

Week 29

Paragraphs 1434–1484



THE CATECHISM IN A YEAR

WITH FR. MIKE SCHMITZ

f faith.⁸² By “analogy of faith” we mean the

How We Worship PART TWO: THE CELEBRATION OF THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

WHY DO WE GO TO CONFESSION?

Conversion is turning away from sin and back to the Lord. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is “the second plank [of salvation] after the shipwreck” of sin (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1446). Jesus established confession when he told the apostles, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained” (John 20:22–23). When we repent, the Father rejoices and welcomes us home. Not only are we forgiven, but our relationships with God and the Church are also repaired.

Keep in Mind

- Sins are any actions that disobey God’s commandments.
- In confession, God both forgives (releases the debt owed) and reconciles (restores the relationship).
- Contrition (sorrow for sin and resolution not to sin again) is essential in confession.
- *Perfect contrition* arises from loving God above all else, while *imperfect contrition* has other motives (see CCC 1453).
- God grants mercy to those seeking forgiveness, even with imperfect contrition.
- God already knows our sins; in Confession, his mercy gains access to heal our wounds.
- Confessing mortal sins is necessary for true reconciliation and forgiveness.
- For a sin to be considered mortal, three conditions are required: grave matter, knowledge of its gravity, and free choice to commit it.
- Ignorance can affect culpability for sin.
- Even after absolution, the consequences of sin may still require efforts to restore what was broken.
- Only God forgives sins, but he operates through the priest, who acts *in persona Christi* (in the person of Christ).



The Return of the Prodigal Son
by Pompeo Batoni (1773)

Dive Deeper

The Prodigal Son’s return symbolizes the soul reunited with God in Reconciliation.

Scan the QR code below to watch the *Ascension Presents* video “Confession is a Place of Victory,” a beautiful story about God’s mercy.



- “Confession to a priest is an essential part of the sacrament” (CCC 1456).
- The priest grants absolution, assigns penance, prays for the person, and does penance on the penitent’s behalf.
- The serious penalty of excommunication aims toward healing by making someone aware that they are not in God’s grace.
- An indulgence does not forgive sin but wipes away “the temporal punishment due to sins whose guilt has already been forgiven” (CCC 1471).
- Indulgences have four components: (1) doing the action itself, for example, praying the Stations of the Cross or the Rosary; (2) receiving Holy Communion; (3) going to Confession within a week of that action; and (4) interceding on behalf of the Holy Father.
- Indulgences are not transactional; purchasing spiritual goods is absolutely prohibited by the Church and Scripture.
- Indulgences help us release attachments and grow in our relationship with God.
- General absolution is absolution given to a whole group, but it is given only in urgent situations, with the Church’s authorization.

Use the space below to reflect on this week's content.

Take It to Prayer

God our Father, help us today to say
 “yes” to your love, grace, and mercy.
 Help us to hate sin and to love you.
 We pray this through Jesus Christ,
 Our Lord. Amen.



The best place to listen along is the Ascension app. Scan the QR code to get exclusive bonus content and transcripts for every episode.

The Catechism in a Year is a daily podcast produced by Ascension and hosted by Fr. Mike Schmitz. It helps us understand what it means to be Catholic by reading the entire *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and allowing those truths to shape our lives. This bulletin was adapted from the books that complement the podcast: *The Catechism in a Year Companions* by Petroc Willey, Fr. Mike Schmitz, and Matthew Doeing.