



# Sin, Temptation and Forgiveness

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# Topics

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What is Sin?

Temptation

God's Forgiveness

Sacraments of Healing

- - Sacrament of Reconciliation
- - Anointing of the Sick (it used to be referred to as 'The Last Rites')

What is General Absolution?

What is Redemptive Suffering?



# Natural Law

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To understand Sin, we need to start with Natural Law

There are many definitions, but I like the one from St. Thomas Aquinas:

- Natural Law is nothing else than the [rational](#) creature's participation in the [eternal law](#)". The [eternal law](#) is [God's](#) wisdom, inasmuch as it is the directive norm of all movement and action

Some key points:

- Rational creature's participation
- From God
- Directs our movement and actions

Natural Law is part of God's plan for salvation

It is internal and intrinsic to each individual



# Natural Law

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Catholic teaching indicates this law is written on everyone's hearts

We are faced now with a society and philosophy that externalizes law from our interior. Laws are not internal but external and imposed

Now seen as in opposition to freedom

- Church has too many rules ...
- People should be free to make their own decisions

This attitude places us on the same level as God. We act in preference to ourselves and what we want rather than in accord to God's law of love



# What is Sin?

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## Two views



Break a rule ...

Based on fear



Break a relationship ...

Based on love



# Sin is the breaking of our relationship with God

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Think of your relationship with others – a good friend, spouse, children and so forth

A husband or wife should not have an affair, not because it is against 'the rules' but because it is a deliberate bruising / severing of the relationship

Committing sin has two requirements:

- Person has full knowledge what they are doing is sinful
- Person performs the act of their own free will and full consent

Sin is never private.

- We are all part of the body of Christ and a bruising of our relationship with God bruises the whole community



# Grave sins

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Some actions are always evil and good intentions can never justify or remove sin

Mortal vs venial

Mortal is a grave sin. A complete break of the relationship with God

- Breaking any of the 10 commandments
- It a choice to be separated from God and God will respect that choice when we face him

Venial is still sin, but not grave. It is a bruising of the relationship with God.

- Person may not have full knowledge or full consent or the sin is less serious

The slippery slope of sin. We start with small things, and then move further and further along.

Difference between shoplifting and stealing \$10K is often just time and practice

Pride, avarice, envy, wrath, lust, gluttony, sloth – these are the 7 deadly sins



# Temptation and sin

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Is temptation sin?

Temptation is incitement to sin, not sin itself.

- Jesus was tempted

Temptation can be external or internal

External – do not discount Satan – the master tempter.

Internal – the temptation is now within us and we seek opportunities

Many strategies to resist temptation, but first must accept that temptation is something you will face







# The Role of Conscience

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## Intrinsically evil acts

- Situations that are always evil
- There is never a justification or reason why this is not evil
- No interpretation needed
  - Rape
  - Torture

## Interpretive Judgement

- Almost always wrong
- In a specific situation, with a specific circumstance, may be justified
- need as complete knowledge of the situation as possible
- Need the Gifts of the Holy Spirit – wisdom and prudence

Conscience is not a pass – one has to have an ***informed*** conscience. Convenience and self-interest is not a reason to ignore Church Teachings or opinions.



# If we are sinful, how can we hope to ever be with God for all eternity?

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# The Sacraments of Healing

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## Reconciliation

- This is a repeatable sacrament of healing
- Like every sacrament there is the matter and the form:
  - The matter is an audible confession of one's sins
  - The form is prayer of absolution
- Five steps for a good confession
  1. Examination of conscience
  2. Contrition
  3. Firm purpose of amendment
  4. Confession
  5. Penance

## Anointing of the Sick

- Used to be 'Last rites'
- Repeatable sacrament of healing
- Can be given to those who are dying, but also to those who are sick which could lead to death, chronically ill, facing a major health crisis
- The matter is the anointing with oil
- The form is the prayer of the priest
- Confers sanctifying grace
  - Strength, courage, healing of the soul and sometimes physical healing
  - Consecrates the one receiving it to be united with Jesus's suffering



# Sacrament of Healing

Confession restores our relationship with God

There is no sin too great that God will not forgive

- Does not mean there is no consequence for sin.

