

The story of the car crash.

We commit a sin, confess our sins to God, and God forgives us. Yet even after we are forgiven, the sin has ongoing effects.

Shame and remorse of conscience.

Small and weakened.

Sometimes even more disposed to sin.

We don't feel the same as we did before having committed the sin. And we know that these feelings are manifestations of God's justice.

We may have injured others.

Most importantly, our sins and their effects impede our union with our Lord Jesus Christ.

MANIFESTATIONS OF GOD'S JUSTICE

Jesus requires us to be perfect, but most people never reach this state of perfection prior to their death.

They may have died loving and fearing God but did not overcome the imperfections of their fallen human natures.

These imperfections include attachments to created goods, inordinate desires for earthly pleasures, and small but habitual sins.

They also include the satisfactions still owed to God, to restore the equality of Justice for the many sins that they committed during their lives.

Scripture says, "nothing unclean" shall enter heaven, how can these imperfect souls ever enter into eternal paradise. Rev 21-27.

Without "holiness" no one shall see the Lord, Heb. 12:14.

The answer is purgatory. God purifies the soul of its imperfections through the fire of His divine justice. During this finite but painful process, the soul is purged of its evil inclinations makes final satisfaction God for its sins.

After the purification is complete God admits the soul into heaven.

Before Jesus exhorted the crowd in His Sermon of the Mount to be perfect as the Heavenly Father is perfect, He told them to make friends with their accusers while they were still able to do so. Jesus warned them that if they didn't, the judge would put them into prison, and they would not be released until they paid the last penny. In this parable, Jesus is warning his followers about the rigors of purgatory and the debt of sin. If in this life we fail to pay our spiritual debt to God, the debt for our sins, we will be detained by the judge in the next life until we have made full satisfaction for it.

Purgatory is one of the most divisive doctrines between Catholics and Protestants. And it is also one of the most misunderstood. That is because the doctrine covers the most theological territory.

To believe in purgatory is to believe in the Catholic understanding of sin, redemption, grace, and judgment. Unfortunately, many Catholics don't believe in or understand Purgatory. Simple ignorance of Scripture and Church teaching is one reason. Another reason is the influence of our culture, which ignores and even denies the reality of sin in our world.

This error has even trickled into corners of Catholic education, where there has been a de-emphasis on God's justice and an overemphasis on His mercy and benevolence.

At Catholic funerals, we rarely hear about the reality of Purgatory and the need to pray for departed souls. This becomes a grave injustice to

those deceased who are suffering in purgatory and need our prayers for their deliverance.

Although it may sometimes be ignored by those who are more comfortable preaching about God's mercy rather than his justice, the doctrine of Purgatory is in fact one of the most merciful and consoling doctrines that Scripture teaches. God purifies us from our defects precisely because of His mercy. God refines his children and the fire of his love so that they can fully attain to the joys of heaven. God perfects us for our own benefit, Not His. Through the pain of purgatory, we gained the bliss of heaven. Without purgatory, not only would those of us with unfinished spiritual business be unable to enjoy heaven, but we also wouldn't make it there in the first place.

Protestants strongly disagree, and they raise many legitimate questions regarding purgatory. For example. If Jesus died for our sins, why does anyone have to go to purgatory? If Jesus took on the punishment for our sins on Calvary, why would God punish us further after we die? If Jesus paid the debt for our sins, why do we still owe a debt after our death? Doesn't the doctrine of purgatory take away from Jesus saving death on the cross?

The doctrine of purgatory is explicitly taught in Scripture. It is also found in the writings of the early Church Fathers, from the very beginning of the Church. This means that Purgatory is a revelation of Jesus Christ given to his apostles. Purgatory is a part of the Deposit of Faith which was once for all delivered to the Saints.

The Jews believed in a state after death where sins could be forgiven. God revealed this truth to the Jews in both Scripture and in the prophetic tradition. In addition to the many Old Testament verses revealing how God purifies His elect through trial by fire, we see the

common Jewish practice of praying for the dead in the actions of Judas Maccabeus, one of the greatest warriors in Jewish history.

