

# HEALING RETREAT

Workbook & Journal



Carl Bloch: Healing at the Pool of Bethesda, 1880

*"Do you want to be healed?"* John 5:6

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# INTRODUCTION: What is healing?

*Do you want to be healed? John 5:6*

When Jesus saw him and knew that he had been lying there a long time, he said to him, "Do you want to be healed?" The sick man answered him, "Sir, I have no man to put me into the pool when the water is troubled, and while I am going another steps down before me." Jesus said to him, "Rise, take up your pallet, and walk." And at once the man was healed, and he took up his pallet and walked. John 5:6-9

How many psychologists does it take to change a light bulb?

The light bulb has to want to be changed

You have to want healing. The fact that there are parts of you that resist it, parts you may not be aware of, that prefer the comfort of lying in darkness, of brooding over injuries, or of simply being too afraid to know a new version of you, one that is not limping or in blindness or crippled or imprisoned in fear.

Wounds ultimately come from sin and sin is a break in communion.

Pope St John Paul II in *Reconciliatio et Paenitentia* (8):

FOUR types of division, fragmentation, or broken communion:

1. Between you and God
2. Between you and your neighbor
3. Between you and creation
4. Between you and your own creation (your very self)

Therefore we have need for healing in our relationship with God, with our neighbor, with creation, and even that healing within the depths of the mystery of our own person.

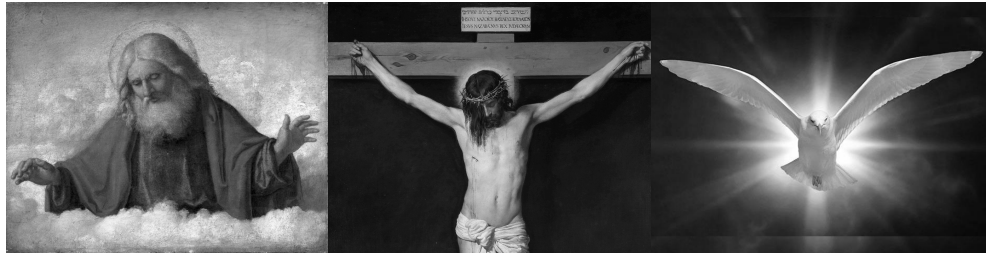
Ultimately it is the Love of God that heals that has been made manifest in Jesus Christ. The greatest concentration of Jesus on earth is in the Most Blessed Sacrament. The more frequent and intense your contact with him, the greater the healing. Also there are great graces of healing in the Sacrament of Penance, in the Word of God, and in prayer, fasting, almsgiving.

We will try to look at what blocks us from wanting to be whole and to be holy, healthy, and happy.

Mary, health of the sick, comfort of the afflicted, refuge of sinners,  
Pray for us!

# TALK 1: OUR HEARTS CRY "ABBA!"

*God the Father as the Origin of Your Being and the Completion of Life*



Pope St John Paul, in his theology of the Body spoke of a tryptych, a threefold way of understanding the human person. These are three moments in our existence, or ways of knowing oneself, or God bringing us into communion with Father, Son, and Holy Spirit:

God the Father is the Alpha and Omega of our Being, our very origin and completion.	Jesus Christ helps you accept His Love for you AS YOU ARE NOW, also accepting your sinfulness	The Holy Spirit is the means to go from where you are now to where God is calling you to be with a gift of his Love.
Original Meaning of the Human Body	Historical Meaning of the Human Body	Eschatological Meaning of the Human Body

The word Father means origin or author, the alpha, or first part of a thing, its cause, its beginning. When God said, "I am the Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last." Revelations 22:13. Some people, when they want to talk about healing try to go back to their childhood, maybe even their experience in the womb, but this is not enough, we must each realize that our origin, the beginning of our personhood is the Father's delight to create us:

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. He destined us in love to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. Eph 1: 3-6

You were created first in the mind of the FATHER! He IS your beginning. Sin is not beginning, pain is not your beginning, false notions of self are not your beginning.

### **Before the Foundation of the World**

Your ultimate beginning is the mind of God - his intention to create you.. You were here first loved, first thought of, God first delighted to design you, and you are a unique emanation of the Father's glory. Never before and never after will there be another like you. A part of the Father's Heart is reserved solely for you, like a "dove in the cleft of the rock" (Song 2:14) you are enthroned and enshrined within the Father's heart. That is your origin.

### **Your Conception Was Willed - God chose to Create you**

God decided to create your soul, *ex nihilo*, out of nothing, at the moment of your conception. The ovum and spermatozoa were provided by your parents, but your soul was immediately created, that is, God in an act of creation decided to create something the universe had never before seen - YOU.

### **Beneath the Fig Leaves**

Looking in the Father's eyes, the way you would in a mirror you see yourself the way he originally looked upon you and begin to understand who you really are. There are many masks or layers of false notions of self, even core lies very deep we may believe. These are very much like the "fig leaves" of Genesis.

### **You were created with these three gifts (Genesis 1:27-28):**

1. In His Image & Likeness - made to love and be loved
2. Male & Female - masculine/feminine, fruitful, human communion, fertility in maternity and paternity.
3. Have dominion - cultivate not only creation but our own creation through culture, arts, sciences, and human progress in the Lord.

### **4 Questions God Asks to call you back to yourself (Genesis 3):**

1. Where are you? (Where has sin brought you?)
2. Who told you that you were naked? (Who told you there was something about you that was wrong or needed covering?)
3. What is this you have done? (What has sin done to you?)
4. Have you eaten of the tree that I commanded you not to eat? (What core lies about you have falsely "fed" you?)

### **Meditation:**

Allow God to bring you back before the foundation of the world to experience that moment when he first looked upon you. Allow God to show you what a delight it was for him to create your soul out of nothing at your conception.

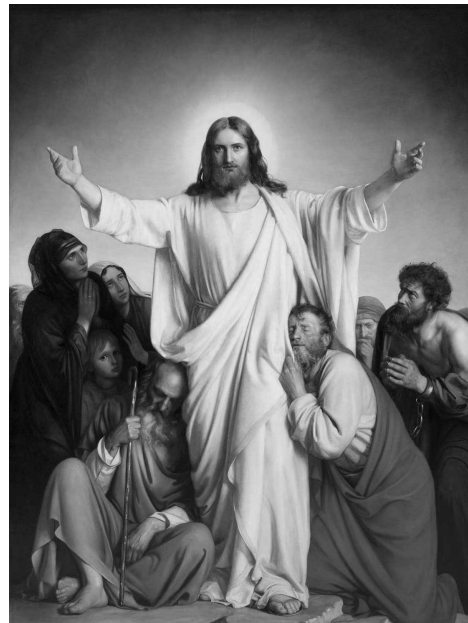
Take notice of what comes to your mind during this reflection. Is there anything from keeping you to see God as a loving Father, as delighting in you as his beloved son or daughter? What images, words, or impressions come to mind. Write them down. If you need to revisit this “moment” or encounter later, it is an excellent grace of healing for those with difficult or traumatic life origins.

**Scriptures for Reflection on God’s Fatherhood:**

Eph 3:14-21   1 Pt 3:20-21   1 Pt 1:3-5   Col 1:15-20   Pv 8:23-25  
Song 2:2   Gen 3:15   Mk 1:7-12   Mt 3:16-17   Lk 3:22  
Lk 1:38   Song 6:10   Song 8:6   Ps 45:11-18   Jn 14:6-10  
Col 1:15   Heb 1:2-3

## Talk 2: Jesus Christ Loves Me as I Am

*God the Son Shows Me How to Accept His Love and My Brokenness*



It is a beautiful thing to experience the Father’s Love for us, as He created us to be, before the foundation of the world. However, due to original sin and the shadow it cast upon our human nature, there is a nasty tendency in us to hate ourselves or condemn ourselves for not being that man or woman that God the Father sees us as. We are not yet that person. So it is not enough just to know the Father’s Love in creating us. We need to know the Love of God the Son in redeeming us.

## **Jesus enters into a dialogue of salvation with each of us**

There came a woman of Samaria to draw water. Jesus said to her, "Give me a drink." For his disciples had gone away into the city to buy food. The Samaritan woman said to him, "How is it that you, a Jew, ask a drink of me, a woman of Samaria?" For Jews have no dealings with Samaritans. Jesus answered her, "If you knew the gift of God, and who it is that is saying to you, 'Give me a drink,' you would have asked him, and he would have given you living water."...Many Samaritans from that city believed in him because of the woman's testimony, "He told me all that I ever did."

John 4:7-42

Notice that Jesus slowly peels layer after layer back and with each intervention there is a deeper understanding of:

1. My human sin, what it has done to me and how it has separated me from God, my neighbor, creation, and myself
2. A deeper revelation of who Jesus is and his power to save me

The ultimate revelation for the woman at the well and for each one of us is that Jesus loves us exactly where we are at RIGHT NOW. He does not loves us for who we could be or should be, or even who we suppose he thinks we should be, some image or model that we are not meeting.

## **Report Card Christ vs the Real Deal**

In encountering Jesus, he heals us also of false notions of God, of who we thought he was: a kind of inspector, a spiritual or moral police officer, an exacting judge, an angry dad, a dean of discipline, a warden, a principle who is giving us a damning report card. The real Jesus is the only One who really truly and deeply loves us where we are at RIGHT HERE AND NOW AS WE ARE.

## **Are you here right now?**

Another thing he shows us is that perhaps we are not here right now in this moment. We learn this especially before Jesus Christ in the Most Blessed Sacrament, where Jesus is truly present to us, supersubstantially present, more present to us than gravity, or air, or any kind of angel or human or creature. But are we here right now present to ourselves.

## **Meditation**

Close your eyes. Be present first to your body, your toes and feet, your legs, the way you are sitting now, your torso, shoulders, arms, hands, fingers, even your skin, and even every hair on your head that God said he has numbered and is fully aware of. Be very aware of your breathing and every beat of your heart.

Then be present to how you feel, either physically or emotionally: warm or cold, hungry or full, tired or rested, pensive or peaceful, joyful or sorrowful, hopeful, angry, hurt, happy, or whatever you are feeling right now.

Be present to your whole history, to every moment that has led up to this moment to where you are right now. Make a conscious effort to be in this moment right now, no longer in the past, nor looking at the future. Just be here and now.

Now be aware of your soul, your spirit, your higher self, your higher nature, the part of you that is made for deepest union with God. Think for a moment of your heart of hearts, your conscience, which is your inmost sanctuary, of how you stand before Almighty God.

Now just pause for a moment and be totally present in this moment with all of you: body, soul, and spirit....

THIS PERSON, this person, this man or woman sitting here right now - THIS IS THE PERSON JESUS LOVES. He loves THIS PERSON infinitely. Not some other version of yourself in the future, not one who is better or more virtuous, but this person here and now Jesus loves infinitely.

