



- A RESOURCE FOR ONGOING FORMATION -

Part 2: A Life of Penance and Daily Conversion

Chapter 2. The Sacrament of Penance

On this road to renewal the Sacrament of Reconciliation is the privileged sign of the Father's mercy and the source of grace. Rule 7

...all the faithful are invited and obliged to holiness and perfection of their own state of life. Accordingly let all of them see that they direct their affections rightly, lest they be hindered in their pursuit of perfect love by the use of worldly things and by an adherence to riches which is contrary to the spirit of evangelical poverty...

Vat II *Lumen Gentium* 42

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

The problem for some people is that they have nothing to tell. Not because it is not there, but because they do not see it. This is **why examination of conscience is important**. Daily examination...When we become aware of our faults we must repent, change our thinking, give a new direction to our lives...We bring with us to the sacrament of reconciliation this changed frame of mind and heart. Christ accepts us, and through the ministry of his priest communicates to us his forgiveness and grace. We are encouraged to make a fresh start.

Peter O'Grady *"Rebuild My Church": a commentary on the Rule of the Secular Franciscans* (p 22-23)

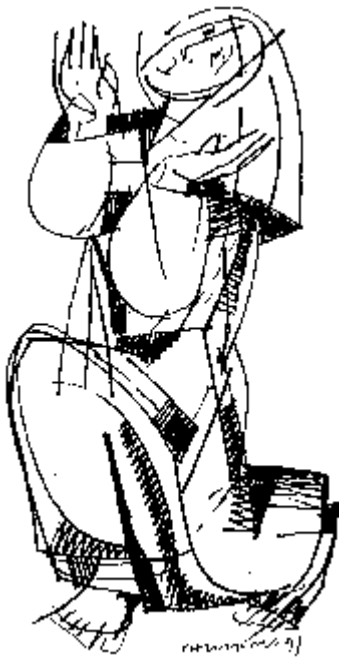
In the sacrament of penance the faithful, confessing their sins to a legitimate minister, being sorry for them, and at the same time proposing to reform, obtain from God forgiveness of sins committed after baptism through the absolution imparted by the same minister; and they likewise are reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by sinning.

CIC 959

...the new life received in Christian initiation has not abolished the frailty and weakness of human nature, nor the inclination to sin that tradition calls *concupiscence*, which remains in the baptised such that with the help of the grace of Christ they may prove themselves in the struggle of Christian life. This is the struggle of *conversion* directed towards holiness and eternal life to which the Lord never ceases to call us.

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1426 (p 321)

1. Why do many people still prefer to have their confession heard in the traditional confessional rather than face to face?
2. What advantage can you see in making a daily 'examination of conscience'?
3. Can you describe the daily interior struggle involved in trying to live as Christ lived?
4. What is meant by calling the sacrament of reconciliation the 'second plank'?



Scripture—

I John 1. 8-10

If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.