Interestingly, although most Protestants claim to deny the doctrine of purgatory, they believe in the doctrine implicitly. Protestants admit that Christians continue to sin until the end of their lives. However, they also confess that we will no longer be sinning in heaven. It necessarily follows, then, that there must be a final purification between death and eternal life. Whether the purification happens instantaneously or not is not the issue. The issue is that there is some kind of purification that moves us from a sinful state to a non-sinful state. And this is what the Church calls purgatory. Moreover, it follows that just as we can pray for someone's sanctification in this life, we can also pray for his sanctification in purgatory.

Indeed, reason alone demands the existence of purgatory. After all, it is probable that most God-fearing people die with at least small sins on their souls. Or with sinful inclinations that they have never completely conquered. Since nothing defiled can be in God's presence, it follows that these souls cannot be admitted into heaven with these imperfections. And yet these souls, so close to God, are not deserving of eternal Hellfire, for such a punishment would not be proportionate to the offence. In short, many departed souls are worthy neither of everlasting punishment nor immediate happiness. Because God desires all men to be saved, reason, then, insists on the transitional state where good souls are cleansed of their imperfections, so that they are made fit for the bliss of heaven.

The human heart also demonstrates that there is a purgatory. Who doesn't number his deceased loved ones in his prayers? I bet there aren't many, even among those who like Protestants and even non-Christians who don't believe in purgatory. It is an instinct of the human

heart. If there were only heaven and hell, how could we explain the instinct to pray for the dead. Because God is holy, holy, holy, He will allow nothing to enter His dwelling place with the slightest spot or blemish. Revelations 4:8. The word purgatory comes from the Latin *purgatoire*, which means to purge, purify, or make clean.

The Church teaches that it is a place or condition of temporal punishment for departed souls who are destined for heaven but not completely purified from sin. Through this purgative process, spiritual contamination is removed and the soul is made wholly pleasing to God, so it can live forever with him in heaven. The Church often refers to the souls in Purgatory as the Holy Souls, the poor souls, or the suffering souls.

Scripture commands us to follow both the written and unwritten traditions that Christ and the apostles handled on to us through the Church.

Protestants reject Purgatory on the basis that Christ has made complete satisfaction for our sins. While this sounds like a pious thing to believe, it's misleading. It is true that the sacrifice of Jesus Christ was more than sufficient to atone for all punishment: temporal and eternal due to sin. The Passion of Christ was a superabundant work of satisfaction for the sins of the whole world.

Christ gave the Father more than was necessary to compensate for our sins. As the Apostle John says, "And here is the propitiation for our sins, and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world." Both Catholics and Protestants agree on this elementary point.

However, although Christ alone has made satisfaction for the eternal punishment for sin. He specifically requires us to participate in making satisfaction for the temporal punishments for our sin. Temporal

punishments refer to the personal, social, ecclesial, and cosmic effects that our sins cause, which must be remedied by virtue of God's divine justice.

We participate with Christ by enduring the trials and sufferings of this life, as well as through acts of Penance. This is why Paul says, “now I rejoice in my sufferings, for your sake, and in my flesh I complete What is lacking in Christ afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the Church.” Colossians 1:24. If Christ made complete atonement for our sins, then how can Paul say that there is something lacking in his sufferings? There cannot be, insofar as the commission of the eternal punishment is concerned. Only a being with eternal power could atone for eternal punishment, and that is exactly what Christ did for us.

It necessarily follows, then, that what is lacking in Christ afflictions refers to the debt of temporal punishment that we must suffer, in justice, for our sins. According to Paul, we are able to complete or satisfy this punishment that God imposes when our own sufferings are joined to those of Christ.