How did this exercise make you feel? Do you allow Jesus to love you exactly where you are at? What obstacles or

## **While we were yet sinners**

But God shows his love for us in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us. Since, therefore, we are now justified by his blood, much more shall we be saved by him from the wrath of God. For if while we were enemies we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, now that we are reconciled, shall we be saved by his life. Not only so, but we also rejoice in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom we have now received our reconciliation. Romans 5:6-11



Jesus Christ loves us infinitely right now because he can draw near to those for whom he died. He is Love itself. And pure Love cannot stop being love; love cannot stop loving us, no matter what we do. Even if we have sinned, he who is pure love will never be able to stop loving us. It is we who block or lock him out.

**The three root wounds, ways of blocking God - concupiscence**

Corresponding to the three main gifts of creation:

<b>Genesis 1:27-28</b>	<b>1 John 2:16-17</b>
1. Image and Likeness	<b>1. Pride of Life</b>
2. Male and Female	<b>2. Lust of the Flesh</b>
3. Have Dominion	<b>3. Lust of the Eyes (Greed)</b>

**Fig leaves, plywood boards, and hardened hearts**

Imagine a plywood board laying over the grass. It does not matter if even an infinite amount of water falls or sun shines, the grass beneath will never turn green. It will be brown, yellow, or just mud infested with insects and worms. These are like the hardened parts of our hearts, or blindnesses of our consciences. What happens is that somewhere along the line we discover some weakness, some ugliness, or sin, or imperfection, or a way in which we just are not enough or don't measure up. This is like nakedness so we cover ourselves with kinds of "fig leaves" or lies about ourselves.

**Scriptures for Reflection**

ON CHRIST'S POWER TO HEAL, HIS DIVINITY - TRUE GOD:

Jn 1:1      Heb 1:2-4      Mt 28:18      Col 1:15-20      Jn 8:58-59  
 Jn 10:30-33      Mt 2:11      Mt 28:17      Mt 14:33      Mt 17:5-6  
 Mk 9:2-3      Lk 9:29      2 Pt 1:16-18      1 Tm 2:5      Ph 2:10-11  
 John 14:6      Acts 4:12

CHRIST DRAWS NEAR TO US IN DIFFERENT HUMAN ACTIVITIES:

he loved his mommy and daddy	Luke 2:51
he rejoiced	Matthew 11:25 Luke 10:21
he loved children	Matthew 19:14
he was amazed	Luke 7:9
he drank wine and celebrated	John 2:9 Matthew 11:19
he suffered and was tempted	Mark 1:13; Luke 4:1-2
he wept at loss	John 11:35
He agonized	Matthew 26:38
He bled	Isaiah 53:5
He died a human death	Lk 23:46
Rose in a human body and still used it	Luke 24:41-43

# Talk 3: The Holy Spirit Lifts Me into Life

*God the Holy Spirit Gives a Real Plan Toward Wholeness and Holiness*

God the Father shows us where we came from and where we are going: Himself.

Jesus Christ shows us where we are at right now.

The Holy Spirit? He fills up the distance between where we are now and where God is calling us to be. His divine grace elevates us and lifts us to live life *on earth as it is in heaven*. How does the Holy Spirit fill in this huge gap?

“Deep calls to deep in the roar of mighty waters.” Psalm 42:7

The Spirit of God searches the depths of the mystery of God (1 Cor 2:10), particularly the depths of the mystery of Jesus Christ Crucified. Then he searches the depths of the misery of our humanity and brokenness, and in the “roar of mighty waters” he joins the two of them together in a healing and blessed union.

## **Ok but how?**

If we look at the operations of the Spirit of God in the creed:

### **I believe in the holy Catholic Church**

The Most Holy Eucharist: No where else in the world can you say “This is God,” everywhere else you say “God is here.” Because God has made himself present in the Eucharist in a way he is not present anywhere else except heaven. This is why most of the miracles of healing are associated with the Eucharist.

Confession: It is not enough to say you “confess your sins to God” but you need to confess them to a human person (James 5:16). In doing so, you neutralize the shame of your sins, you own them, claim them, and they lose their grip over you through the power of the Blood of the Lamb that is transmitted this way

Baptism and Confirmation: Living the life of communion with the relationships of the Most Holy Trinity

### **The communion of saints**

The intercession of the saints in heaven is necessary but what seems to be most powerful is the communion with the saints of those you can see, or “graced friendships” with the holy ones here on earth. There is no real healing without the actual presence of people who teach you how to be loved and how to love in the arena of human relationships, or communion of persons.

### **The forgiveness of sins**

It is impossible to know God, to know love, to heal without the forgiveness of sins, forgiveness of every single person who has ever offended you and yourself.

### **The resurrection of the body**

Already a foretaste in this life with the redemption of the body, that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit and that you subdue and master its appetites with prayer, fasting, and almsgiving.

### **Life Everlasting**

“This is eternal life, that they know you the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom you have sent.” John 17:3

Living life on earth as it is in heaven, by participating in eternal life in happy union with God here below.

### **Mary Spouse of the Holy Spirit**

Mary said, “My soul magnifies the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my savior,” (Luke 1:46-47). This is who she is: the magnifier of God, the Mediatrix of the one and only Mediator, the Theotokos, or Bearer, or Mother, of the True God.

### **Good tech goes unnoticed**

No one ever noticed what microphone they were using at the Oscar awards or what camera they televised it with. No one says they need to look at a microscopic molecules “directly” or look at nebulae or black holes in space “directly” without the help of a telescope. No one takes off their reading glasses to look at the page “directly.” It is also therefore absurd to talk about how it is better to go “directly” to Jesus, as if Mary would somehow impede or get in the way of union with God. Need more Jesus? Need more Mary! No Mary? No Jesus!

### **The Holy Rosary**

Praying the Rosary is a way to hyper-accelerate the healing process, a way to help anxiety, depression, temptation, to balance imbalances, to assuage fears, strengthen the will, enlighten the mind, calm the passions, and buoy up confidence and hope in God.

### **The unholy spirits**

The Holy Spirit also reveals the work and presence of the diabolical, intelligent, invisible creatures who want to destroy us and limit our healing.

**Four principle ways of operation of the demons:**

- 1. Infestation of a place or animal or thing
- 2. Temptation - inverting a higher good for a lower good
- 3. Obsession - fixation on a lower good as if it were God
- 4. Possession - agreement with the evil one to take over one's will

The demons are like parasites or bacteriae that enter through our woundedness. The bigger problem is not the bacteria but the wound. So the best way to rid oneself of evil spirits is NOT by focusing on them, but by focusing your fallen nature on God. You can swab a wound free of bacteria, but it is by far better to bind up and heal the open wound.

Practices given by Christ to heal our principle wounds:

<b>Genesis 1:27-28</b>	<b>1 John 2:16-17</b>	<b>Matthew 6:2-18</b>
1. Image and Likeness	1. Pride of Life	<b>1. Prayer</b>
2. Male and Female	2. Lust of the Flesh	<b>2. Fasting</b>
3. Have Dominion	3. Lust of the Eyes (Greed)	<b>3. Almsgiving</b>

Spiritual warfare, exorcism, divine combat are actually to help us be consumed not by the actions of demons but by the actions of God.

**How to heal from curses, hexes, spells, contact objects:**

Any exorcist will tell you that the first and best thing to do is to destroy any contact objects by giving them to a priest and make a renunciation of any kind of demonic practices in confession including:

- palmreading
- horoscopes
- telepathy
- masonry
- animal sacrifice
- necromancy
- curses
- marijuana or any other psycho-reactive drugs
- ouija board
- Fortune telling
- spells/hexes
- devil worship
- gods/idols
- amulets
- sorcery
- magic, witchcraft, bruha
- astro travel, gnosticism
- aura/chakra reading
- rituals (egg blessing etc)
- astrology
- charms/medallions
- mantras/centering prayer

In the end, to turn wholly to the Holy Spirit and live a life of communion with him.

## Talk 4: Unforgiveness and Childhood Trauma

*Forgive Us our Trespasses as We Forgive Those who Trespass Against Us*

Forgiveness is one of the most important steps to healing. Psychologically, it is impossible to have a healthy emotional life and psychological healing without it. Spiritually, it is a matter of eternal salvation:

For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father also will forgive you; but if you do not forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses. Mt 6:14-15

And forgive us our trespasses, As we forgiven those who trespass against us; Matthew 6:12

Why will God not forgive us if we do not forgive others?

The human heart, when it comes to forgiveness, is very much like a fist. When it is open, it is free to give and free to receive, but when it is closed to give or FORgive others, it is also closed to receiving forgiveness.

It is an offense against the fifth commandment, "Thou shalt not kill," and is murdering one's brother in one's heart.

It is also a participation in the unforgivable sin, the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, or impenitence. By not choosing not to forgive your neighbor, or at least by choosing to not ask God for the grace and strength to forgive one's neighbor, you are choosing to not be forgiven by God, thus not allowing him to forgive you.

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1864 reads: "Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven."

There are no limits to the mercy of God, but anyone who deliberately refuses to accept his mercy by repenting, rejects the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation offered by the Holy Spirit. Such hardness of heart can lead to final impenitence and eternal loss."

Not forgiving your neighbor is like drinking the poison and expecting them to die. It does not affect them. They might not even know whether you forgive them or not. It is actually between you and God.

Forgiving someone doesn't mean it justifies what they did, it just means that you are choosing to be free of the hatred and poison of unforgiveness. It also does not mean you must be reconciled with someone. Reconciliation is between two people. You may or may not choose, or it may or may not be a good thing, to reconcile with a person, especially if they mean you harm. You may not ever talk to them again in your life, but you do need to forgive them. That is a matter of your own health and salvation.

"Forgiveness is the restoration of freedom to oneself. It is the key held in our own hand to our prison cell" -Pope St John Paul II

### **How to forgive**

The soul of forgiveness is love. The strength and power to forgive flows from loving the person you want to forgive. However, if you look into your own heart for this kind of love and humility, it is not there. Our heart's love is very conditional, fickle, and fading. Our hearts are very small and incapable often times of the great love necessary to forgive. If you look into the Heart of Christ you will find no end of the infinite love necessary to forgive. Place therefore your heart beneath this endless infinite waterfall of grace, love, and forgiveness and you will be given the grace to forgive.

### **What if I don't want to forgive?**

There is an illusion that not forgiving means you still have control of all the powerless feelings you might have at being offended. It can be terrifying to forgive, make you falsely think that what they did was justified or ok.

### **What must I do to be free?**

1. Bring it to confession
  2. Bring it to the Cross. Watch Jesus forgive them. Watch Jesus die for them. Ask yourself if Jesus died for every sin in the history of sins except this one sin committed against you, or if he did in fact die for this person and their sin.
  3. Ask for the grace to forgive.
  4. Forgive them.
  5. Pray earnestly for them from the heart for their eternal welfare.
- When you are able to deeply pray for their good the way the Heart of Christ prays for them, chances are, you have probably forgiven them.

