

Confession and Contrition and Coronavirus Closings

A Pastoral and Personal Solution

Many people are asking about lack of access to the sacrament of Reconciliation. The following may be of help and consolation to them.

Act of Perfect Contrition: The Holy Father has recently drawn attention to the fact that, before Easter, many faithful go to Confession to meet with God again. “However,” he acknowledged, “many will say to me today: ‘But, Father, where can I find a priest, a confessor, because one can’t leave home? And I want to make peace with the Lord, I want Him to embrace me, that my Papa embrace me . . . What can I do if I can’t find priests?’”

“Do what the Catechism says,” the Pope stressed, “it’s very clear: if you don’t find a priest to hear your Confession, talk with God, He is your Father, and tell Him the truth: ‘Lord, I’ve done this, and that, and that . . . I’m sorry,’ and ask Him for forgiveness with all your heart, with the Act of Contrition and promise Him: ‘Afterwards I will go to Confession, but forgive me now.’”

“If you do all this,” Francis said, “you will return to God’s grace immediately. As the *Catechism* teaches,” he reminded, “you yourself can approach God’s forgiveness without having a priest at hand. Think: ‘it’s the moment!’ And this is the right moment, the opportune moment. An Act of Contrition well made,” Francis said, “will make our soul become white as snow.”

– Pope Francis, Daily Mass Homily, Friday of the Third Week in Lent,” 20 March 2020

While there is no set formula for making a Perfect Act of Contrition, a common one reads as follows:

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.

In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,

I have sinned against You, whom I should love above all things.

I firmly intend, with Your help, to do penance,

to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin

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