

Sponsor Meeting 3 – Sin

Opening Prayer (Together): Come Holy Spirit, fill the hearts of your faithful and kindle in them the fire of your love. Send forth your Spirit and they shall be created. And You shall renew the face of the earth.

Activity and Discussion:

- 1) On your smart phone or tablet, go to www.blessedsacramentchurch.org/confirmation and watch the video under the post Sponsor Meeting 3 – Sin.
- 2) When you have watched the video, read through the reflection on the following page, and use the discussion questions as a guide for a conversation with the confirmand on this topic.
- 3) Ask the confirmand to fill out the summary form, and then both of you should sign it.
- 4) Use the following prayer to conclude your time together. **Closing Prayer: Psalm 51**

Sponsor says: *"Let us remember we are in God's Holy Presence."*

Sponsor and Confirmand take a moment to quiet themselves and place themselves in God's presence.

Confirmand Reads:

Have mercy on me, God, in accord with your merciful love; in your abundant compassion blot out my transgressions. Thoroughly wash away my guilt; and from my sin cleanse me. For I know my transgressions; my sin is always before me. Against you, you alone have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your eyes. So that you are just in your word, and without reproach in your judgment. Behold, I was born in guilt, in sin my mother conceived me. Behold, you desire true sincerity; and secretly you teach me wisdom. Cleanse me with hyssop, that I may be pure; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. You will let me hear gladness and joy; the bones you have crushed will rejoice. Turn away your face from my sins; blot out all my iniquities. A clean heart create for me, God; renew within me a steadfast spirit.

They pause for a brief time to listen to the Lord speak to them in the scriptures.

The sponsor continues: Lord Jesus, Son of the Living God, have mercy on us sinners. Give us the courage to humbly and truthfully confess our sins, and by your spirit heal us and make us holy. Make (Confirmand's Name) courageous and honest so that he/she never doubts your desire or ability to forgive and sin, no matter how bad he/she may fear it is. We ask this in Jesus' name. Amen.

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, "sin is an offense against reason, truth, and right conscience; it is failure in genuine love for God and neighbor caused by a perverse attachment to certain goods." (CCC 1849). A simpler way of saying all of this is that sin is "to miss the mark." Humans are created to love perfectly, and when we sin, we fail to do so.

These failures to love can be broken into a variety of categories. Original sin is the sin that we inherit from Adam and Eve just by virtue of being born as humans. Because they were the first humans, their sin damaged the integrity of all human souls. We are born with original sin, but it is washed away in baptism. We continue to bear, however, the consequences of that sin, namely weakened wills, darkened intellects, and disordered desires. Moreover, we all face the certainty of bodily death.

With our weakened wills, darkened intellects, and disordered desires, it is easy to find ourselves loving other things more than we love God. The consequences of original sin are what leave us open to the possibility of personal sins. Personal sins are those immoral acts that we commit as individuals, and there are two kinds of personal sin – mortal and venial. Mortal sins are those serious sins which are contrary to God's laws, and which we choose freely, knowing that they are wrong. For instance, stealing is forbidden by the fifth commandment. We know that it is wrong. So, if we choose to steal something and then do it, we have committed a mortal sin.

As a consequence of mortal sin, we separate ourselves from God. We choose not to allow him to love us, and in doing so, we also tell God that we love other things more than him. The Church teaches that those who die in this state have separated themselves from God eternally. They do not go to heaven. Moreover, because mortal sins separate us from God, they also prohibit us from receiving Holy Communion. If we know that we are in a state of sin and we choose to receive Holy Communion anyway, we commit another mortal sin, and separate ourselves further from God. The only way by which we can be restored to holiness after committing a mortal sin is to receive the sacrament of reconciliation.

Venial sins, as compared to mortal sins, are less serious in nature. A sin is venial if we did not know the act was wrong, or if we did not do it intentionally. For instance, if I hit my thumb with a hammer and use God's name in vain, it is probably a venial sin, whereas it is mortal when I have allowed myself to develop a habit of using God's name vainly in my everyday conversation or when I swear.

Sin can be avoided. It requires prayer, virtue, and penance. We do not do it alone. We need God's help. While sin is serious business, we should never believe that our sins are so grave or shameful that they are beyond God's power to forgive. There is nothing he cannot forgive, and there is no sin so shameful that we cannot talk about it with the priest in confession. It is important to remember that we were made to love perfectly, and that when we do not love perfectly, only God's love can help us. His love is more powerful than any sin humans can commit.

Sponsor Meeting 3 – Sin (Confirmand)

Reflection Questions #3 – Due December 16th (please use the resources provided):

- 1) Can a person lose sanctifying grace (a share in God's life)? How?
(CCC 1861; Youcat 316)
- 2) In what ways do you see sin damaging your relationships with other people?
- 3) What happens to a person that dies in a state of mortal sin?
(CCC 1035, 1472, 1861, 1874; YouCat 161-162)
- 4) Consider when you last went to confession. Can any sin be forgiven? (CCC 982)
- 5) Is it easy for you to go to confession? Why?
- 6) What are some ways you could avoid sin, especially habitual sins, in your life?

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

Student's Name (Print): _____ Sponsor Signature: _____