## **Childhood Trauma**

Before the age of ten, most of our personality is already developed. It is in childhood that most people develop or experience a wounding on their person that they may have to struggle with their whole life.

### **Two kinds of Trauma - one with a small 't' and big 'T'**

There is trauma that is violent, like an accident, or physical or sexual abuse, there is other trauma that is more hidden, like a growing perception of not being loved, valued, cherished, or even subtle emotional or verbal abuse from family or friends. Both of these affect us and we need healing from any kind of trauma.

### **How to heal**

1. Identify a wound, a perception, or core lie. It is usually linked to a negative memory when a false self identity was formed.
2. Forgive the person who caused it, a parent, a relative or friend, an enemy or bully, or even yourself. In order to do this you may have to do some serious praying/confessing.
3. Identify the core truth that God has promised - that we are loved infinitely and he has bestowed the dignity of his love and the promise of eternal blessedness.
4. Seek healthy mentoring friendships or corrective experiences to heal from the negative ones.

## Q&A ON FORGIVENESS

### **1) What is forgiveness?**

Forgiveness is our decision to accept God's grace to let go of the hurt due to sins committed against us and to express this by acts of mercy and love toward the offender (see Luke 15:20-24).

"Forgiveness is the restoration of freedom to oneself. It is the key held in our own hand to our prison cell" (Pope John Paul II).

### **2) How often must I forgive?**

70 x 7, that is, indefinitely, always (see Matthew 18:22).

### **3) Are there any sins committed against me, which I don't have to forgive?**

No. The Lord calls us to forgive all sins — even rape, murder, abuse, adultery, etc. We never have the occasion to forgive others for their character, attitude, or motives. We are not to judge these things.

**4) When I forgive, am I condoning sin?**

No, the Lord forgives all our sins and condones none of them (see John 8:11).

**5) Must I forgive if the person offending me isn't sorry?**

Yes, for-GIVENESS is before-GIVENESS — to give pardon before asked forgiveness or even if never asked forgiveness.

**6) Must I forgive if a person continues to hurt me?**

Yes. While hanging on the cross, Jesus forgave His enemies even as they continued to spit at Him and blaspheme Him (see Luke 23:34).

**7) If I forgive a person, do I stay in an abusive situation?**

No. You free yourself to obey God and remove yourself from an abusive situation until it is changed. If you do not forgive, you will often enable others' irresponsible behavior by becoming co-dependent.

**8) How do I forgive?**

None of us can forgive by our own power. "To err is human, to forgive divine," and we are not divine. However, the Lord promised us His divine power to forgive. Therefore, forgiveness is our decision to accept God's grace to forgive.

**9) What if I don't want to forgive?**

We should pray and ask the Lord to change our hearts.

**10) How quickly must I forgive?**

Immediately (Matthew 5:25), we're in a self-made jail and at a stand-still in our relationship with God until we forgive.

**11) What if I forgive and not forget?**

Forgetting offenses against us does not mean we have amnesia but that there is no special sting in us when we remember offenses. If it hurts us to remember offenses against us, either we need healing and the need to continue to forgive.

**12) How do I forgive myself?**

The Bible does not speak of our forgiving ourselves. Not forgiving ourselves is a symptom which will take care of itself if we truly forgive others and receive prayers for healing.

**13) What if I don't forgive?**

1. We "give the devil a chance to work on" us (see Ephesians 4:27).



2. We are handed over to the torturers (Matthew 18:34). These torturers are such things as fear, loneliness, depression, frustration, anxiety, and self-hatred.

3. We cut ourselves off from receiving forgiveness (Matthew 6:12, 15), healing (Sirach 28:3), prayer (Mark 11:25), worship (Matthew 5:23-24), and Christian community.

We lose our appetite for prayer, the Scriptures, the Mass, and Christian fellowship. We become spiritually anorexic.

If we persist in unforgiveness, we cut ourselves off from God forever and thereby damn ourselves.

#### **14) How do I know if I have forgiven?**

Forgiveness is not a feeling but a decision. Moreover, forgiveness is not only praying for those who have hurt us or treating them politely. We know if we have made the decision to forgive when we show it in acts of love and mercy to those who have offended us.

For example, the father of the prodigal son threw his arms around his son, kissed him, gave him gifts, honored him, and celebrated his return (Luke 15:20-24). By God's grace, we must go and do likewise. Even if the persons we need to forgive have died, we should give love and mercy to their family members.

Right now, decide to accept God's grace to forgive all who have sinned against you in any way. Say: "By God's grace, I decide to forgive \_\_\_ for \_\_\_." Fill in the blanks and repeat this statement until you have forgiven everyone who has ever offended you. Then thank Jesus forever for the miracle of forgiveness.

## FORGIVENESS PRAYER

*Forgiving yourself and others*

Let us close our eyes and listen. When I say "**JESUS**", that is your cue to say **FORGIVE ME**.

Lord, forgive us our trespasses:

For not showing mercy and love to others, **JESUS: FORGIVE ME**

For not trusting in you, **JESUS: FORGIVE ME**

For lying, **JESUS: FORGIVE ME**

For the unforgiveness & bitterness in my heart, **JESUS: FORGIVE ME**

For the times I abused my body with alcohol, sex or drugs, **JESUS: FORGIVE ME**

For the times I contemplated suicide **JESUS: FORGIVE ME**

For my active participation in an abortion **JESUS: FORGIVE ME**

For the times I stole from others, **JESUS: FORGIVE ME**

For the times I participated in witchcraft, **JESUS: FORGIVE ME**

For the times I physically, sexually or verbally abused others,  
**JESUS: FORGIVE ME**

For the times I committed the sins of lust, gluttony, greed, sloth, wrath, envy or pride, **JESUS: FORGIVE ME**

Now when I say **JESUS**, you respond: **I FORGIVE THEM**

Lord, help us to forgive those who trespass against us. Bring to mind the names of the people that have hurt you....

Let us begin with our parents.

For the times my parents abused me physically, emotionally, or verbally **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times my parents fought in front of me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times they didn't provide for me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times they forgot about me and set me aside, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times they didn't tell me that they Loved me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times they left me behind and were not a part of my life, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For all the hurt my parents have cause to me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

Now bring to mind the name of your spouse.

For the times my spouse abused or neglected me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times my spouse lied to me **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times my spouse didn't allow me to love them, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times my spouse chose somebody else over me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times my spouse fought with me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times my spouse didn't show love to me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times my spouse did not forgive me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

Now bring to mind the names of others in your life that have hurt you. Be it brothers, sisters, ex- spouses, step parents, aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents, sons, daughters, friends, co-workers, bosses, teachers, clergy, former boyfriends or girlfriends, classmates who ever cause you any pain or harm.

I bring to you Lord all the people from my past who have hurt me, for the times they cause me pain, **JESUS, I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times they physically, sexually, or verbally abused me, **JESUS : I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times they laughed at me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times they didn't believe in me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times they didn't accept me for who I am, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times they took me for granted, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times they ignored me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times they unjustly accused me, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

For the times they didn't show me love, **JESUS: I FORGIVE THEM**

Repeat after me:

Lord, I am truly sorry

for every sin

I have ever committed

and I forgive with all my heart

those who hurt me.

Amen

# Talk 5: Healing from Broken Relationships

*Looking for Love in All the Right Places*

## **All Relationships are Modeled after the Blessed Trinity**

Before talking about an unhealthy relationship. Let's talk about a healthy relationship - GOD IS A RELATIONSHIP. The Father loves the Son so perfectly that forth from them spirates eternally the Holy Spirit, who is himself, the Love of the Father and the Son.

## **Elements of The Relationship that IS GOD**

1. Autonomy - The Father is Not the Son and vice versa
2. Unity - they have communion and belong to one another. "I am in the Father and the Father is in me" Jn 14:11. A friend "lives in you" and "you live in him." They have made room for you in their heart and you in theirs.

These two also happen to be our major psychological needs. We need to be esteemed, respected, and to have our dignity protected and cherished, or at least to know ourselves as a loved person. We also need a sense of belonging. We need love. Some say this is perhaps the deepest need we have. When a human person is denied of love they have a kind of death.

The deepest and most common wounds that are found in people today is a lack of love, or as

St Mother Teresa of Calcutta said, "A lack of love is the greatest poverty in the world today."

## **Emeth and Hessed**

In the old testament, there are two words that describe the covenant love of God. They are revealed any time a prophetic servant of the Lord, such as Moses or Elijah, asks God to reveal who he is:

"The LORD, the LORD, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness." Ex 34:6

**Emeth**- faithfulness, truth, justice, stability, unwavering fidelity

**Hessed**- gracious mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, nurturing

These two are present in every interaction of God, but because human relations are modeled after divine they are the two things necessary for any healthy human friendship. We need at one and

the same time both TRUTH and LOVE. If a relationship lacks truth and is only about love, there is no accountability, no backbone, no enduring responsible care for the other and it is not actually love. If there is no love and only truth, then it is cold, uncaring, unresponsive, insensitive, and lacks empathy, and is therefore not really truthful to the dignity of the human person.

These are really like feminine and masculine qualities, the *emeth* and *hessed* that make up every human relationship, but also corresponds to the very fabric of our being and call to the deepest longings of the human heart.

Just as we are created from one man and one woman, in order to know ourselves as lovable persons, as affirmed and esteemed persons, we need the love of man and woman. We need masculine and feminine affirmation, which is done at a very very early age (18 mo.) with voice and touch.

**Clinical effect on babies reading the same text with same tone of voice:**

<b>Man's voice</b>	<b>Woman's voice</b>
Increased heart rate	Decreased heart rate
Increased brain activity	Decreased brain activity
increased body temperature	decreased body temperature
Increased body/eye movement	Decreased body/eye movement
Emotional excitement/anticipation	Deceleration of emotional response

When a man holds a baby, especially his own, his first instinct is to throw the baby high in the air, much to the delight of the child, to 'periscope' their head as a lookout, or to hold their head in his hand so he can have direct eye contact with the child. A woman instinctively draws the babe near her breast for food, warmth, and to let the child be calmed by her heartbeat.

<b>Man's touch engenders</b>	<b>Woman's touch engenders</b>
Courage	Humility
Confidence	Gentleness
Ability to regulate anger	Ability for Intimacy
Self control, ability for chastity	Capacity for Empathy

**Why these responses, instincts, tendencies?**

<b>Anatomy of the Interior of the Human Person</b>	
Intellect	
Reason (Ratio)	Intuition (Intellectus)
Will	
Irascible or Energy Appetites To accomplish the difficult good	Concupiscible or Pleasure Appetites To accomplish the immediate good
Hope-courage Fear-despair Anger	love - hatred joy-sadness delight-disgust
Parts of the Human Person that correspond to Masculine affirmation	Parts of the human person that correspond to feminine affirmation
EMETH	HESSED

St Edith Stein said that a fully developed man or woman possess BOTH Emeth and Hessed, Masculine and Feminine virtues. This does not contribute to gender confusion rather the opposite. A truly masculine man is gentle, tender, empathetic, albeit in a masculine way. A truly developed and feminine woman is courageous, bold, confident, free and capable of healthy anger albeit in a feminine way.