As we will see, God requires this suffering because it restores the sinner to the equality of justice and allows the sinner to achieve the holiness that is required for heaven. Because making satisfaction for our debt of punishment is difficult, Scripture warns us to fear the consequences of unforgiven sin: not without fear about sin forgiven. Of course, if there were no consequences to forgiven sin, there would be nothing to fear. If we do not make sufficient satisfaction in this life for our many sins and die in a state of grace, we will go straight to heaven. However, if in this life we don't complete what is lacking in Christ's, afflictions for our sins, we will do so in the next, which is purgatory. As Paul says, regarding God's judgment, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says all who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of Heaven. The Church gives the name Purgatory to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned. The Church formulated her doctrine of faith on purgatory specifically at the Councils of Florence and Trent. Based on the teaching of Scripture and the Church Fathers, the Council of Florence defined purgatory as follows: It is likewise defined, that, if those truly penitent have departed in the love of God, before they have made satisfaction by worthy fruits of penance for sins of Commission and omission, the souls of these are cleansed after death by purgatorial punishments. The Council of Trent declared: since the Catholic Church, instructed by the Holy Spirit, in conformity with the sacred writings and the ancient tradition of the Fathers and Sacred Councils, and very recently in this Ecumenical Synod, has taught that there is a purgatory, and that the souls detain there, are assisted by the suffrages of the faithful, and especially by the acceptable sacrifice of the altar, The Holy Synod commands the bishops that they insist that the sound doctrine of purgatory, which has been transmitted by the Holy Fathers and the Holy Councils, be believed by the faithful of Christ, be maintained, taught, and everywhere preached. Based on these definitions, we can summarize the Church's teaching on purgatory as follows: First, purgatory is for persons who die in God's grace, without mortal sins on their souls, and are thus destined for heaven. Mortal sins involve grave matter and the sinner's knowledge and full consent. These sins are called mortal, that is deadly, because they expel grace from the soul, precluding it from obtaining union with God, the source of all life. Those who die with their mortal sins having been forgiven or having

committed venial sins only, are assured of their place in heaven, although they may have to go to purgatory for final purification.

Thus, purgatory is not for persons who died with unforgiven mortal sin. These souls knowingly chose sin over God during their lives and failed to repent of their sins before death. These are the souls of the reproachable who will be tormented day and night, forever and ever. Because those in purgatory are guaranteed of their place in heaven, purgatory is a temporary, transitional state between death and eternal life with God.

Secondly, as we have seen, purgatory is a process of purification from sin.

Through this process, the soul achieves the requisite holiness that God requires for it to be suitable for heaven.

A third key classic belief about purgatory is that the souls there can have their sufferings lessened, and even be delivered from their torments completely, by the suffrages of those on earth. Suffrages are acts of penance performed by the faithful, such as prayer, fasting and almsgiving.

Although God requires from the members of the body satisfaction for their sins, He doesn't necessarily require it from the member who owes it. God is so merciful that he accepts satisfaction for sin from any member he chooses.

By saying that his sufferings are for your sake, and for the sake of the body, the church, Paul reveals that one member's suffrages are able to help another member and make up for what is lacking in his own suffrages. In other words, God allows one member to merit satisfaction for another member since, just as he allowed Christ to atone for the eternal punishment for our sins.

What purgatory is not: Some people have mistaken ideas about purgatory. For example, some people think that purgatory is a place where people get a second chance after death to accept God and be saved. Others think that Purgatory is an alternative destination for people who are too good for Hell but not good enough for Heaven. Some also think that purgatory is a place where the soul works for heaven and gains additional merits from God.

These views are erroneous. We are given only one opportunity to respond to God's grace in Christ and accept His mercy. And that is during our earthly lives. This is our only chance to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling. Philippians 2:12. Once we die, the condition of our souls is fixed. And our fate sealed. As Paul says in his letter to the Hebrews, men die once, and after that comes judgment. Hebrews 9:27.

Purgatory does not give someone a second chance to accept Jesus Christ after he dies. After he judges us Christ will no longer deal with our sins. Christ will no longer give us an opportunity to repent of them, and He will no longer forgive them. Once the soul leaves the body at death, the time for clemency and forgiveness has passed.

God judges the soul according to the objective state of its condition at the moment of death. The particular judgment is to be distinguished from the general judgment which will occur at the end of the world when Christ separates the sheep from the goats. At the general judgment, Christ will simply proclaim publicly each person's particular judgment. Those who were judged favorably will have their bodies resurrected to eternal life. And those who were judged evil will have theirs resurrected to eternal condemnation.

Purgatory is not a middle state between the place of the saved and the place of the damned. Jesus revealed in Scripture that there are only

two ultimate destinations for those who were able to choose good or evil during their lives. Those who love God and their neighbors as themselves, when inherit the Kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. That those who did evil will be thrown into the eternal fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.

