

Lesson XII - PENANCE

GETTING STARTED

- 1.) Read Psalm 51:1-12. Draw attention to the penitential tone of this Psalm. Also, note the various requests:
 - a.) Have mercy on me.
 - b.) Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity.
 - c.) Cleanse me from my sin.

Go through this Scripture passage with your students, picking out all similar expressions.

- 2.) Read the Prayer of Manasseh (pages 219-220 in the Diocesan Bible). Point out some of the expressions of sorrow and repentance.
- 3.) Read Psalm 32:1-5. Be sure to draw attention to what happens when we do and when we don't repent and confess our sins:

No Repentance and Confession

- a.) My body wasted away through groaning all day long.
- b.) Thy hand was heave upon me.
- c.) My strength dried up.

With Repentance and Confession

- a.) You didst forgive me the guilt of my sin
- b.) Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven.

- 4.) Read 1 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 is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.*

Be sure to stress the point that we all have sins; we all have something which must be corrected. If we deny our own imperfections, we are liars and make a liar out of our Lord.

Have the students list some of their own faults/sins for which they should ask forgiveness. This activity should be carefully done. If students are reluctant to do this as an open class activity, they can silently call to mind those faults/sins.

FINISHING-UP

Brief Answers - Briefly answer each of the following questions.

- 1.) What happens to us when we receive the Sacrament of Penance ?

2.) What is necessary to properly receive the Sacrament of Penance ?

3.) Read John 20:22-23: *He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained."*

What does this have to do with the Sacrament of Penance ?
Whom did our Lord authorize to grant forgiveness of sins ?

ADDITIONAL

1.) The Confession Prayer makes mention of

I have sinned by the sevenfold transgression of the deadly sins, namely by pride, envy, anger, laziness, covetousness, gluttony, and lust and all their forms.

Discuss with your students some of the sins which fall into each of the above categories.

2.) The Confession Prayer also says

I have neither performed the positive commands, nor abstained from those things that are forbidden.

This tells us that we can sin by both the things we DON'T do as well as by the things that we DO.

Discuss with your students some of the sins which might fall into each of these categories.

Since it is usually easier to think of things which we have done that we should not have, and since it is a little more difficult to think of ourselves sinning by NOT HAVING DONE something, first have the students read Matthew 25:41-46. This should help the discussion along.