“Christ embodies the ideal of human perfection: in Him all bias and defects are removed, and the masculine and feminine virtues are united and their weaknesses redeemed; therefore, His true followers will be progressively exalted over their natural limitations. That is why we see in holy men a tenderness and a truly maternal solicitude for the souls entrusted to them while in holy women there is manly boldness, proficiency, and determination.” -St Edith Stein

**Effects of a lack of masculine or feminine affirmation**

<b>Lack of Masculine Affirmation</b>	<b>Lack of Feminine Affirmation</b>
Lack of confidence	Lack of Humility
Insecurity	Abrasive-ness
Inability to regulate anger	Inability for Intimacy
Inability for chastity, Daddy Issues	Incapacity for Empathy, Mommy Issues

When a child who has not been integrally masculinely or femininely affirmed, they it is possible for them to sexualize the need for man or woman touch, man or woman voice. These are deeper causes or triggers for: lust/pornography addiction, same-sex attraction, promiscuity, daddy-issues, attention seeking, inability to regulate fear and anxiety, incapacity to set and keep boundaries, and overall incapacity to enter into healthy friendships.

Gods' Response to Disintegration and Fragmentation:

Graced Friendships:

1. First with God
2. Second With God's Friends or as the Catechism says:

**2347** The virtue of chastity blossoms in friendship. It shows the disciple how to follow and imitate him who has chosen us as his friends, who has given himself totally to us and allows us to participate in his divine estate. Chastity is a promise of immortality. Chastity is expressed notably in friendship with one's neighbor. Whether it develops between persons of the same or opposite sex, friendship represents a great good for all. It leads to spiritual communion.

It should be noted that a person does not necessarily have to receive masculine affirmation from their father, but any person capable of bestowing this kind of affirmation, like a grandpa, coach, priest, counselor, or older mentor type friendship.

#### **Ordering the different kinds of love:**

Agape- self-sacrificing love

Filios - fraternal or friendship/companionship love

Eros - erotic love or desire to possess the beloved

There is a hierarchy of loves. When people place erotic love above agape there is only use. Can a person say that they truly are willing to take life-long responsibility for another if they use them for sex? Sex is so sacred that it can only be said NOT to be use unless the other person is protected by the life-long covenant of marriage.

#### **Formation of Conscience**

Living in a sexualized culture, a person's conscience is easily malformed into thinking they are entitled to sex, especially as a kind of consolation for hardships endured i.e. the phenomenon of

the man-pillow. Pop-culture gave birth to the idea that a person's soul was made for another creature rather than for the infinite object who is God, or that certain women were made for certain men instead of being made for God. The only completion of a human person is God. The word soul-mate can only be understood in a healthy way that a man and woman can and should have a union of souls, but their souls were not made for one another.

Feminine Concupiscence tends toward "Your desire shall be for your husband," or the thought that a man completes a woman, will be her prince charming or knight in shining armor.

J.R.R. Tolkien wrote to his son, Michael that the only thing Love that will ever complete your soul is the Eucharist. A good spouse helps one find his completion in God:

"Out of the darkness of my life, so much frustrated, I put before you the one great thing to love on earth: the Blessed Sacrament .... There you will find romance, glory, honour, fidelity, and the true way of all your loves upon earth, and more than that: Death: by the divine paradox, that which ends life, and demands the surrender of all and yet by the taste (or foretaste) of which alone can what you seek in your earthly relationships (love, faithfulness, joy) be maintained, or take on that complexion of reality, of eternal endurance, which every man's heart desires."

### **Marriage - Battle to Love Another More than Oneself**

Each married woman, like Our Lady, has an invisible husband, God, and a visible husband, man. She is wedded to God in Baptism, in which she has been to him covenanted and conjoined and she is wedded to man in holy Matrimony, in which she has been sacramentally bonded. Here the words of St John are very appropriate:

"You cannot say you love the God that you cannot see, unless you love the brother[spouse] you can see" 1 John 4:20

So marriage can be a great place for a person to grow in love, a kind of heaven on earth. If spouses are not directing their souls to God and instead to each other or to some other created thing - it can be a kind of real hell on earth.



### **The redemption of Eros**

Living in a sexualized culture, it is easy to think that anything sexual will lead to sin. This is not true. Sexual attraction, sexual desire, wanting another person - are not evil, only need to be ordered to the highest Love of Agape through chastity. Chastity or moderating all loves to agape, does not mean suppressing or annihilating sexual feelings or attraction. If a man is attracted to a woman there isn't anything wrong with him. It simply means everything is working and in the right place.

### **The redemption of Dating**

Sometimes for this reason certain people "kiss dating goodbye" and say that relationships should only have agape with no eros, which fundamentally against human experience. You like a girl, think she is pretty, then want to know her more, want to spend more time with her - and so forth until this may blossom into a serious life-long commitment of marriage. You shouldn't have to want to marry a girl to simply try to get to know her through dating. Dating needs to be redeemed! In a sexualized culture many singles think dating is a dirty word, a foul word because of painful experiences and many who think dating is equivocated with sex. Sadly these disillusioned single folks tend to be like Star-Trek (shields up full and photon blasters 100%) and usually scare any other men out of their air space.

It not healthy to vilify attraction or sexuality and person raised in this kind of environment will probably need healing and integration. These kind of people tend to say, contrary to St Thomas Aquinas and Pope St John Paul II, "love is not a feeling." Yes, it is. It is a concupiscible appetite, or passion i.e. a movement or 'feeling.' You are permitted therefore to love coffee, love pizza, and love the feeling of an autumn day. It is better to say "Love is not only a feeling, but also a virtue, and God Himself is in his essence LOVE." Lower love such as eros needs to be sublimated and integrate into higher love through self-mastery and practice of the virtues.

### **A match versus a furnace**

Sublimation, the opposite of temptation, is allowing a lower good or lesser feeling (like sexual desire) to be consumed or elevated a higher good or more powerful feeling (like eternal love) the way a match thrown into a furnace is consumed and turned into itself.

## Talk 6: "Confess Your Sins!" James 5:16

*How to use the Sacrament of Confession for Healing and Restoration*

Let us pray out loud the following penitential psalm. Take note of how it makes you feel and what it evokes in you. Does anything strike you? Write these down.

*Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.  
In your compassion blot out my offense.  
O wash me more and more from my guilt  
and cleanse me from my sin.  
My offenses truly I know them;  
my sin is always before me.  
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;  
what is evil in your sight I have done.  
That you may be justified when you give sentence  
and be without reproach when you judge,  
O see, in guilt I was born,  
a sinner was I conceived.  
Indeed you love truth in the heart;  
then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom.  
O purify me, then I shall be clean;  
O wash me, I shall be whiter than snow.  
Make me hear rejoicing and gladness,  
that the bones you have crushed may revive.  
From my sins turn away your face  
and blot out all my guilt.  
A pure heart create for me, O God,  
put a steadfast spirit within me.  
Do not cast me away from your presence,  
nor deprive me of your holy spirit.  
Give me again the joy of your help;  
with a spirit of fervor sustain me,  
that I may teach transgressors your ways  
and sinners may return to you.  
O rescue me, God, my helper,  
and my tongue shall ring out your goodness.  
O Lord, open my lips  
and my mouth shall declare your praise.  
For in sacrifice you take no delight,  
burnt offering from me you would refuse,*

*my sacrifice, a contrite spirit.  
A humbled, contrite heart you will not spurn.  
In your goodness, show favor to Sion:  
rebuild the walls of Jerusalem.  
Then you will be pleased with lawful sacrifice,  
holocausts offered on your altar.  
Glory to the Father and to the Son,  
and to the Holy Spirit:  
as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and will be for ever. Amen.*

### **God heals us in Confession**

In any healthy relationship you need to say frequently, "I love you" and "I am sorry, please forgive me." In the Eucharist God shows us his love and we respond in love. In confession, we confess our guilt to the Lord and he heals us.

In order for us to be healed there are very specific ingredients that bring about healing. They are:

1. Confession - confessing our sins out loud
2. Contrition - being sorry and accountable to what we did
3. Satisfaction - making reparation
4. Absolution - hearing the priest say, "I absolve you."

These are the essential elements, or ingredients of confession. If one of them is not there, there is no sacrament. It is like a cake. If you don't have flour, eggs, milk, and sugar, you can't really call it a cake. Some people just want some sugar - they don't want to feel guilty anymore so they go looking for absolution from the priest, but they don't respect the other ingredients.

Saying it out loud to another human person makes you own it, frees you. It is clearly not enough for God for us to confess our sins only to him or "directly" to him. The Lord Jesus wants us to:

Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous man has great power in its effects. James 5:16

The sinfulness of the Church, especially of priests, can be cause for people to object and rightly say, "Only God can forgive sins." Mark 2:6. This is exactly what the Pharisees said when they heard Jesus say, "My son, your sins are forgiven." Mark 2:5. The problem, which they could not understand, is that Jesus Christ is God

Himself standing before them. He has all authority to forgive sin. Jesus did not appear to look like the Creator of the Universe. He appeared poor and comely, a Galilean and the son of a carpenter.

This poor looking Jesus, who is God and who has the right to forgive sins and the right to bestow the power to forgive sins, if he so chooses, chose to give this gift to the Church, to men:

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." Jn 20:22-23

The humanity and weakness of the ministers of the Church are no different. The package forgiveness comes in is very humble, and it is given only to the humble to open this gift. Perhaps this is the first part of healing: in order to receive healing in the Sacrament of Mercy, you must humble yourself before another man, a priest of God. Another humbling and therefore healing quality of confession is that we must confess our sins in kind and number. The law of the Church tells us:

**Canon 988 §1.** A member of the Christian faithful is obliged to confess in kind and number all grave sins committed after baptism and not yet remitted directly through the keys of the Church nor acknowledged in individual confession, of which the person has knowledge after diligent examination of conscience.

**§2.** It is recommended to the Christian faithful that they also confess venial sins.

Why is this important? To answer this let us look ask what is sin and how does it wound us.

### **Sin Kills**

One way that sin wounds is by the pride that is behind it. In some sense, every sin is founded on the idea that you can do whatever you want and it doesn't matter what God or anyone thinks. You are deciding to be God and write your own laws. The ten commandments were not just written in stone in a land far far away in a time long long ago. They are written into the fabric of human nature, written onto every human heart. Like gravity, a physical law, someone who tries to prove that it isn't binding on them by jumping off a cliff actually ends up proving it. Someone who tries

to prove that adultery or murder is ok for them ends up proving that the law is binding on them by killing their soul.

