COURSE OUTLINE

The Sacrament of Penance & Reconciliation

Pre-Session Assignment

Read and review the Rite of Penance and Examination of Conscience prior to class.

Session 3

PRAYER

Reflection on the Prodigal Son led by Fr. Matthew Guckin. Our Father…

LECTURE 1: RECONCILIATION – THE SACRAMENT

- The Format for Confession
  - The Examination of Conscience
  - The Reception of the Penitent
  - The Reading of the Word of God (Optional)
  - The Confession of Sins & the Acceptance of Satisfaction (i.e., Penance)
  - The Prayer of the Penitent (i.e., Act of Contrition) & the Absolution
  - The Proclamation of Praise of God & the Dismissal of the Penitent

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. *What important part is omitted from the formula for Confession?*
2. *What is the purpose of each component of the formula and how does it relate to your relationship with God?*

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LECTURE 2: THE POWER OF FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. *Have you ever been convicted by the Holy Spirit? What was the result?*
2. *How are promptings or convictions of the Holy Spirit graced moments, and what do they reveal about God's interest and involvement in my life?*
3. *Fr. Guckin used the image of Velcro being pulled apart and reattached as an image of what sin does to our relationship with God and how God heals that relationship. How would you use this image with your students or what other images have you used to teach sin and reconciliation to students?*

LECTURE 3: THE DEADLIEST OF THE DEADLY SINS (PRIDE, ENVY, ANGER)

- Pride, Envy and Anger represent a disordered and twisted form of love.
- **PRIDE**
  - The root of all sin is pride – the desire to act according to my own will rather than God's. We see this sin in the story of creation when Adam and Eve give into the temptation to be like God, determining for themselves what is good.
  - The remedy for pride is humility – the root word of which is humus meaning "of the earth." God is our Creator, and he fashioned us from the clay "of the earth." Humility helps us to recall our proper place in the order of creation and be true to our calling.
- **ENVY**
  - Envy is the daughter of Pride. It is coveting the blessings of another while failing to recognize and acknowledge our own blessedness before the Lord who is the giver of all gifts. Envy can also take the form of rejoicing at someone's troubles because it brings us satisfaction. It is related to pride in that we feel we deserve more or that God is not doing enough for us.
  - The remedy for pride is admiration. If everything we have is a gift from the Lord, the Giver of Life and Creator of all things, then the proper response to envy is to admire and praise the Gift Giver and rejoice in the blessedness of others as well as ourselves.

- **ANGER**
  - "Anger is a passion for revenge that goes beyond the control of reason" (St. Thomas Aquinas). It is the son of Pride because we allow our passion for vengeance to rule us, hardening our hearts and making us unwilling to forgive.
  - The remedy for anger is forgiveness – a central teaching of Jesus that was even displayed on the cross. It moves us beyond the desire for justice so that we can act with mercy instead. Forgiveness leads to peace.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. *Which of these big three sins do you struggle with the most? What satisfaction are you getting from it and how does that compare to what God is calling you to?*
2. *From your experience in teaching, which of these sins plagues students most? How do you address it in the classroom and how do you help students to comprehend the sinfulness of the behavior?*

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LECTURE 4 – THE OTHER DEADLY SINS (SLOTH, GREED, GLUTTONY, LUST)

- Sloth, Greed, Gluttony, and Lust represent an excessive/defective form of loving.
- All sin is disordered (i.e., not as God designed or desired things to be).
- **SLOTH**
  - Sloth is defined a sorrow in the face of spiritual good; a spiritual indifference which can lead to laziness and a lack of zeal for God and Christian living. Sloth can make us lethargic and want to do nothing.
  - The remedy for sloth is Zeal for the Kingdom of God.
- **GREED**
  - Greed involves the excessive love of possessing things beyond our needs, exceeding what is necessary, or the unreasonable desire for riches.
  - The remedy for greed is Generosity.

- **GLUTTONY**
  - The unreasonable desire for the pleasure that is associated with food and drink.
  - The remedy for gluttony is Asceticism, which is the struggle we have to go through to allow the loftier virtuous desires to emerge.
- **LUST**
  - Lust is the disordered or unreasonable desire for sexual pleasure.
  - The remedy for lust is Chastity.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- *Where in my life do I avoid responsibility or neglect spiritual growth?*
- *Am I overly attached to someone or something in my life?*
- *Mindfulness of the dignity of the human person weighs heavily in our battle against sin. What opportunities do you have or can you create to help your students be mindful of the dignity of the human person in their interactions with others?*

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Lecture 5: Conclusion

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FINAL REMINDERS

- The course Facilitator will notify the Office for Catechetical Formation (OCF) of your course completion.
- The OCF will update your certification record within two weeks and email you a copy of your catechetical record. If you have completed your Master Certification, a certificate will also be sent via email. If you do not receive your record ***after*** two weeks, contact the OCF via email: phillyocf@archphila.org.
- It is ***your*** responsibility to forward a copy of your certification record to your Principal and/or Director of Religious Education.
- Your feedback is important to us as we strive to improve our courses. Please take five minutes to complete the course survey using the QR code provided.

CLOSING PRAYER

St. Michael the Archangel,
defend us in battle.
Be our protection against the wickedness
and snares of the Devil.
May God rebuke him, we humbly pray,
and do thou,
O Prince of the heavenly hosts,
by the power of God,
thrust into hell Satan,
and all the evil spirits,
who prowl about the world
seeking the ruin of souls.
Amen.

