

## **Chapter 19 – Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation: God Is Rich in Mercy**

Divine mercy and conversion from sin are constant themes in Scripture.

Only God can forgive sins. But Jesus willed that the Church should be his instrument of forgiveness on earth. On Easter night the Risen Christ imparted to the Apostles his own power to forgive sins.

The Sacrament of Penance involves a conversion of our hearts to God, a confession of sins to a priest, the forgiveness of our sins, a penance to make some amends for sin, and reconciliation with God and the Church. For those who commit mortal sin after Baptism, this Sacrament is necessary for being reconciled to God and the Church.

Sin should never be understood as a private or personal matter because it harms our relationship with others and may even break our loving communion with the Church.

The regular confession of our venial sins helps us form our consciences, fight against evil tendencies, let ourselves be healed by Christ and progress in the life of the Spirit.

Questions:

- Why do we confess our sins to a priest?
- Why is it necessary to be reconciled to the Church as well as to God?