The punishment for one unrepented mortal sin is eternal damnation in the fires of hell (CCC 1861), where as Jesus said, "there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth" Luke 13:28. Jesus and the apostles bear witness to the fact that there is sin that kills eternally the soul:

There is sin which is mortal; I do not say that one is to pray for that. All wrongdoing is sin, but there is sin which is not mortal.  
1 John 5:16-17

If it kills the soul, you can bet the effects emotionally and relationally are going to be very dire indeed in our lives. A mortal sin, one that kills the life of charity of our soul, or mortally wounds us must have three things (CCC 1857):

1. It is bad - object is grave matter - against 10 Commandments
2. We know it is bad - committed with full knowledge
3. We do it - with deliberate consent

It is a free knowing choice against God. Therefore healing must be a free knowing choice for God. For every action there is an opposite and equal reaction. There are effects for sins. Since our will was wounded in choosing evil, it must be healed by freely choosing to repent of it.

### **Weeding the Garden**

To understand this think of a garden. In order to kill a weed you have to pick it up from the root and burn it. When a person doesn't confess a mortal sin that they are aware of, it is like removing only the tops of the weeds, or pruning them. You cannot have a cake without flour or the Sacrament of Penance without a good confession without being very brutally honest about your sins and naming/claiming them. In fact the more a sin causes you shame and pain, the more the need you have of getting rid of it, especially things that are particularly secret or unknown to anyone else.

"The greatest obstacle to holiness is unconfessed mortal sin. The second greatest obstacle is a lack of hatred for venial sin." - St Teresa of Avila

### **Sorry I am not sorry**

Likewise a lack of contrition is like a cake without eggs - there is no sacrament if there isn't an intention to at least want to try to not sin again. You don't have to be perfectly sorry. In fact, the Church tells us you can have imperfect sorrow for sin, or attrition, since sin often forms an attachment and is difficult to break. Sometimes the will isn't easily moved to be sorry because frankly, we are arrogant, and want what we want.

Let's say a husband did something really bad to his wife. He really hurt her. Then he goes to her and says, "I am so very sorry." However, I think I am going to do it again soon, in fact, I am going into a situation where I know I am going to do it again. Would she forgive him? No way! This is what it is like when someone says that they are habitually sinning by living with someone who is not their spouse. They are sorry for sinning, but they going right back into that situation again. Even if the priest wanted to give absolution, the very lack of contrition would totally negate the Sacrament. No eggs - no cake. No contrition - no Sacrament.

All this talk of sin tends to unsettle us and make us fear God's judgment and even fear him not forgiving us. It is important to remind ourselves again that there is no sin God cannot forgive except when we do not want to be forgiven, or obstinate impenitence. Be consoled by the words of St Francis de Sales:

"go on bravely in the spirit of humility to make your general confession;—but I entreat you, be not troubled by any sort of fearfulness. The scorpion who stings us is venomous, but when his oil has been distilled, it is the best remedy for his bite;—even so sin is shameful when we commit it, but when reduced to repentance and confession, it becomes salutary and honourable."

### **I can't get no satisfaction**

Another very consoling thing about repentance is satisfaction. We break a window. We say we are sorry. We are forgiven. We still need to give restitution, to repair the window. The glorious mystery about reparation is seen here, when Moses was receiving the commandments, God compared to him the effects of sin with the effects of good actions:

Visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children to the third and the fourth generation of those who hate me, 6 but showing

steadfast love to thousands of those who love me and keep my commandments. Exodus 20:5-6

What did you focus on when this was read? The fact that God punishes up to 3 or 4 generations, or that God blesses 1000 times any good that we do? A generation is not just a father-son relationship but a good act "generates" effects, since man is "the father of his acts," that is, the only one to whom they can be attributed.

### **Making Reparation**

The greatest prayer is to offer the Blood of Jesus, or perhaps you have heard it said, "The most perfect form of prayer is the Mass" (Pope Paul VI) or "The celebration of Holy Mass is as valuable as the death of Jesus on the cross." (St Thomas Aquinas). What then is the greatest reparation is that prayer that offers "the Body, Blood, Soul, and Divinity of Jesus Christ." Whatever form of prayer you use, if you offer the Blood of the Lamb, God the Father hears this as if he hears the prayer of Jesus himself, for this IS the prayer of Jesus himself, the offering of Calvary, the sacrifice of salvation. Never underestimate the power of this kind of reparative prayer. Never. St Faustina prayed this prayer before a man who was dying impenitently and suddenly he was granted the grace of final penitence and therefore of eternal salvation. The children at Fatima offered this kind of prayer and after two years of reparation, Our Lady said of them, "because of your prayers, the faith of Portugal shall not fail." Thus do saints and children change the fate of entire nations.

## Talk 6: 7 Deadly Wounds, 7 Deadly Sins

*By His Wounds Were We Healed*



He was despised and rejected by men;  
a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief;  
and as one from whom men hide their faces  
he was despised, and we esteemed him not.  
Surely he has borne our griefs  
and carried our sorrows;  
yet we esteemed him stricken,  
smitten by God, and afflicted.  
But he was wounded for our transgressions,  
he was bruised for our iniquities;  
upon him was the chastisement that made us whole,  
and with his stripes we are healed.  
All we like sheep have gone astray;  
we have turned every one to his own way;  
and the Lord has laid on him  
the iniquity of us all.  
He was oppressed, and he was afflicted,  
yet he opened not his mouth;  
like a lamb that is led to the slaughter,  
and like a sheep that before its shearers is dumb,  
so he opened not his mouth.



As we read We read Isaiah 53:3-9, take note of how you feel. What strikes you? Are there any feelings, images, or words that come to mind? Write them down.

St Bridget of Sweden, a great mystic of the Church was given 7 prayers in honor of the 7 times Jesus' blood was spilled:

1. Circumcision
2. Agony in the Garden
3. Scourging at the Pilar
4. Crowning of Thorns
5. Carrying of the Cross
6. The Crucifixion
7. Piercing of Jesus Heart

Likewise the Servite Friars were spread the devotion to Our Lady of Sorrows. Mary is said to have been sorrowed 7 major times in her life:

1. The Prophecy of Simeon
2. Flight into Egypt
3. Losing Jesus in the Temple
4. Meeting Jesus in Via Dolorosa
5. The Crucifixion
6. Piercing of Jesus Heart
7. The Burial of Jesus in the Tomb

Jesus' and Mary's sufferings of body and soul are a light to show us that woundedness is not always caused by sin, nor should we be fixated or focussed so much on what we have suffered by more on offering our wounds to God. Prayer and the Sacramental life of the Church could be said to be a kind of divine exchange, or as it says in the Church's Liturgy "We come to share in the divinity of Christ who humbled himself to share in our humanity."

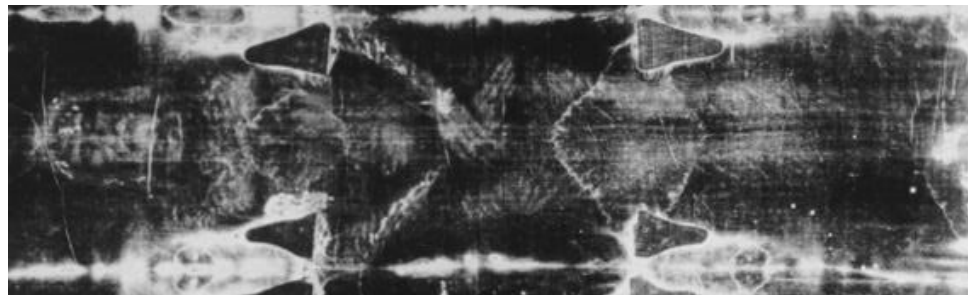
Healing is, in a very spiritual sense, a trading of our wounds with the redemptive wounds of Christ, or rather we offer our wounds to Christ, who joins them to himself and sanctifies the offering, while sanitizing us. This posture is important. It is vey possible to get inordinately fascinated by our own pain, navel gazing, not looking up to God who calls us to holiness and to wholeness.

## Seven Deadly Sins

The Church fathers came up with the seven capital or deadly sins, and it could be said that every sin could be somehow rooted or related to these.

DEADLY SIN	IDOLATRY
Pride	Self
Envy	Status or Possessions
Gluttony	Food or Drink
Lust	Sex or Relationship
Anger	Control
Greed	Security or Wealth
Sloth	Comfort

## Finding Your Sins the Map of Redemption



The sufferings of Christ, the sorrows of Mary are a kind of map of our own sins, for it was by the Cross of Christ and by our participation in his Cross, modeled in the best disciple Mary, that we find our redemption. Meditation on the Sacred Passion of the Lord is perhaps one of the fastest, most sure, most powerful ways of finding healing. Add to this the powerful intercession and maternal presence of Our Lady, and you have a powerful vehicle for healing.

There were many promises given to those who meditation on the passion of the Lord. St Bridget's promises were:

1. The soul who prays them will suffer no Purgatory.
2. The soul who prays them will be accepted among the Martyrs as though he had spilled his blood for his faith.
3. The soul who prays them can choose three others whom Jesus will then keep in a state of grace sufficient to become holy.
4. No one in the four successive generations of the soul who prays them will be lost.
5. The soul who prays them will be made conscious of his death one month in advance.

The promises for those who meditate on the sorrows of Mary:  
(These were also passed on by St Bridget)

1. I will grant peace to their families.
2. They will be enlightened about the divine mysteries.
3. I will console them in their pains and I will accompany them in their work.
4. I will give them as much as they ask for as long as it does not oppose the adorable will of my divine Son or the sanctification of their souls.
5. I will defend them in their spiritual battles with the infernal enemy and I will protect them at every instant of their lives.
6. I will visibly help them at the moment of their death, they will see the face of their Mother.
7. I have obtained from my divine Son, that those who propagate this devotion to my tears and dolours, will be taken directly from this earthly life to eternal happiness since all their sins will be forgiven and my Son and I will be their eternal consolation and joy.

### **Why such promises?**

At first they seem scandalously generous, or maybe disproportionate —unless we consider just how powerful is the Blood of Jesus and intercession of the Mother of God. Some people think this is just nice piety for only certain people. One of the most solid and age old Christian practices, central to the Church's year of faith, practiced by Our Lady and the Apostles- and any sad soul seeking consolation and healing - is to meditate on the Passion of the Lord.

### **Seven Deadly Wounds**

Wounds are strongholds of the mind and emotion based in **identity lies**.

