



KEY TERMS

Salvation: The forgiveness of sins and restoration of friendship with God, which can be done by God alone.

Cross: The instrument of execution on which Jesus Christ died.

THE DOCTOR

A DOCTOR LIKE NONE OTHER .

Jesus is a doctor unlike any other doctor. Most doctors come and go and treat our illnesses. However, Jesus treats our illness by assuming the consequence of our sin Himself. Jesus is our Divine Physician, in Him we receive healing and forgiveness of sin.

CCC 615

DEADLY CONSEQUENCES

The consequence of sin is death. God told Adam and Eve that if they ate of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they were surely doomed to die.

CCC 602

read Genesis 2:15-17, followed by Romans 6:23.

God sent His Son to take on the consequence of our sin so that all His children might live.

read 2 Corinthians 5:21.

The great work of salvation was accomplished by Jesus on the cross.

CCC 601-603

THE CROSS

read John 19:16-30.

Jesus' Death on the cross uniquely healed the wound of sin once and for all. However, this wasn't the first time in the history of God's people that we were healed and saved by looking at cross. The story of the bronze serpent, found in the book of Exodus, prefigured Jesus' salvific sacrifice.

CCC 613-614

THE BRONZE SERPENT

When God's people were wandering in the desert in search of the Promised Land, they suffered greatly. They were hungry, thirsty, and walking aimlessly through a hot and barren desert. They lost faith in God and His providence. They complained about Him. For a time, it seemed as though they had lost His favor. Then, another pestilence hit.

God's people were plagued by fiery and poisonous serpents. Those who were bit, died. Moses went to God and interceded for God's people. A remedy was prescribed and those who followed the prescription, lived. Moses did as was prescribed, and God's people were saved from death.

Jesus later explains that just as God's people were healed of their sickness by looking at the serpent on the pole, the faithful today can be saved from the sickness of sin by looking to Jesus' death on the cross.

read John 3:14-15.

This happens concretely at Mass. During the entrance processional, the cross is held high for all to see, and the faithful are called to remember that through Jesus' death we, too, are healed.

This symbol is also seen today as the caduceus, the symbol of medicine. It can be seen at hospitals, pharmacies, and doctor offices across the globe



KEY TERMS

Reconciliation: The sacramental celebration in which, through God's mercy and forgiveness, the sinner is reconciled with God and also with the Church, Christ's body, which is wounded by sin.

Contrition: Sincere sorrow for sin.

Absolution: An essential element of the Sacrament of Reconciliation, in which the priest, by the power entrusted to the Church by Christ pardons the sins of the penitent.

THE APPOINTMENT

FACE-TO-FACE

Funny how long it took some of us to recall names. Like the face-to-face encounters we experienced in the Gather, Jesus had face-to-face encounters with His people.

In Scripture, people encountered Jesus in a variety of ways. Some people happened upon Him. Some people heard about Him and traveled a great distance to see Him. Some people even brought their friends to Him.

In Matthew 4:23, we see Jesus out in public teaching, proclaiming the Gospel, and healing multitudes of people.

Soon, instead of running into Jesus, people intentionally approached Him. In Matthew 8:1-4, a leper approaches Jesus.

Soon after, two blind men, men who cannot see where they are going, follow Jesus as He passes by. How did they do this? They can't see. It's a crowded, public street that is likely very loud. Yet, they follow Jesus, and they approach Him and are healed from their blindness.

Then, people started bringing their friends to Jesus. People brought a paralytic lying on a stretcher to Jesus. People brought someone possessed by a demon to Jesus.

Matthew 9:1-2, Matthew 9:32-34

Where is it that you have encountered Jesus? Did you run into Him while attending Mass with your family? Did you run into Him while talking to a friend or Core Member? Did you approach Him in Adoration, wondering if He was real? Did you approach Him by attending a Life Night for the first time? Did a friend bring you to Mass, Adoration, or a Life Night?

APPOINTMENTS

When we are sick, we make appointments to see the doctor to address our sickness. We can also have appointments with Jesus to address our spiritual sickness. We can make these appointments ourselves by scheduling Mass, Adoration, Life Nights, and prayer into our calendars. Jesus can also make these appointments with us by revealing Himself in conversations with parents, friends, and Core Members, or by revealing Himself in situations where we are forced into silence because the Internet is out or our smartphone is dead, or by revealing Himself in moments of mercy, like when someone was merciful towards you, covered for you, did your part, or forgave you.

APPOINTMENT WITH JESUS

One of the more difficult appointments to make is an appointment to meet Jesus in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. However, like the people in Scripture, if we approach Jesus and ask for healing, we can walk away healed.

Here are some concrete steps you can take to participate in Reconciliation.

1. Recognize. First and foremost, we need to recognize our sin and our need for forgiveness. We are human; we sin. The good news is that Jesus is always ready and eager for us to take advantage of His mercy. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we meet Jesus Christ face-to-face, and He offers us mercy.

2. Examine. Then we need to perform an Examination of Conscience. This is when we look at our thoughts, words, actions, and omissions since our last confession. We see where we have pleased the Lord and where we have sinned and failed to love the Lord, those around us, and ourselves.

Before confession, or when in line, we can pull up an Examination of Conscience on a phone, say a prayer to the Holy Spirit asking Him to help us examine our consciences, and then pray through the Examination of Conscience.

3. Contrition and Repentance. Contrition is genuine sorrow for our sin. It is motivated by our love for God the Father. When we sin against God the Father, we are choosing not to love Him, choosing to place impediments in our relationship.

Contrition is a feeling that leads to the act of repentance. The word “repent” comes from the Latin word meaning “to regret intensely.” We are literally supposed to grieve for our sin. To repent means to turn away from our sin or to shed our attachment to sin. This is best achieved in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

CCC 1423-1424, 1451

4. Confess. Get to the Sacrament of Reconciliation; come to our parish for during normal confession hours, schedule a time for confession with a priest, or go during a Life Night or retreat. When we confess our sins to a priest, he stands in *persona Christi capitis*, in the person of Christ. This means we are confessing our sins to Christ Himself. Also, what is said in the confessional, stays in the confessional. Priests are bound by the seal of confession, meaning they are not allowed to share or repeat what is said. They can't even talk to us about what we said in the confessional once we leave the confessional.

CCC 1441,1455-1456

When we first get into the confessional, or sit down with a priest, we need to remember to tell him how long it's been since our last confession. This helps him have context for what we are about to say. Then, we tell him the sins we would like to confess.

5. Advice. Next, the priest will probably give some advice, and then ask us to say the Act of Contrition.

6. Absolution. Absolution is the cancellation of the debt or pardoning the punishment due to sin. It is in this prayer that Christ, through the priest, frees us from our sins. The priest prays the Prayer of Absolution over us at the end of confession.

CCC 1449

7. Penance. Penance is our way of “making amends for” or “making satisfaction for” our sins. Absolution takes away our sin, but it does not remedy all the disorders sins has caused. Penance helps amend these disorders.

CCC 1459-1460

There can be a variety of reasons why we don't make appointments to go to the doctor: we are too busy, we are embarrassed about what's wrong with us, or we are afraid someone will find out what we are sick with. Don't let these excuses keep you from your physical or spiritual doctor. Both your physical and spiritual health are worth a little discomfort.