Purgatory is not a place of effort and merit. In purgatory, the soul does none of the work of purification; Rather, God does all the work. The souls in Purgatory have nothing to do because they have already worked out their own salvation during their earthly lives. Their salvation is guaranteed. Scripture is clear. Purgatory is where those righteous souls are finally freed from their labors. Paul says for whoever enters God's rest, also ceases from his labors. While the soul rests from its earthly labors, God engages in His heavenly labor of purification. God tests the soul and the fires of his divine love as a refiner does with silver and gold. God says through the prophet Zechariah, And I will put this one into the fire, and refine them as one refined silver, and test them as gold is tested. Malachi also reveals for he is like a refiners fire and like a fuller soap; he will sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, and he will purify the sons of Levi and refine them like gold and silver.

In addition. It is generally believed that the souls in Purgatory are incapable of increasing their merits before God. That merits are gratuitous gifts that God bestows on the faithful for obeying His commandments during their lives. These gifts include an increasing grace, a higher degree of charity, closer union with the Trinity, and a corresponding increase in heavenly glory. As Augustine says, when God grants us merits, he is simply crowning his own gifts. Man obtains from God what God gave man the power to do in the first place. Scripture teaches that the merits we gain on earth are reserved for our enjoyment in heaven. Revelation praises the souls in heaven who rest from their labors, he emphatically proclaims for their deeds. Follow

them! Paul also says that those who are rich in good deeds, liberal and generous, are laying up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so they may take hold of the life which is life indeed. 1 Tim 6:18-19.

Like heaven in hell, Purgatory concerns life after death. Any time we discuss the afterlife, we are dealing with mystery. As Paul says, For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part; Then I shall understand fully. 1 Cor 13:12. While we know certain things about purgatory from scripture and tradition, there are many things we do not know with certainty. For example, we don't know where purgatory is, the exact nature of the sufferings endured there, or how long it lasts. Nevertheless. Scripture and Tradition provide us many clues, as do the private revelations of many Saints.

Where is purgatory?

As we have seen, the most common phrase describing purgatory is a place or condition of temporal punishment after death. While most modern theologians prefer to describe purgatory as a condition or state or process, one doesn't err by calling purgatory a place. When Jesus warned sinners that they would be detained in prison until they paid the last penny, the early church interpreted Jesus warning as a reference to purgatory. Thus, purgatory is a place, insofar as it detains the soul for purification. Just as the soul was detained in the body during the earthly life, the soul may also be detained in the prison of purgatory after death.

If purgatory can be called a place, where is this place? Theologians throughout the centuries have speculated that Purgatory is the interior of the Earth. This was the position held by Augustine and Aquinas. Only God knows for sure, and there are no compelling arguments on the question. Nevertheless, Scriptures may provide some subtle inferences.

In Matthew's Gospel, Jesus says, so will the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth. As we have seen, When Christ was in the heart of the earth, He preaches deliverance to the souls of the righteous, who were waiting for the gates of heaven to be open for them. These righteous would have included those in purgatory as well, for they were likewise to receive the message of salvation, even though they were making final satisfaction for their sins. If so, this means that Purgatory is in the heart of the earth where Jesus descended after his death.

In Luke's Gospel. Even though the rich man was being tormented in Hades, he could still see Lazarus who was in Abraham's bosom and could communicate with Abraham. Assuming that Abrahams bosom was in the heart of the earth as shown above, then it is reasonable to conclude that the rich man's place of torment was near or joined to it, separated only by the Great Chasm.

Many saints received revelations that Purgatory and Hell was somewhere in the earth. Saint Theresa had visions of souls coming forth from the depths of the earth and ascending into heaven by the hands of angels. Saint Francis of Rome was conducted by an Angel into both which were situated in the bowels of the earth. The Blessed Virgin Mary revealed to three shepherd children in Fatima, Portugal, a frightening vision of happenings in the bowels of the Earth. In this vision, the children saw a vast sea of fire, with souls appearing like burning embers with human forms. They were floating about in the conflagration and were raised into the air by flames and great clouds of smoke. The children also heard shrieks and groans of pain and despair. Although Lucia later explained that this was a vision of hell, the elements in the vision, fire, flames, smoke, cries are also consistent with the private revelations that many Saints have received about

Purgatory. This is but a tiny sampling of those visions received by saints, suggesting Purgatory's existence in the heart of the Earth.