The Church is healed as well from the bruising / severing of the relationship of a part of the mystical body





# What is General Absolution?

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Only meant to be done during extreme conditions. For example, soldiers about to engage in a battle and no time to do individual confessions. Also was allowed during the pandemic.

This is a celebration where the priest will perform a general absolution of the faithful with the following caveats:

1. the penitent must be properly disposed; and
2. the penitent must be personally resolved to confess in due time each of the grave sins which cannot for the moment be thus confessed; and
3. the penitent should make an act of contrition (or offer some prayer of sorrow for sin) prior to receiving general sacramental absolution



# Redemptive Suffering

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Suffering is part of the human condition. Illness, sickness, infirmity

Sickness cause spiritual, physical, and emotional disturbance that may lead to sorrow, bitterness, discouragement, and lack of hope

Jesus did not come to banish suffering in this life, but to give it meaning or purpose

Suffering is necessary for holiness; it is a primary tool of the Holy Spirit to configure us to Christ

By performing corporal and spiritual works of mercy, we imitate Jesus the healer, and become more fully transformed in him by the power of the Spirit

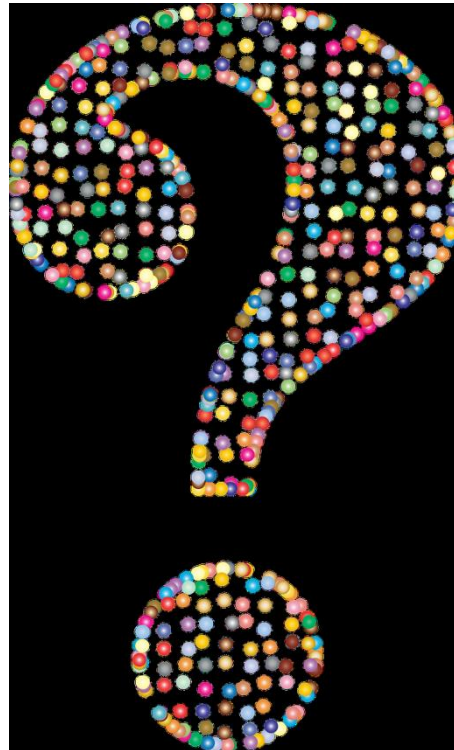
Romans 5:3-5

3 Not only so, but we also glory in our sufferings, because we know that suffering produces perseverance; 4 perseverance, character; and character, hope. 5 And hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured out into our hearts through the Holy Spirit, who has been given to us.



# Do you have a specific scenario you want to discuss?

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# Reflection Questions

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- 1) What are some of the great temptation we face in life?**
- 2) How does sin reproduce itself?**
- 3) Can you think of examples of where contemporary society has become blind to sin?**
- 4) Why does modern society find it hard to settle on a common understanding of what is right and what is wrong?**





# Breaking Open the Word

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## The Passion of our Lord According to Matthew

Said in parts:

(n) Narrator

(J or +) Jesus

S1,S2,S3 – the crowds and others



# Holy Week and the Sacred Pascal Triduum

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Passion Sunday (a.k.a. Palm Sunday) starts the Holiest week of the year in the Christian Calendar and no – it is not Christmas!

Holy Thursday – The celebration of the Last Supper, Institution of the Priesthood

Good Friday – The arrest, trial, crucifixion of our Lord. Only day of the year with no mass.

Easter Vigil – The resurrection of Jesus.

These three celebrations are actually one. There is no closing hymn and dismissal Holy Thursday. No opening hymn or closing and dismissal Good Friday and no opening hymn Saturday.

When you participate in all three, the entire message of the Passion is conveyed as it is intended.



# Holy Week

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Our culture places a great emphasis on Christmas, but our faith places the emphasis on Easter. Without the death and resurrection of Jesus, then his arrival in the manger has no real meaning.

- Remember the Christian symbol is the Cross, not the manger.

The Pascal Mystery opened the door for eternal life with the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.



# Holy Week

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What is your reaction the reading of the Passion?

One way to contemplate the Gospel is to put yourself into the position of the different peoples in the story. Is there one you feel you identify with strongly?

As we enter into Holy Week what are your feelings about it? Excited, overwhelmed, not really thought about it?