

The Fall (Original Sin)

Introduction

- Read Genesis Chapter 3.
- **Original sin** is the sin by which the first human beings disobeyed the commandment of God, choosing to follow their own will rather than God's will. As a consequence they lost the grace of original holiness, and became subject to the law of death; sin became universally present in the world. Besides the personal sin of Adam and Eve, original sin describes the fallen state of human nature which affects every person born into the world, and from which Christ, the "new Adam," came to redeem us (CCC 396-412).
 - It is a sin "contracted" by us, not "committed".
 - It is a state of birth and not a personal act.
 - It is transmitted to the descendants of Adam "not by imitation, but by propagation."
 - This transmission remains a mystery which we cannot fully understand.

Sin and the Effects of Sin

- **Actual sin** is an offense against God as well as a fault against reason, truth, and right conscience. Sin is a deliberate thought, word, deed, or omission contrary to the eternal law of God.

In judging the gravity of sin, it is customary to distinguish between mortal and venial sins (CCC 1849, 1853, 1854).

 - **Mortal sin** – a grave infraction of the law of God that destroys the divine life in the soul of the sinner (sanctifying grace), constituting a turn away from God. For a sin to be mortal, three conditions must be present:
 - Grave matter
 - Full knowledge of the evil of the act
 - Full consent of the will

- **Venial sin** – sin which does not destroy the divine life in the soul, as does mortal sin, though it diminishes and wounds it (CCC 1855). Venial sin is the failure to observe necessary moderation, in lesser matters of the moral law, or in grave matters acting without full knowledge or complete consent (CCC 1862).

Concupiscence

- **Concupiscence** – Human appetites or desires which remain disordered due to the temporal consequences of original sin, which remain even after Baptism, and which produce an inclination to sin (CCC 1264, 1426, 2515).
- **Conscience** – The interior voice of a human being, within whose heart the inner law of God is inscribed. Moral conscience is a judgment of practical reason about the moral quality of a human action. It moves a person at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil (CCC 1777-8). *An examination of conscience* is recommended as a preparation for the reception of the Sacrament of Penance (CCC 1454).

Seven Sacraments

Sacrament – An efficacious sign of grace (they actually confer the grace that they signify), instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us through the work of the Holy Spirit (CCC 1131, 774).

- **Sacraments of Initiation**
 - **Baptism**
(Mt 28:19-20; Mk 16:15-16)
 - **Holy Communion (Eucharist)**
(Mt 26:26-28; Mk 14:22-24; Lk 22:19-20; 1 Cor 11:23-26)
 - **Confirmation**
(Jn 16:7-15; Acts 2:1-4; 8:14-17; 19:5-6; Heb 6:1-2)

- **Sacraments of Healing (Mercy)**
 - **Confession/Reconciliation/Penance**
(Jn 20:21-23)
 - **Anointing of the Sick**
(Jas 5:14-15)
- **Sacraments of Community**
 - **Holy Orders**
(Mt 26:26-28; Mk 14:22-24; Lk 22:19-20)
 - **Holy Matrimony**
(Mt 19:4-12; Eph 5:28-32)

Summary

- God tested Adam and Eve. Adam's sin is called original sin because he is the father of mankind. All of mankind inherits this sin.
- With original sin, man lost his preternatural and supernatural gifts. The most grave loss was the loss of sanctifying grace and the ability to go to heaven.
- God promised to send a Savior who would save us from sin and open the gates of heaven.
- The grace of justification, or sanctifying grace, is given to us at Baptism and Penance, which are sometimes called "sacraments of the dead" because they give life to souls that have been dead through sin (CCC 1279, 1446).
- The sacraments that increase grace in us are Confirmation, the Eucharist, the Anointing of the Sick, Holy Orders, and Holy Matrimony (CCC 1131).