“More often than not, the emotional pain we feel in the present tense has been triggered by lie-based thinking, which is rooted in memory. **Lie based thinking** is the false belief one holds in memory learned during a specific life event.” Dr. Ed Smith, *Healing Life's Hurts*, page 27

### **Seven deadly wounds are a personal taste of hell:**

- hell is the experience of *complete separation* from God
- The seven deadly wounds are reflections of experiences of *disconnection from God*
- Each of the wounds has an “*identity distortion*” or *lie* associated with it
- Each of these “*identity lies*” is true of the demons who speak them, but they are not true of us in Christ. *Yet these lies get planted in our hearts as young children through our misinterpretation of events.*

## Seven Deadly Wounds

WOUNDS	HOW THEY DISTORT OUR IDENTITY
Abandonment	“I am all alone. No one understands me.”
Shame	“I am bad, dirty, perverted . . . it’s my fault.”
Fear	“If I trust, speak, confront, I will hurt and die.”
Powerlessness	“I feel overwhelmed . . . I don’t know what to do.”
Rejection	“I am not loved or wanted . . . I have no value.”
Hopelessness	“It’s never going to change . . . there is no hope.”
Confusion	“I don’t know what is happening to me.”

*Adapted from Dr. Ed Smith, Beyond Tolerable Recovery,*

The seven deadly wounds are interrelated with the seven deadly sins:

-Sins not only causes wounds, it also grows out of our wounds.

Remember Jesus said, “woe to those who caused these little one to sin” by wounding them (Mt 18).

-We often sin in an attempt to escape the suffering caused by the wound.

-We need to examine the area of sin pattern and see behind the sin to the wound that is giving power to the sin. Eg. Usually wrath is almost always the fruit of a rejection wound.

### **Bitter root judgments**

Bitter root judgments are ways we respond to the hurt of sin.

“See to it that one be deprived of the grace of God, that no bitter root spring up and cause trouble, through which many may become defiled.” Hebrews 12:15

“Stop judging, that you may not be judged. For as you judge, so will you be judged, and the measure with which you measure will be measured out to you.” Matthew 7:1-2

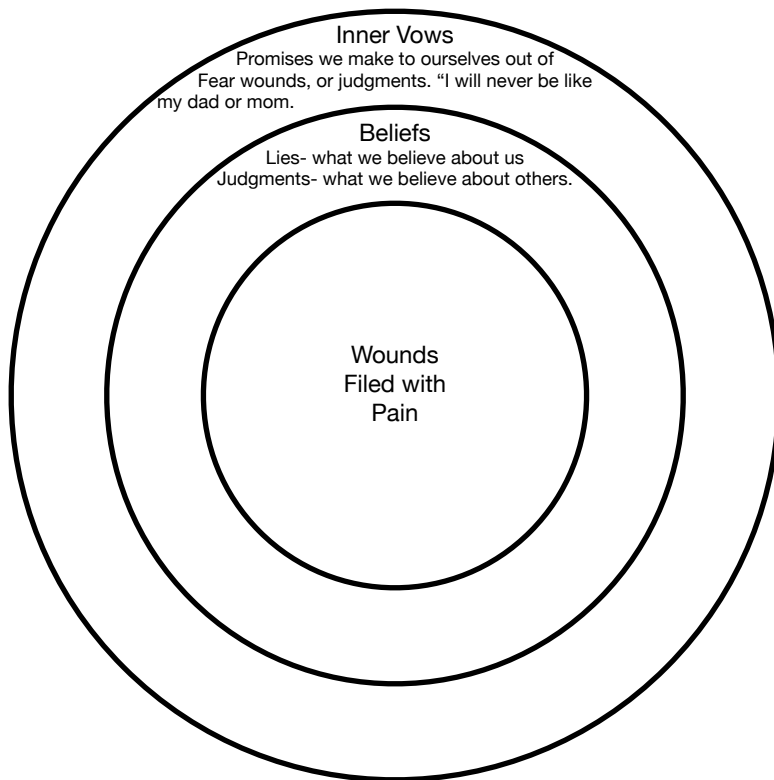
“When we experience a wound and close our hearts in unforgiveness *we inevitably form judgments about the other person, ourselves, or life. These judgments then become restrictions to our heart that cause us to perceive reality with distortions,* and limit our ability to experience God’s merciful love and healing presence. We reap what we sow in the areas of judgments.” John and Paula Sandford, *The Transformation of the Inner Man*, pages 237-266

## Inner Vows

Inner vows are decisions we make to save ourselves from hurt

“Again you have heard it said to the men of old, ‘You shall not swear (vow) falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have been sworn (vowed).’ But I say to you, do not swear (vow) at all...And do not swear (vow) by your head...Let what you say be simply ‘yes’ or ‘no’; *anything more than this comes from evil.*” Matthew 5:33-37

“An inner vow is a determination set by the mind and heart into all the being in early life...There are good and helpful vows as well as destructive ones. Even the good ones need to be released, so that we are not impelled by the flesh but by the Spirit in freedom...We must discern in each case whether a vow is in fact at the root of trouble. Where inner vows do lie at the root, seldom are they the sole factor even if major. They work in tandem with bitter roots, resentments and fears, etc.”  
John and Paul Sandford, *The Transformation of the Inner Man*, pages 191-204



## **Spiritual Strongholds**

Strongholds are fortresses of our minds and hearts that become prisons.

“Strongholds are like concrete fortresses we’ve constructed around our lives block by block, ordinarily over the course of years. We created them, whether or not we were aware, for protection and comfort. Remember the shelters in Gideon’s day? Inevitably, however these fortresses became prisons. At some point we realize we no longer control them. They control us.” Beth Moore, *Breaking Free*, page 226

## **Unconfessed sins and unhealed wounds become strongholds**

“If you don’t conquer satan’s temptation right at the threshold of your mind you will begin to mull his thought over, consider it an option and eventually choose to act it out. Repeated acts form a habit and if you exercise a sinful habit long enough, a stronghold will be established in your mind. Once a stronghold has been established you have lost your ability to control your behavior in that area.” Dr. Neal Anderson, *The Bondage Breaker*, page 5

Strongholds affect spiritual, psychological, and relational health

-Spiritual strongholds destroy trust and communion with God

-Psychological strongholds fragment our souls, minds, and emotions

-Relational strongholds damage trust and intimacy in relationships

## **Demonic Strongholds**

Demonic influences may hinder our freedom in a particular area.

“Loss of control normally starts small and grows over time in visible control. A lie is planted and believed. A temptation is acted out. A wound is incurred and left to fester. Our life changes according to what we believe—to us it is true. We see the world as we are, not as it is. Just as there is an instant in time when a person with a cold caught it, there is a an instant in time when a demon begins executing its plan against a person,

when it enters a person, etc..." Andy Reese, Sozo Training Manual

We need to be able to identify the entryway for these demonic strongholds.

"I ask the Lord to show me the entryway, the faulty foundations, the lies on which this person has based his thinking...following are some of the most common points of entry:

- Response to trauma
- Involvement with the occult
- Self-inflicted curses (or pacts with the devil)
- Circumstances at birth (abandonment or rejection)
- Association and environment (friends or entertainment)
- Willful sins (repeated sexual sins out of lust can lead to bondage)
- Family sin (family of origin and generations)

### **Barriers to facing our brokenness**

Shame keeps us hiding in fear

"Then the eyes of both were opened, and they realized that they were naked; they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loincloths' (Gen 3:6). This passage, which speaks about the reciprocal shame of the man and the woman as a symptom of the fall... should be considered in its context. Shame touches in that moment the deepest level and seems to shake the very foundations of their existence. 'I heard the sound of your step in the garden, and I was afraid, because I am naked and I hid myself' (Gen 3:9-10). A certain fear is always part of the very essence of shame." Pope St John Paul II, Theology of the Body, #27:1

Pride leads us to put on a false front:

"Before we examine the advantages of admitting our broken state, let's look at the disadvantages of pretending. This is what your life will look like if you deny your brokenness:

- You will lie continuously for fear that someone will see how 'messed up' you are
- You will lead a double life - one that is 'Christian' and the other that is hidden
- You will be super spiritual and moralistic in order to throw people off your trail
- You will constantly feel guilty
- You will project a false self because the real self is unacceptable to you
- Sometimes you will hate yourself and believe that God hates you

These are the characteristics of someone who needs to 'have it altogether'. He is not free to be who he really is." Russell Willingham, *Breaking Free*, page 126

### **Facing our Broken condition**

Admitting our broken condition

"You may be wondering what advantage there is to admitting your broken state. Doesn't that just empower the problem and give glory to satan and keep you stuck in the victim role? The answer is no. The fact is that all of us are broken. We have no choice in the matter (cf. Romans 8:20). We have only two choices - what form our brokenness will take and whether or not we will admit our brokenness. However the man who understands the grace of God and admits his broken state has great advantages. If you move in the direction of truth and honesty, this is what your life will look like:

- You will not need to hide
- You will seek out other honest people whom you can trust with your brokenness
- You will know that brokenness is a permanent part of the human condition
- You will know that your sexuality is broken and will take time to heal
- You will be gracious toward other people instead of critical and self-righteous
- You will know that change, growth, maturity, and wholeness are a process and not an event
- You will be patient with yourself but not permissive
- You will live in constant gratitude for a God who accepts you
- That gratitude—not fear and guilt—will be the motive of your obedience"
- Russell Willingham, *Breaking Free*, pages 126-127

### **Facing our negative emotions**

"God has created us with the ability to experience negative emotions for a reason! If we can learn to recognize their purpose, negative emotions can be very constructive. Having negative emotion can actually be a positive experience, if we learn to return to joy and to respond to it appropriately." Ed Khouri, *Restarting*, pg 37



## Journaling Activity: Facing your Wounds

Pray with psalm 139:1-7, 13-18, 23-24

*O Lord, you have searched me and known me! You know when I sit down and when I rise up; you discern my thoughts from far away. You search out my path and my lying down, and are acquainted with all my ways. Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, you know it completely. You hem me in, behind and before, and lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is so high that I cannot attain it. Where can I go from your spirit? Or where can I flee from your presence?*

*For it was you who formed my inward parts; you knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise you, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made. Wonderful are your works; that I know very well. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes beheld my unformed substance. In your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed. How weighty to me are your thoughts, O God! How vast is the sum of them!*

*I try to count them—they are more than the sand; I come to the end—I am still with you. Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my thoughts. See if there is any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.*

1. Read slowly the passage to get familiar with the text
  2. Slowly read the passage a second time
  3. Very, very slowly read the passage a third time
- Pay attention to which word, words, or phrases rest in your heart. Talk to God about what is on your heart...and listen

Take out a separate sheet of paper:

1. Reflect on your habitual sins. What are the sins that you continue to fall into? Write these down.
2. Identify the primary deadly sin(s) that keep(s) you bound. Write those down.

Deadly Sin
Pride
Envy
Gluttony
Lust
Anger
Greed
Sloth

3. Using the diagram on page 35, Identify:  
A. Your wounds:    B. Beliefs:    C. Vows:
4. Identify an event where you were wounded. Describe it. What happened?
5. Which of the deadly wounds did you experience during that event?

