

## THIS IS YOUR CATHOLIC MINUTE ON MORTAL SIN AND ITS REMEDY

Mortal sin is defined as sin as grave matter which is also committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) **1857** For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must together be met: “Mortal sin is sin whose object is grave matter and which is also committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent.”<sup>131</sup> **1858** Grave matter is specified by the Ten Commandments, corresponding to the answer of Jesus to the rich young man: “Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and your mother.”<sup>132</sup> The gravity of sins is more or less great: murder is graver than theft. One must also take into account who is wronged: violence against parents is in itself graver than violence against a stranger.

The remedy for Mortal Sin is the Sacrament of Confession. The hours for confession are posted online, and you can schedule an appointment for confession in case you are doing a general/life confession and/or are looking for deeper direction.

---

### RESOURCE INFORMATION

*Catechism of the Catholic Church.*

Mortal Sin: Article 8 of the CCC 1857-1859

*Summa Theologiae*, third part, question 86.

**St. Thomas Aquinas says:**

**I Answer That**, It is impossible for a mortal actual sin to be pardoned without penance, if we speak of penance as a virtue. For, as sin is an offense against God, He pardons sin in the same way as he pardons an offense committed against Him. Now an offense is directly opposed to grace, since one man is said to be offended with another, because he excludes him from his grace. Now, as stated in the Second Part (I-II, Q. 110, A. 1), the difference between the grace of God and the grace of man, is that the latter does not cause, but presupposes true or apparent goodness in him who is graced, whereas the grace of God causes goodness in the man who is graced, because the good-will of God, which is denoted by the word *grace*, is the cause of all

created good. Hence it is possible for a man to pardon an offense, for which he is offended with someone, without any change in the latter's will; but it is impossible that God pardon a man for an offense, without his will being changed. Now the offense of mortal sin is due to man's will being turned away from God, through being turned to some mutable good. Consequently, for the pardon of this offense against God, it is necessary for man's will to be so changed as to turn to God and to renounce having turned to something else in the aforesaid manner, together with a purpose of amendment; all of which belongs to the nature of penance as a virtue. Therefore it is impossible for a sin to be pardoned anyone without penance as a virtue.

But the sacrament of penance, as stated above (Q. 88, A. 3), is perfected by the priestly office of binding and loosing, without which God can forgive sins, even as Christ pardoned the adulterous woman, as related in John 8, and the woman that was a sinner, as related in Luke vii, whose sins, however, He did not forgive without the virtue of penance: for as Gregory states (*Hom. xxxiii in Evang.*), *He drew inwardly by grace, i.e., by penance, her whom He received outwardly by His mercy.*