

Confession: The sacrament of salvation

Date : 20 Ιουνίου, 2007

What is confession

It is one of the Sacraments of God's love, it is the Sacrament of the purification and the healing of the soul.

How it works

It starts with repentance, which is the realization of our mistakes and the change of our wrong way of thinking. Repentance is completed by receiving the Sacrament of Confession, when man, in front of a priest, confesses his/her mistakes to God Himself. There is **no** sacrament if we tell our mistakes in front of the holy icon or to our friend or to a psychologist, because even if they can listen to us they cannot free us from the burden of our sins and they cannot heal us. Only the Apostles and their successors, that is the priests, have been given by God the authority to loose our sins and only by confessing to the priest -which presupposes humbleness- can God root out our passions and liberate us from the burden, the guilt, the anxiety and the sorrow, which are the results of sin. Confession helps us cultivate our soul, so that it becomes, as far as possible, worthy of Christ Himself. The sacrament works according to the sincerity, the preparation, the receptivity, the humbleness and the conscious obedience of the faithful person. Obedience, as the result of our own free choice and not of external pressure, liberates us from introversion and leads us to real freedom.

The obstacles

1. *Fear or despair*. BUT God does not punish, God is love and hell is the rejection of God's love. There is no sin that God does not forgive, except for lack of repentance.
2. *Shame*. BUT the Church is a hospital and to our spiritual father we show our wounds, as we do to the doctor, so as to be healed.
3. *Lack of trust*. BUT Confession is absolutely confidential. Also, even if the priest has some weaknesses himself, God transmits His Grace through the priests who serve God's Sacraments.
4. *Postponement*. BUT the more we delay, the more difficult it becomes to approach Confession. Nobody knows the time of death and nobody can deceive God.

5. *The probability of penance.* BUT penance is given, when necessary, as medicine for our disease, not because the priest punishes or judges us.

The misconceptions

1. *We believe that we do not have sins.* BUT nobody is without sins, because our standard of comparison is Christ.
2. *We believe that we are not to blame.* BUT whoever justifies himself and puts the blame on others does not repent.
3. *We analyse how we fell and why we have passions.* BUT we don't analyse temptation. We humbly admit our mistakes.
4. *We confess only our acts.* BUT we sin also with our words and with our thoughts.
5. *We have on mind sins which we have confessed.* BUT God has forgiven us for what we have confessed with repentance.

Please note

- * To know God, we should first know and admit our sins, repent of them and ask for God's mercy.
- * Words cannot describe any sacrament. Only by experiencing the Sacrament of Repentance and Confession, can we taste the happiness of our salvation.

(Ιερά Μητρόπολη Γλυφάδας)