the priest know that you would like to go to Confession and let him know when is a good time for him to visit. You may extend some courtesy to a priest who visits, and remember that it is polite to allow for him to visit briefly for the Sacraments. It is simpler for a priest to accommodate a home visit in his schedule when he knows that it will not require a prolonged social engagement.

♦*"I don't want to."*

For growth in the spiritual life, abnegating our own wills is indispensable. Better to open your heart to allow God's grace to break in through your willfulness and pride while you are still alive, than to have more purification needed in Purgatory, where you are purified by sufferings which are not meritorious.

♦*"I don't commit that many sins."*

Even the smallest venial sin is intolerable. A venial sin is still swinging the hammer to nail Jesus to His Cross. "For a just man shall fall seven times and shall rise again; but the wicked shall fall down into evil" (Proverbs 24:16). In this valley of tears, we all fall short. Do not be deceived. We must repent even of our venial sins.

♦*"I don't commit any sins."*

The first sin you should confess is the sin of pride that is blinding you to your condition as a sinner. St. John writes, "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 John 1:8). Pray for light from the Holy Spirit to detect your sins. For a devotional

confession, you may add a sin of your past life for which you are heartily sorry. This would not be out of any doubt of its being forgiven in a past Confession, but so as to have definite matter for the Sacrament and to renew and deepen your sorrow for your sins.

♦*"I can get forgiven in other ways."*

Sacramental absolution is necessary for the forgiveness of mortal sins. Repentance is necessary for the forgiveness of any sins. The confession of venial sins aids in recognizing the sins we commit and coming to repentance; it provides the opportunity for counsel from a priest who is assisted by the Holy Spirit. You receive a penance which helps you abnegate your will, turn away from sin, and make reparation for sin. Also, you are given special graces to help you avoid those sins in the future.

♦*"I am too busy."*

Too busy, indeed, if your spiritual life and relationship with God cannot find a place in your calendar. Are you too busy to bathe and take care of your body? How much time does that take? Why not give as much attention to your soul, which is more precious than your body? If you are not able to come during a regularly scheduled time, speak with your priest about another time that would work for you.

♦*"I don't think it helps that much."*

It is the experience of countless saints and holy men and women throughout Christian history that frequent and regular confession is fruitful for holiness of life. The Church teaches that "by this means we grow in a true knowledge of ourselves and in Christian humility, bad habits are uprooted, spiritual negligence and apathy

are prevented, the conscience is purified and the will strengthened, salutary spiritual direction is obtained, and grace is increased by the efficacy of the sacrament itself" (Pope Pius XII, *Mystici Corporis*, 87).

♦*"I keep on confessing the same sins."*

Frequent and regular confession is one of the ordinary means of overcoming habitual sin. More frequent confession allows for closer attention to causes and patterns of sin.

♦*"I think God doesn't want to forgive me."*

Our Lord Jesus Christ prayed from the Cross, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34). He has already prayed for your forgiveness. It is for you to come to Him through His priest to receive His Mercy. His desire to forgive you and enrich you with His graces is greater than your desire for forgiveness.

♦*"My sins are too great."*

No sin is greater than the Infinite Mercy of God, as Jesus assured St. Faustina: "My mercy is greater than your sins and those of the entire world. . . . I never reject a contrite heart. Your misery has disappeared in the depths of My mercy" (*Diary*, 1485). When you are given absolution from your sins, the flood-tide of the Ocean of Mercy pours forth in a mighty torrent on your soul.

♦*"I don't think it is that necessary. I can get by without it."*

Do you want to settle for minimalistic mediocrity? Or do you want to be holy, to grow in holiness, to be united ever more intimately to Most Sacred Heart of Jesus in a bond of wondrous love which begins already in this life and lasts forever and ever?