How painful is purgatory? It is generally understood that there are two kinds of pain and purgatory: Pain of sense and pain of loss. The pain of loss consists of being detained from beholding the face of God, the very end for which God created the soul. When the soul was in the body, it struggled between satisfying the desires of the spirit and the desires of the flesh. Read the Book of Wisdom which says, A perishable body weighs down the soul. And Paul repeatedly refers to the tension between the body and the soul, the flesh and the spirit. When the soul is free from the body, it seeks God alone. Thus, being deprived of its only desire--- God ---during its detention and purgatory, produces tremendous spiritual torments for the soul, from which it will not be released until it has paid the last penny.

We have also seen how Scripture alludes to God using fire to purify us like silver and gold. When read literally, Scripture teaches that the pain of purgatory is the pain of bodily or corporeal fire. it also makes sense that a person whose sin corporeally should also be punished.

corporeally. The Book of Wisdom says that one is punished by the very things by which he sins. Saints over the centuries have given us frightening revelations of the pains of Purgatory. They have seen visions of violent flames, lava, hot chains, punishing the souls of the just. They have heard screams and cries of agony and fury as the souls endured the fires of expiation. Those graced with these visions have all said that the chastisements of Purgatory are beyond our comprehension, surpassing all the sufferings of this life. If a temporal fire causes a painful burn to the skin in this life, how much more pain does flame cause in the Soul in Purgatory? It is a sobering meditation. Hosea mentions that sinners became detestable like the thing they loved. 9. 10.

As we alluded to, the great minds of the Church agree that the least pain in purgatory surpasses the greatest pain of earthly life. Regarding pain of sense, because punishment is afflicted upon the soul directly, which is the source of all bodily sensations, it follows that this pain of sense is worse than anything the soul could experience in the body. The severity of the punishment, of course, depends on the severity of the sins for the Lord says, I will recompense them according to their deeds. The Lord also says that a man is punished in proportion to his offense.

Regarding pain of loss, the more something is desired, the more painful is its absence. Since the soul in Purgatory desires God alone and with the most intense desire, it follows that this pain of loss is worse than anything the soul could experience while on earth.

The Fathers and Doctors of the Church agreed that this pain of loss of the vision of God is the greatest pain of Purgatory. Notwithstanding the supreme pains of purgatory, the souls there freely submit to their punishments out of their fervent love and desire for God. They would rather undergo these terrible torments than appear before God with their current defects. They love God above all things, for their disembodied souls seek Him alone. Furthermore, because God loves those He chastises, He gives the souls in Purgatory. Great consolations. Although God wants us to have a holy fear of sin and punishment, He wants us to temper that fear with great trust in His mercy, For God's mercy is as infinite as his justice. Thus, while their sufferings are like those of hell, their consolations give them a taste of heaven.

How long does purgatory last? Although we don't know exactly how time operates in the afterlife, it seems where the souls are detained in purgatory for a time, Jesus warning that we will not get out of the prison of Purgatory until we have paid the last penny means we are detained for a good time. Of course, one person's debt may be larger or

smaller than another's. Fire consumes the elements at different speeds. Why? Because wood remains longer and fire than hay or stubble. Hay and stubble burn more quickly, and wood burns more slowly. Metaphorical usage of these elements demonstrates the obvious color. Some sins are more grievous than others. Thus, some sins are punished longer and more severely in purgatory than others. Those who had graver sins represented by wood will be purified longer than those with lesser sins represented by stubble. The severity of punishment corresponds to a person's guilt, while the length of punishment corresponds to how deeply the sin has taken root in the soul.

Many saints have had conclusions that are unanimous. The shortest time in purgatory seems to be an extraordinarily excessively long time. Hence like the pains of sense and loss, this pain of duration is intensified beyond anything we have experienced in this life. That in fact, it is because the suffrages of purgatory, sense, and loss are so incredibly intense that the soul perceives time as it does. Consistent with the opinions of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church is that the pains of purgatory seem to last not only 10 and 20 years, but in some cases entire centuries. When the seer Lucia at Fatima asked the Blessed Mother about her deceased friend Amelia, who died at 18 or 20 years of age, the mother of God said she will be in purgatory until the end of the world.

God does not want us to go to purgatory. No, we impose purgatory on ourselves. That our Lord has told us, my yoke is easy, and my burden is light. If we love God with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength, we have nothing to fear. The way we respond to God's grace in this life will determine the outcome of the next. Our Lord loves us and will consume us in the fire of His love.

