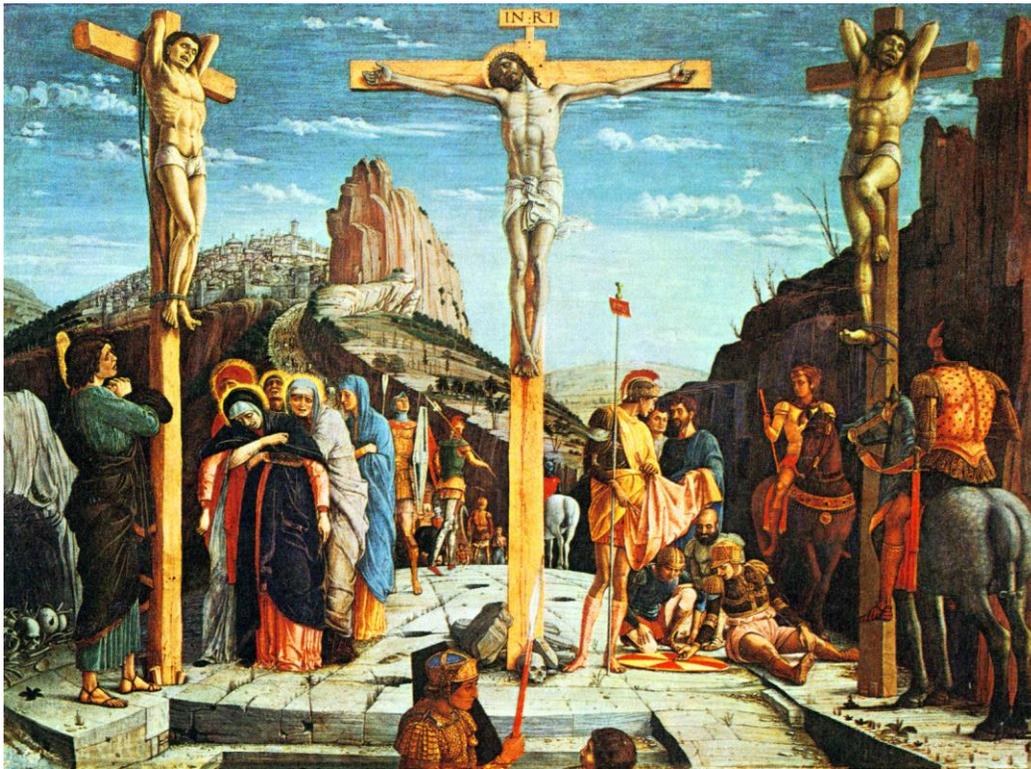


Sorrow of a Contrite Soul

August 1



VII. The Acts of the Penitent Contrition

1451 *Among the penitent's acts contrition occupies first place. Contrition is "sorrow of the soul and detestation for the sin committed, together with the resolution not to sin again."⁵⁰*

1452 *When it arises from a love by which God is loved above all else, contrition is called "perfect" (contrition of charity). Such contrition remits venial sins; it also obtains forgiveness of mortal sins if it includes the firm resolution to have recourse to sacramental confession as soon as possible.⁵¹*

1453 *The contrition called "imperfect" (or "attrition") is also a gift of God, a prompting of the Holy Spirit. It is born of the consideration of sin's ugliness or the fear of eternal damnation and the other penalties threatening the sinner (contrition of fear). Such a stirring of conscience can initiate an interior process which, under the prompting of grace, will be brought to completion by sacramental absolution. By itself however, imperfect contrition cannot obtain the*

forgiveness of grave sins, but it disposes one to obtain forgiveness in the sacrament of Penance.52

XI. The Celebration of the Sacrament of Penance IN BRIEF

Repentance (also called contrition) must be inspired by motives that arise from faith. If repentance arises from love of charity for God, it is called "perfect" contrition; if it is founded on other motives, it is called "imperfect."

Psalm 50:19

A sacrifice to God is an afflicted spirit: a contrite and humbled heart, O God, thou wilt not despise.

Isaias (Isaiah) 66:2

My hand made all these things, and all these things were made, saith the Lord. But to whom shall I have respect, but to him that is poor and little, and of a contrite spirit, and that trembleth at my words?

