

Preparing for Confession

How do we prepare to receive this Gift of Awakening Grace?

Think timidly and fearfully of our weak condition.

Need to open up as we have become hardened and blinded.

We need to recognize this hardness.

Conversion often occurs simply as the thought comes to a person to change his life and improve himself.

Don't Procrastinate

This is a common ailment. Never say: "I will do it tomorrow or some other time."

Remember, habit and inclinations can imprison us in sin.

There are different levels to our condition

The covering that is deepest most dangerous and closest to the heart is self-deception, insensitivity and carelessness.

Absent mindedness and distraction of a busy life are closer to the surface.

On outer surface is the passions of the flesh.

Resolve to abandon sin and dedicate one's life to pleasing God (Theosis).

Embrace the story of the Prodigal Son (Luke 15:11-32)

Admit your sins

How do we identify our sins?

1. Makeup a sheet with the laws of God on one side and your life on the other. See how they compare.

A. Recall all your obligations in relation to God, your neighbor and to yourself.

B. Go through the Ten Commandments.

C. Review the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5).

E. Read the Epistle of James and the Epistles of Paul especially 12:9-21 in the Epistle to the Romans. And chapter 4 in the Epistle to the Ephesians.

F. Read the first Epistle of Saint John.

G. Look at the prayer before Communion.

You will uncover a multitude of deeds words, thoughts feelings and iniquitous desires that should not have been done. And things that should have been done that were not. There will be some that were good but the motivations behind them were not pure.

The most important thing is to realize that to know your sinfulness requires an exact determination of your deeds. Along with the circumstances of time, place, people and so forth.

2. Identify the underlying patterns which show you the characteristic of your heart.

The governing passions will become clear.

There will be one passion which will condition all the actions.

This is the root of your sinfulness.

3. Reflect on these sins until you see clearly that each one was committed according to your own desire. Don't listen to the excuses.

Work on this until you can honestly say, I am guilty of this and that.

You will begin to feel burdened and wretched. Don't feel bad that you are experiencing them but desire that they all come forward.

The right condition is a feeling of regret and repentance. This leads to a vow to change.

4. Seal this work with the sacrament of repentance.

Through this sacrament one clears the divine ledger.