Satisfaction for sin.

Temporal versus eternal punishment.

We can understand the difference between temporal and eternal punishment and its relation to sin in the following way. If a person completely turns away through mortal sin from the infinite good, that is God, there is a corresponding infinite punishment endured in hell. If a person turns to a mutable good beyond right reason, venial sin, there is a finite punishment endured here or in purgatory. The punishment is finite or temporal because the good itself is finite and because the person hasn't turned away from God completely. That is, the person has ultimately chosen the mutable good over the immutable God. Hence venial sins incur temporal punishment, while mortal sins incur eternal punishment.

When a person incurs eternal punishment hell, he needs a satisfaction of infinite value to be released from his punishment. Of course, only God, who has infinite power, is able to provide infinite satisfaction. This he gave in the person of Jesus Christ, an eternal being without sin.

Man avails himself of Christ's atoning work by confessing his sins. The Apostle John says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, And he'll forgive our sins and from all unrighteousness."

When a person dies., his debt of punishment is not automatically discharged. This makes logical sense. If someone intentionally tortures and kills ten innocent people and dies without repentance, he will be punished forever in hell. If the same person dies shortly after committing the murders, but repents on his deathbed, God forgives him of his eternal punishment, but he doesn't get off Scott free. He doesn't just waltz into heaven. Instead he must make satisfaction for his grievous sins. God is infinite mercy, But He is also infinite justice. If the person did not make satisfaction during his earthly life, he will do so in purgatory.

This means it is erroneous for Protestants to reject purgatory and the need for temporal punishments on the ground that Christ paid the legal debt for our sins. It's true that if sin were a legal debt, that Christ fully paid, Purgatory would be unnecessary. But then, so would hell. That is because God would not require one payment from Christ and a second payment from the sinner, both for the same sin. That would violate the Law of Justice. If Christ really satisfied the debt, there is no more debt to owe...and we all go to heaven.

Christ sacrifice is not an impersonal legal motion to a judge to pardon the criminal, but a personal intimate plea to the Father to forgive the sinner. Christ's atonement is about personal appropriation, not legal payment. It's about grace, not law. For Paul says you are not under the law, but under grace. Catholics also point out that Christ work is not a legal transaction because in order to be saved one must accept the payment through an act of faith. Read scripture. It really teaches that God requires the sinner to have faith in Christ's blood for it to benefit him. Romans 3.

The problem then, with the Protestant understanding is that faith is not a dimension of law. One does not need to have faith in a criminal court Judge to issue a punishment when the law is violated. A defendant's faith is irrelevant to his sentence. Rather, faith is a dimension of relationships, particularly within a family. This is why it is impossible to enter the New Covenant without faith. That Protestants have no explanation for why faith is required if Christ's atonement is a mere legal transaction. This is why Scripture always puts Christ atoning work in the context of family, not law. For example, Paul says that Christ was sent to redeem those who were under the law, so that we might receive adoption as sons. Read Galatians 4:5. Paul also says he destined us in love to be his son through Jesus Christ. Ephesians 1:5. Christ's atonement doesn't release defendants from a judge but reconciles sons

to their father. This is the heart of the story of the Prodigal Son. Because we are adopted sons of God, Paul says, God has sent the Spirit of his Son into our hearts, crying ABBA, Father: “So through God you are no longer a slave, but a son, and if a son, then an heir.”

God doesn't impose punishment upon sinners solely because it appeases his anger as demanded by his justice. He also imposes temporal punishments upon us to further his work of saving our souls. After all, God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. That temporal punishment aids the sinner's reformation by moving the sinner to repentance, which is necessary for salvation. Justice aims not only at removing inequality, already existing, but also safeguarding equality for the future. Since satisfaction is an act of justice, it is both punitive and rehabilitative.

Matthew 5:25-26 the judge will put us in prison

²⁵ “Settle matters quickly with your adversary who is taking you to court. Do it while you are still together on the way, or your adversary may hand you over to the judge, and the judge may hand you over to the officer, and you may be thrown into prison. ²⁶ Truly I tell you, you will not get out until you have paid the last penny.