Wounds
Abandonment
Shame
Fear
Powerlessness
Rejection
Hopelessness
Confusion

6. What beliefs about yourself are held in those wounds?  
Eg. Abandonment: I am alone, unprotected, not understood
7. What judgments did you hold against others from that event?  
Eg. Men are selfish. Life is dangerous. Etc.
8. What inner vows did you make in order to protect yourself in that would? Eg. I will never trust anyone again. I will not be weak.
9. Look at both your sins and wounds. Ask God to show you the connection. Write this down.
10. Write a prayer in your journal asking for God to free you from your sins and heal you from your wounds

1. IDENTIFY THE CURRENT DISTRESS SYMPTOMS
  - What is currently distressing me? What do I desire?
  - What is the current trigger event and what am I feeling in the situation?
  - What do I believe in my heart about myself? (*stronghold lie*)
  - What do I believe in my heart about other person? (*judgment*)
  
2. ASK JESUS (FATHER OR HOLY SPIRIT) TO SHOW YOU THE ROOT OF PROBLEM
  - Do not to *try* to pray or figure out—just listen and receive.
  - The root may be one memory or a series of memories, or a feeling.
  - The root may also be a womb experience or generational problem.
  
3. IDENTIFY THE PAINFUL EXPERIENCE AND CORRESPONDING BELIEF (LIE)
  - The pain and lie should match with initial distress and lie.
  - If there is more than one memory identify the common thread.
  - If the root problem is pre-verbal, there may not be memory only feelings.
  - If the root issue is generational there may not be any emotion.
  
4. ASK JESUS TO REVEAL WHAT HE DESIRES ME TO KNOW
  - Some see pictures (*Jesus revealing Himself to child*).
  - Some have a revelation of truth (“*I am not to blame*”).
  - Some have a release of pain (*I am not feeling alone anymore*).
  - Some have just a sense or an inner knowing (*I am loved*).
  
5. IF I DO NOT RECEIVE ANYTHING FROM JESUS—LOOK FOR BARRIERS
  - The problem may be control due to an inner vow or judgment.
  - The problem may be dissociation due to early trauma.
  - I may experience abandonment from God.
  - The barrier may be a wall of anger, fear, denial or hopelessness.
  - Ask the Lord to reveal and minister to the barrier and its source.
  
6. WHEN I RECEIVE HEALING FROM JESUS
  - Check to see the fruit in the memory and original issue (*compassion, peace, joy*).
  - Check the belief connected to original lie and judgment.
  - Give thanks to Lord and seal the healing in His Blood and Spirit.

## Talk 8: Living in the Freedom of the Children of God

*"Where the Spirit of the Lord is there is Freedom" 2 Corinthians 3:17*

### **Vitamins for healthy living:**

**Vitamin A - Acceptance**  
**B - Boundaries**  
**C - Community**  
**D - Distance (from toxic people and things)**

### **Acceptance**

The ancient Greeks had an ideal of happiness called "ataraxia: a lucid tranquillity and imperturbability, serenely detached from the vicissitudes of fate and circumstance."

St Ignatius of Loyala spoke of a holy indifference, a kind of acceptance of anything that may happen regardless of the outcome, desiring to be detached in healthy way from anything outcome, understanding surrender to the will of God as the highest ideal.

Perhaps the highest form of this is found in Jesus and Mary. Jesus who said, "Not my will but thine be done," and Mary who said, "Fiat," or "let it be done unto me according to your word."

There is nothing healthier than taking a heavy dose of Vitamin A, Acceptance of what is. There are three kinds:

1. Self-Acceptance - this is one of the highest indicators of a healthy emotional and spiritual life - you are able to accept yourself where you are *actually* at, not at where you think you should be, where you think God thinks you should be, but where you are actually at. The way to come to full self-acceptance is by accepting the Love of Jesus for you *exactly where you are at*.
2. Acceptance of others - if you can accept yourself for who you are and where you are at, you WILL accept

others too. On the other hand a good indication that you do not accept yourself and that you have high self-loathing or self-hatred is that you are highly critical of others. The stick with which you beat yourself up with will still be in your hand, so-to-speak when you draw near to others, and the natural thing is to hit them with the same un-acceptance with which you already aim at yourself. So if you do not accept others, back to the drawing board. You cannot have Vitamin A

3. Acceptance of Reality, or actually of God's Will. It is what it is. Things are the way they are. Cultures or countries in which there is a very high standard for "the way things are supposed to be" also have a high level of mental illness, especially of neurosis and compulsion. In places where people are generally accustomed to being accepting, or celebrating life and reality, usually have lower cases of depression and anxiety. This is usually true of an authentic Catholic culture, where feast days are really feast days and fast days are really fast days.

### **Acceptance doesn't mean compliance with evil**

It just means that you accept that the evil is there and the only way to treat a problem is to properly accept that it is there. People in denial refuse the diagnosis or try to come up with excuses, escapism, fleeing, delusion, rosy-colored glass way of seeing.

### **Nor is it despair.**

Acceptance does not mean that you think the situation is unchangeable or hopeless or helpless, but only that you see things as they are and are thus ready to accept also God's help to change it and make it better.

## **Vitamin B - Boundaries**

I am not you and you are not me. I am not your Savior and you are not mine. I can help you within limits and you can help me within limits, but I am not going to be your soul, that which animates and gives you life, and I am not expecting you to be the gas station for my empty tank. Only God is the Savior. He is our animator and life. Anyone else is a finite being. They have a limited amount of time and material that they can give in a relationship. A healthy person knows their boundaries, knows their limits.

The heresy of modalism said that there is one God and that the Father and the Son are just different masks that God wears. Contrary to this falsehood is the understanding that God is One communion of persons where the Father is not the Son and the Son is not the Holy Spirit.

One huge boundary is set by the reconciliation measurement we are permitted to have with people we are in need of forgiving. We forgive them. That means we are interiorly free of any poisonous hate toward them. However we are reconciled with them *only insofar as is possible according to the relationship we are given*. If you find that you fail to maintain your human dignity and respect for yourself or others in a relationship, most likely you have a lack of Vitamin B, boundaries. Unfortunately these happen most of all with people we are close to.

Here are 10 signs your family (or you) may lack healthy boundaries (Kristen M. Schwartz):

1. They believe others should be anticipating their needs, and actively or passively punishing when needs aren't met.

2. Members think their needs should be filled automatically without ever communicating them.
3. They pry into your personal business then share details with others.
4. Some force judgement and opinions without being asked.
5. Others have a hard time separating or owning their own beliefs and judgements.
6. They pry/interfere with your marriage or relationships.
7. Some air grievances about other family members causing harm to inner family relationships.
8. They say Yes when they mean No and No when they mean Yes, leading to resentment & passive aggression.
9. They can belittle or shun you as an attempt at controlling your decisions or behavior.
10. Some take, take, take, just cause they can: emotionally, monetarily and physically.

### **Vitamin C - Community**

*"Where two or three are gathered in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matthew 18:20)*

God is a relationship. He is a communion of persons, and the healthiest human interactions are a reflection of this communion. It is deepest on our hearts to need an arena, a playground, a communion where we learn every day to love and be loved, to forgive and be forgiven. Living healthy sexual life, either in celibate or married chastity is close to impossible without community life. The Catechism of the Catholic Church points out that friendship is a key ingredient to chastity (2347):

“The virtue of chastity blossoms in friendship. It shows the disciple how to follow and imitate him who has chosen us as his friends, who has given himself totally to us and allows us to participate in his divine estate. Chastity is a promise of immortality.

“Chastity is expressed notably in friendship with one's neighbor. Whether it develops between persons of the same or opposite sex, friendship represents a great good for all. It leads to spiritual communion.”

### **Vitamin D - Distance from toxic people and influences**

Some relationships, even in families, will only work from a distance. If a person has a tendency to destroy, hurt, hate, crush, insult, manipulate, dominate, or any other toxic kind of effect on my life, you will need vitamin D, distance. If there are the negative and destructive effects, you usually need more vitamin D. Distance is needed in the same way the negative effects are taking place: distance of time and place, emotional distance, and this usually means physical, even geographical, so that it is physically impossible for the other person to intrude.

Many times people believe they are exercising a lack of charity when in reality their relationship has a lack of justice, or order. They mistake dysfunction for some kind of fault of patience or kindness on their part. Then if for some reason the element of distance is introduced into the equation, they suddenly miraculously get more charitable and kind, when what they needed to begin with was to be distant from the disordered relationship.



## How Suffering Can Help Heal

Is sickness a curse? If God chooses not to heal you are you displeasing to him? Has he forgotten you? Is it because your lack of faith, of prayer, because of your sins that he doesn't heal? There are many false prophets preaching the "prosperity gospel" or the "health and wealth gospel." To these, it seems that Jesus said: Blessed are the rich, for God has rewarded them. Blessed are the healthy, for God heard their cry. Blessed are the popular, for everybody loves them. Blessed are the powerful, graces abound for them. Blah blah blah blah. What a bunch of garbage!!!! Jesus was not crucified to take away our sufferings but to sanctify them. There are not a few times, but many times, that God permits us to endure certain afflictions, for by them we are healed of even greater maladies than mere physical ailments, such as pride, vanity, worldly way of thinking, etc.

## Merit

Jesus has merited for us eternal life. It was God's initiative and nothing we can say or do can ever diminish his first act of offering us salvation. God will never stop loving us. However, by participation we can choose to accept or reject this offer through our actions and thus increase or decrease eternal merit, or participation in divine life.



There are basically three ways we can increase in merit: prayer, love, and suffering. Without suffering it is difficult for us to grow in divine grace.

Everyone is full in heaven, only we each have a different level of merit, or container, of participation in God's eternal life. So the greater our heart has been stretched

here on earth, the more of God we may enjoy eternally. Wouldn't you want to enjoy God more in eternity, if you only had to suffer a little on earth? This is why you will not find a saint who didn't endure great hardship, humiliation, suffering, many were sickly, maligned, maltreated, or as St Paul says:

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, to show that the transcendent power belongs to God and not to us. We are afflicted in every way, but not crushed; perplexed, but not driven to despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; struck down, but not destroyed; always carrying in the body the death of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus may also be manifested in our bodies." 2

Corinthians 4:7-10

This is why sufferings are precious. This is why it is not always wise to ask God to remove every kind of pain or inconvenience, but sometimes better to ask for the grace to bear it. St Catherine of Siena asked Jesus for another cross. She was shown a huge warehouse full of crosses. She went up to one that she really liked and chose it. The Lord then told her that was the one she was already carrying. What is a Christian's strength? Weakness!

"Three times I besought the Lord about this, that it should leave me; but he said to me, "My grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." I will all the more gladly boast of my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. For the sake of Christ, then, I am content with weaknesses, insults, hardships, persecutions, and calamities; for when I am weak, then I am strong." 2 Corinthians 12:8-10

## RENOUNCING LIES AND ANNOUNCING TRUTH

### Wounds

**Rejection:** In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the lie that I am unloved and unlovable. I renounce the lie that I am not wanted, not desired and not good enough. In Jesus name, I announce the Truth that by virtue of my baptism I am a beloved son or daughter of the Father. I announce the truth that he loves me so much that Jesus gave his life for me, and that there is no greater love possible (Jn. 15). I announce the truth that the Love of God has been poured out into my heart through the Holy Spirit. I announce the truth that I am loved and valued, wanted and desired, and that I am precious in the Fathers eyes.'

