

February 18, 2021

Good Morning All,

Another cold, rainy day. Stay safe if you have to travel outside of Anderson - we are blessed with a temperature above freezing so no icy roads for us!

1. Today's Readings: <https://bible.usccb.org/bible/readings/021821.cfm>

2. **The RE Corner with Jan Heithaus:** The next couple of days we will be addressing the Sacrament of Confession (Reconciliation, Penance).

We hear at the beginning of Lent:

"Repent and believe in the gospel".

"Rend your hearts and not your garments."

Going to Confession is vital to our spiritual life. Our sin breaks our relationship with Our Father. Confession is the road back, the means of mending of that relationship. We are the prodigal children, returning to Our Father, realizing we have sinned and humbly begging His forgiveness.

To prepare for our discussion on Confession, let us look at what sin is. Is temptation a sin?

3. Quote of the Day: "When tempted, invoke your angel. He is more eager to help you than you are to be helped!" *St. John Bosco*

How wonderful to be reminded by St. John Bosco to always remember your Guardian Angel is with you. 'Ask and you shall receive' should always be our go to the many decisions we make every day and remembering to thank God for our many blessings and moments to learn!

St. Joseph, Pray for Us!

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Temptation vs. Sin

Sin is the great obstacle to spiritual progress. Here's how the Catechism defines sin in general:

Sin is an utterance, a deed, or a desire contrary to the eternal law. It is an offense against God. It rises up against God in a disobedience contrary to the obedience of Christ. Sin is an act contrary to reason. It wounds man's nature and injures human solidarity. (CCC 1871-1872)

A lot of theology lies behind that simple definition, but I want to highlight only two things. First of all, sin always involves a choice. In this sense, a temptation is itself never a sin. After all, Jesus himself was tempted, but he never sinned. Always keep that in mind. Being tempted, feeling powerful temptations, is not a sin. The sin comes in depending on how we respond to those temptations.

Sin Involves a Decision

To sin, we must make some kind of a decision, whether clear and firm, or vague and wishy-washy. For sin to be present, our freedom must somehow be involved. This means that we are always responsible, to some extent, for our sins. If we just make a mistake, we can't call that a sin. If I take someone else's luggage home from the airport because it looks like mine, that's a mistake, not a sin. But if I grab someone's briefcase while they are not looking and disappear with it into the crowd, that's more than a mistake. It's a choice to take for myself something that belongs to someone else. That's the sin of theft.

Spiritual Poison

Second, sin always causes damage. Sin is wrong precisely because it is a rebellion against God's wise and loving plan for us. God created us and wants us to flourish. His will – what the Catechism refers to as “the eternal law” – is always something good for us. So whenever we “rise up against God in disobedience”, we are acting in a destructive way, a way that will damage ourselves and those around us.



In this sense, sin is like spiritual poison. If I eat or drink poison, it does damage to my body. It may make me sick, or paralyze me, or even kill me. My biological organism by its very nature needs certain nutrients in order to function well and stay healthy; poison is not one of them. Poison is the contrary of nourishment. In a similar way, our spiritual organism – our mind, heart, and will – require certain “nutrients” in order to grow and flourish. These are traditionally identified as what is true, good, and beautiful. When I make a morally wrong choice, I am “imbibing”, so to speak, moral evil instead of moral good. It’s spiritual poison. It does damages to my spiritual organism, to my ability to love and be loved. If repeated, it will become habitual sin, or vice. It will eat away at my spirit, destroying my interior peace, stealing any sense of lasting fulfillment, and even making me into an evil influence in the world. Sin always causes damage. This is why Jesus emphasized so much the need to repent of our sins and go to him to have our sins forgiven. This is why the Catholic Church constantly encourages us to contemplate God’s mercy and receive it through prayer and the sacraments, especially the sacraments of baptism and confession.

Source: catholicexchange.com