We have already referred to this teaching of Jesus a number of times. After Jesus teaches the beatitudes, and about how our own righteousness not as imputed righteousness must exceed that of the Pharisees. He issues warnings about who shall be liable to judgment. Then Jesus says make friends quickly with your accuser, while you are going with him to court, lest your accuser hand you over to the judge, and the judge to the guard, and you be put in prison; Truly I say to you, you will never get out until you have paid the last penny.

Jesus in this passage is teaching by using metaphors. A metaphor is something that represents or denotes something else in reality. It is figurative language that has an underlying meaning. Hence to properly

exegete the passage, we must identify what the metaphors in the passage represent. We first note that Jesus is teaching about judgment and its consequent penalty, prison. Every other time Jesus teaches about judgment in the New Testament he is teaching about God's judgment upon sinners, and usually in the context of either the particular or general judgment. In fact, this is the fundamental principle underlying Jesus entire sermon on the mount. There is nothing in the text to suggest that Jesus is speaking about temporal matters in verses 25 to 26 and spiritual matters in the rest of his discourse. Hence, we can assume that Matthew 5:25-26 is about the judgment of the person's soul at death.

Jesus begins by saying, make friends quickly with your accuser. The word accuser is used only three other times in the New Testament: once in Luke 12:58 once in Luke 18:3 and once in 1 Peter 5: 8 which refers to the devil and how he seeks to ruin souls. The passage from Peter then is the most relevant because it is explicitly connected with the spiritual and the soul. The passage is also relevant because it provides the only New Testament definition of the accuser as the devil. Peter says your adversary the devil prowls around like a roaring lion seeking someone to devour.

In Matthew 5:25-26 Jesus is referring to Satan when he says accuser. When he tells us to make friends with the accuser before going to court, Jesus is not telling us to befriend Satan, but to settle our score with him by renouncing all of his empty promises in this life so that we do not have to be accused by him before the judge in the next life. Many saints have said that both one's guardian Angel and Satan are present at the particular judgment, with our Angel revealing to Christ our good deeds and Satan accusing of us of our bad deeds. This is how the accuser will hand us over to the judge. Jesus Christ is the law giver and judge to whom all judgment has been given by the Father. The

ability to make friends with Satan also means that we can grow in virtue and holiness and make satisfaction for our sins by overcoming his temptations. In other words, we can use Satan to our advantage in this life. Jesus' use of the phrase going with the devil to court affirms the same thought. Our journey to the court of God the particular judgment, will involve battling Satan during our life. We do not want to wait until we get to court the particular judgment, to renounce him, because then, the judge will be in charge of the proceedings. As we have learned, the time for contrition and mercy is in this life. Once we pass to the next life, we face only God's strict and exacting justice. If we have not dealt sufficiently with the devil in this life renouncing sin and making due satisfaction to God, we will have to do it in the prison of the next life. Jesus urges us to make friends quickly, because the debt owed to God is easier to pay in this life than the next and time is short.

Matthew 12:32: forgiveness in this age or the next

³² Anyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come.

In the verses that both proceed and follow Matthew 12:32, Jesus is speaking about soteriological issues: God, Satan, merits and judgment. Sandwiched in between Jesus teaching is his warning about blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. Jesus says: "Therefore, I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. And whoever says a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; But whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come." The plain meaning of Jesus words is obvious. Jesus declares that there is forgiveness both in this age and in the age to come. If the phrase age to come refers to the life after death, then this passage must refer to purgatory. That is because forgiveness is unnecessary in heaven and impossible in hell. To properly exegete this passage, then, we have to understand what the

phrase in the age to come means. The identical Greek phrase is used only one other time in the New Testament, in Ephesians 1:21 where Paul describes Jesus' name as above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come. The age to come in Ephesians 1:21 refers to the afterlife where Jesus intercedes in heaven as high priest before the Father. This also means that there is forgiveness in the afterlife. In fact, every time the New Testament uses the phrase age to come it refers to the afterlife. Ephesians 1:21 provides us other insights about Matthew 12:32 's connection to purgatory. First the verse in Ephesians 1:21 says Jesus name is above every name. This is the same phrase that Paul uses in Philippians 2:10 when he says that God bestowed on him the name which is above every name. This is significant because Paul is describing the importance of Jesus name in the age to come. In Ephesians 1:21 and its importance to those under the earth. As we have seen, the abode under the earth may be seen as reference to the church suffering in purgatory. This connects those in the age to come with those under the earth that is those in the afterlife who are subject to Christ heavenly reign. Those in the age to come are said to be under his feet. Ephesians 1:22 and those under the earth are said to bend the knee. Philippians 2:10 at the name of Jesus. This means that those in Matthew 12:32 who are forgiven in the age to come are the same people who are under the earth-- two allusions to purgatory.