**Abandonment:** In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the lie that I am alone, that no one understands me or cares for me. I renounce the lie that I am unprotected, and that God has abandoned me. In Jesus name, I announce the Truth that Jesus himself promised me, T will never leave you nor forsake you (Heb. 13:5); 'I will be with you always till the end of time' (Mt. 28). I announce the Truth that I am connected and understood and deeply cared for. I announce the Truth in Holy Communion I am united with Christ and the Communion of Saints. They are always with me, so I am never alone.

**Fear:** In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the lie that if I trust I will be hurt, disappointed or die. In the name of Jesus I renounce all fear, anxiety, mistrust and distrust. I renounce the lie that I am not safe and not protected. And I announce the Truth that God is my rock, my fortress, my deliverer and my protector (see Psalms 23, 27, 91). I announce the Truth that Gods perfect love casts out all fear (1 Jn. 4:18). I announce the Truth that I am safe and secure.

**Shame:** In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the lie that I am bad, dirty, ugly, stupid, worthless, perverted... And in Jesus name, I announce the Truth that Jesus died for my sins and that I am forgiven, washed, cleansed, justified and accepted (see 1 Co. 6). I announce the Truth that Jesus did not come to condemn me but to save me (John 3:17-21; Romans 8:1; John 8:10-11). I announce the Truth that in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, I am forgiven and set

free. I announce the truth that I am pure and worthy, not because of what I have done, but because of what Jesus has done for me.

**Powerlessness:** In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the lie that I am powerless, weak, unable to change, not capable; that I am stuck, trapped, that I don't know what to do". In Jesus name. I announce the Truth that Jesus promised that his grace is perfected in my weakness, so that when I am weak, then I am strong. (2 Co. 12:8-10). I announce the Truth, that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Philippians 4:13). I announce the Truth that "Where the Holy Spirit is there is freedom." (2 Co. 3:17). Therefore I accept the truth that I am empowered by Christ and liberated by the Holy Spirit. I announce the Truth that through Confirmation, I am anointed with the power of the Holy Spirit, who lives and dwells in me.

**Hopelessness:** In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the lie that nothing ever changes and I will never have what I want. I renounce the lie that my life is meaningless and that I have nothing to live for. In Jesus name, I announce the Truth that my hope is steadfast in Christ, and that He makes all things new (Jn. 21:5). I announce the Truth that because my hope is in Christ, I will not be disappointed (Ro. 5:5); I announce the truth that 'I am being transformed from glory to glory into the image of Christ' (2 Co. 3:18); and that God is at work in me, and what he begins he will bring to completion (Php. 1:6). Therefore I am filled with hope in the good things to come."

**Confusion:** "In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the lie that everything is confusing, that I don't understand anything and that it is up to me to figure things out on my own. In Jesus name, I announce the truth that I have the mind of Christ (1 Co. 2:16) and that the Holy Spirit reveals whatever I need to know when I need to know it (1 Co. 12:10). I announce the truth that the Lord gives wisdom and understanding to anyone who asks (Jas. 1: 5). I announce the Truth that God has given His Church to lead me into all Truth. I announce the Truth that I have understanding and enlightenment from the Lord."

## **Sins**

**Pride:** "In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the sin of pride and any idolatry of myself. I renounce self-righteousness, self-deception, and self-promotion. I ask for your forgiveness Lord, and I choose instead to humble myself before you."

**Envy:** "In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the sin of envy, and any idolatry of position or status. I renounce coveting what anyone else has and bringing them down. I ask for your forgiveness Lord, and I choose instead contentment and kindness toward my neighbors."

**Anger:** "In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the sin of anger, and any idolatry of power, control or justice. I renounce all bitterness, judgments, and retaliation. I ask for your forgiveness Lord, and I choose instead the virtue of patience and long-suffering, to bless those who hurt me."

**Lust:** "In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the sin of Lust, and any idolatry of sex or relationships. I renounce all immorality, fornication, adultery, pornography.... I ask for your forgiveness Lord, and I choose instead the virtue of chastity and to see everyone in purity."

**Gluttony:** "In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the sin of Gluttony, and any idolatry of food, drink or drugs. I renounce all self-indulgence and false comfort through what I take into my body. I ask your forgiveness Lord, and I choose instead temperance and fasting to combat self-indulgence."

**Greed:** "In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the sin of Greed, and any idolatry of security, wealth or money. I renounce all sins of hoarding, stealing, or using people to get ahead. I ask your forgiveness Lord, and I choose instead generosity and trusting you for my provision."

**Sloth:** "In the name of Jesus Christ, I renounce the sin of Sloth, and my idolatry of ease and false comfort. I renounce laziness or giving up when things get difficult. I ask for your forgiveness Lord, and I choose diligence and perseverance."

## PRAYER FOR RENOUNCING INNER VOWS

Father I acknowledge that I have tried to save myself rather than rely on you for my salvation. Please forgive me for my sin of pride and self-sufficiency. I acknowledge that my effort to protect myself has left me imprisoned behind walls that keep me from freely giving and receiving love. I desire to be free of this bondage that has come as a result of my own choices.

In the name of Jesus I renounce the inner vow that (details of inner vow).

I ask you to release me from the bondage of this vow now. Thank you. Amen.

## PRAYER FOR RENOUNCING JUDGEMENT

Father I acknowledge that I have judged (*name* \_\_\_\_\_). I realize that I did this to protect myself from the feelings of vulnerability and powerlessness in order not to be hurt. I also realize that this judgment is sin and keeps me bound. I ask you now for your forgiveness and to release me and (the person judged) from the bondage of this condemnation and isolation. In the name of Jesus I renounce the judgment of (*name*) that (*identify specific judgments*).

I know I cannot change my own heart so I ask you to give me your heart of compassion for \_\_\_\_\_.

## PRAYER OF FORGIVENESS

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you who you need to forgive (could be family, friend, abuser, God, yourself).
2. Picture the person in front of you and pay attention to what you feel.
3. Make an account of the debt they owe you (what did they take from you, how did they hurt you? It is okay to feel angry).
4. Imagine yourself telling them what they did to hurt you and how it has affected you.
5. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal to you what you believe about yourself based on that incident (identity lie).
6. Renounce the identity lie. (For example: "I renounce the lie that I am not loved or cared for, etc")
7. Ask the Holy Spirit to reveal the judgments you hold towards that person who hurt you.
8. Renounce the judgments (see prayer above).
9. Ask Jesus to forgive the person.
10. Forgive the person.
11. Pray a prayer of blessing over that person-ask God to bless them in the opposite way that they hurt you.
12. Ask Jesus to seal this forgiveness and heal the wounds.
13. Thank God for his healing.

## **CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: Article 5 (1499-1510)**

### **THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK**

**1499** "By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of the priests the whole Church commends those who are ill to the suffering and glorified Lord, that he may raise them up and save them. and indeed she exhorts them to contribute to the good of the People of God by freely uniting themselves to the Passion and death of Christ."

I. Its Foundations in the Economy of Salvation  
Illness in human life

**1500** Illness and suffering have always been among the gravest problems confronted in human life. In illness, man experiences his powerlessness, his limitations, and his finitude. Every illness can make us glimpse death.

**1501** Illness can lead to anguish, self-absorption, sometimes even despair and revolt against God. It can also make a person more mature, helping him discern in his life what is not essential so that he can turn toward that which is. Very often illness provokes a search for God and a return to him.

The sick person before God

**1502** The man of the Old Testament lives his sickness in the presence of God. It is before God that he laments his illness, and it is of God, Master of life and death, that he implores healing. Illness becomes a way to conversion; God's forgiveness initiates the healing. It is the experience of Israel that illness is mysteriously linked to sin and evil, and that faithfulness to God according to his law restores life: "For I am the Lord, your healer." The prophet intuits that suffering can also have a redemptive meaning for the sins of others. Finally Isaiah announces that God will usher in a time for Zion when he will pardon every offense and heal every illness.

Christ the physician

**1503** Christ's compassion toward the sick and his many healings of every kind of infirmity are a resplendent sign that "God has visited



his people" and that the Kingdom of God is close at hand. Jesus has the power not only to heal, but also to forgive sins; he has come to heal the whole man, soul and body; he is the physician the sick have need of. His compassion toward all who suffer goes so far that he identifies himself with them: "I was sick and you visited me." His preferential love for the sick has not ceased through the centuries to draw the very special attention of Christians toward all those who suffer in body and soul. It is the source of tireless efforts to comfort them.

**1504** Often Jesus asks the sick to believe. He makes use of signs to heal: spittle and the laying on of hands, mud and washing. The sick try to touch him, "for power came forth from him and healed them all." and so in the sacraments Christ continues to "touch" us in order to heal us.

**1505** Moved by so much suffering Christ not only allows himself to be touched by the sick, but he makes their miseries his own: "He took our infirmities and bore our diseases." But he did not heal all the sick. His healings were signs of the coming of the Kingdom of God. They announced a more radical healing: the victory over sin and death through his Passover. On the cross Christ took upon himself the whole weight of evil and took away the "sin of the world," of which illness is only a consequence. By his passion and death on the cross Christ has given a new meaning to suffering: it can henceforth configure us to him and unite us with his redemptive Passion.

"Heal the sick . . ."

**1506** Christ invites his disciples to follow him by taking up their cross in their turn. By following him they acquire a new outlook on illness and the sick. Jesus associates them with his own life of poverty and service. He makes them share in his ministry of compassion and healing: "So they went out and preached that men should repent. and they cast out many demons, and anointed with oil many that were sick and healed them."

**1507** The risen Lord renews this mission ("In my name . . . they will lay their hands on the sick, and they will recover.") and confirms it through the signs that the Church performs by invoking his

name. These signs demonstrate in a special way that Jesus is truly "God who saves."

**1508** The Holy Spirit gives to some a special charism of healing so as to make manifest the power of the grace of the risen Lord. But even the most intense prayers do not always obtain the healing of all illnesses. Thus St. Paul must learn from the Lord that "my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness," and that the sufferings to be endured can mean that "in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his Body, that is, the Church."

**1509** "Heal the sick!" The Church has received this charge from the Lord and strives to carry it out by taking care of the sick as well as by accompanying them with her prayer of intercession. She believes in the life-giving presence of Christ, the physician of souls and bodies. This presence is particularly active through the sacraments, and in an altogether special way through the Eucharist, the bread that gives eternal life and that St. Paul suggests is connected with bodily health.

**1510** However, the apostolic Church has its own rite for the sick, attested to by St. James: "Is any among you sick? Let him call for the elders [presbyters] of the Church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven." Tradition has recognized in this rite one of the seven sacraments.