From the Book of Heaven

V1 - *Now, as Jesus would come back, I would say to Him: 'Dear, my beloved, give me sorrow for my sins, so that, consumed by sorrow and by regret for having offended You, my sins may be erased from my soul, and also from your memory. Yes, give me as much sorrow, for as much as I have dared to offend You. Even more, let sorrow surpass this, so that I may draw more intimately close to You.'*

I remember that once, while I was saying this, my always benign Jesus told me: "Since you are so sorry for having offended Me, I myself want to dispose you to feel sorrow for your sins, so that you may see how awful sin is, and what bitter pain my Heart suffered. Therefore, say together with Me: 'If I cross the sea, You are in the sea, though I do not see You; I tread the earth, and You are under my feet. I sinned'." And then, in a low voice, almost crying, Jesus added: "Yet I loved you, and at that very moment, I preserved you." While Jesus was saying this, and I together with Him, I was caught by such sorrow for the offenses given, that I fell flat to the ground; and Jesus disappeared.

Few are those words, but I understood so many things that it is impossible to say all that I comprehended. In the first words I comprehended the immensity, the greatness, the presence of God in each existing thing, such that not even a shadow

of our thought can escape Him. I also understood my nothingness compared to a Majesty so great and holy. In the word "I sinned", I understood the ugliness of sin, the malice, the daring I had had in offending Him. Now, while my soul was considering this, in hearing Jesus Christ say "Yet I loved you, and at that very moment, I preserved you", my heart was taken by such sorrow, that I felt I was dying, because I could understand the immense love that the Lord had for me in the very act in which I tried to offend Him, and even to kill Him. Ah Lord, how good You have been with me, and I – always ungrateful, and still so bad!

V1 - *I remember confusedly that, when I would be with Our Lord, I would often ask for sorrow for my sins and for the grace to be forgiven of all the evil I had done; and at times I reached the point of saying that only then would I be content, when I would hear Him say, from His own lips: "I forgive all your sins." And blessed Jesus, who can deny nothing when it is for our good, one morning made Himself seen and told me: "This time I Myself want to do the office of confessor. You will confess all of your sins to Me, and in the act in which you do this, I will make you comprehend, one by one, the sorrows you have given to my Heart in offending Me, so that, by comprehending what sin is, as much as it is possible for a creature, you may be resolved to die rather than to offend Me. You, in the meantime, enter into your nothingness, and recite the Confiteor."*

V1 - *Oh! if all could see who God is, and who the soul is in the act of sinning, they would all die of sorrow, and I believe that sin would be exiled from the earth ...So, when blessed Jesus would see that I could not take any more because of the pain, He would withdraw and leave me, to allow me to comprehend well the evil I had done. And then He would come back again, and I would continue the accusation of my sins.*

But who can tell all that I understood, and explain, one by one, the different affronts and the special sorrows which I had caused Our Lord with my sins? I feel it is almost impossible for me to explain myself - also because I don't remember it too well.

Then, when I finished the accusation, which lasted about seven hours, lovable Jesus took the aspect of a most loving father. And since I was exhausted in my strengths because of the sorrow, more so since I saw that that sorrow was not enough, to be sorry as much as it befitted my sins - to encourage me, He told me: "I Myself want to make up for you, so I apply to your soul the merit of the pain I had

in the Garden of Gethsemani. This alone can satisfy the divine justice." After He applied His pain to my soul, then I seemed to be disposed to receive the absolution.

All humbled and confused as I was, prostrated at the feet of the good father Jesus, through the rays He was sending into my mind, I tried to excite myself more to sorrow by saying - though I don't remember everything: 'Great, immense, has been the evil I have done against You. These powers of mine and these senses of my body were meant to be as many tongues with which to praise You. Ah! instead, they have been like many poisonous vipers which were biting You and were even trying to kill You. But, holy father, forgive me - do not want to cast me away because of the great wrong I have done to You by sinning.'

And Jesus: "And you - do you promise to sin no more, and to banish from your heart any shadow of evil that might offend your Creator?"

And I: 'Ah! yes, with all my heart I promise You. I would die a thousand times rather than sin again. Never again, never again.'

And Jesus: "And I forgive you, and I apply to your soul the merits of my Passion, and I want to wash it in my Blood."

V18 - Nov. 5, 1925 - *"...But, do not stop, keep flying, and you will hear the anguishing moans of the Holy Spirit in the Sacrament of Penance. How much ingratitude, how many abuses and profanations, on the part of those who administer it and on the part of those who receive it. In this Sacrament, my Blood places Itself in act over the contrite sinner, in order to descend upon his soul, to wash him, embellish him, heal him and strengthen him, to give back to him the lost grace, to place in his hands the keys of Heaven, which sin had snatched away from him; to impress on his forehead the peacemaking kiss of forgiveness..."*

FIAT!