Second, Ephesians 1:22 makes reference to the Church which is his body, which, given the context, is also a reference to the Church in the afterlife. We have seen Paul make the same reference to Christ's body the church in Colossians 1:24 where he says: "I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ afflictions for the sake of his body that is the Church." Because Paul is speaking of the same church in both Ephesians 1:22 and Colossians 1:24

it means that Paul can suffer for the sake of the church in the age to come--the same church suffering that is under the earth. That is Paul could suffer for the souls in purgatory. As we will continue to see, our sufferings alone not only for sin and temporal punishments in this life but also give rise to forgiveness in the age to come. Hence there is a clear scriptural connection between the suffering church body under the earth and age to come --- all references to purgatory. Augustine, Jerome, Pope Gregory, and Pope Gelasius also interpreted Matthew 12:32 as a reference to purgatory.

The possibility of forgiveness in the age to come supports the Catholic and Scriptural teaching about venial sin. As John teaches, there is a sin which is mortal and sin which is not mortal. Because mortal sin kills the life of grace in the soul, it cannot be forgiven in the age to come when the soul's time for contrition has passed. Mortal sin must be confessed and absolved in this life. Because venial sin is harmful but not deadly, it is forgiven in the age to come according to the plain words of our Savior.

The good thief.

When examining Jesus' teachings in the context of purgatory, Protestants often bring up how Jesus forgave the good thief during the crucifixion. They believe that Jesus spontaneous gift of salvation for the thief denies any need for purgatory. We recall that when the thief asks Jesus to remember him when Jesus came into his kingdom, Jesus responded to him by saying "Truly I say to you today you will be with me in paradise." Luke 23:43. Protestants use this extraordinary event to deny not only the doctrine of purgatory but also the Catholic doctrines concerning the necessity of baptism and good works for salvation. Yet Jesus isolated statement during this unusual event does nothing of the sort. On the most basic level, Jesus' statement doesn't

necessarily preclude the good thief from having to go to purgatory before joining Jesus in paradise. The thief, upon his death, may certainly have had to go through additional purification before entering heaven on that same day. We must also remember that purgatory is for those souls who still owe God's satisfaction for their sins. But the good thief does a number of things suggesting he would have already made sufficient satisfaction of his sin before death. For example, the good thief recognizes that he and the other criminal are receiving the due reward of our deeds. In other words, scripture reveals that the good thief's punishment of crucifixion was the due debt he owed to God for his crimes. In prior verses the good thief also rebuked the other thief who was reviling Jesus and expressed his fear of God; he also recognized that Jesus has done nothing wrong after the thief confesses both his guilt and Jesus goodness he asked Jesus for salvation: "Jesus remember me when you come into your kingly power." That's the good thief repenting of his sins and exhibits faith hope and charity to the moment of his death. When we couple these factors with his painful demise, we may conclude that the good thief was temporary purified of his sins, and this is why Jesus blessed him with salvation. That would mean that the good thief would have no need for purgatory, for his punishment was satisfied on his cross. These actions also prevent one from asserting he was saved by faith alone for his faith, like that of David, was accompanied by sorrow for his sin, hoping in God, and charity towards his fellow man.

In addition to the Lord Jesus, the apostle Paul also provides us with a number of teachings that support the doctrine of purgatory. In fact his teaching in 1 Cor 3 is perhaps the most explicit teaching on purgatory in all of the New Testament. Most of the early church fathers such as Clement of Alexandria, Origin and, Gregory of Nyssa, Augustine, and

Pope Gregory the Great interpreted Paul's teaching to be a clear reference to purgatory.

¹⁰ By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care. ¹¹ For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ. ¹² If anyone builds on this foundation using gold, silver, costly stones, wood, hay or straw, ¹³ their work will be shown for what it is, because the Day will bring it to light. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test the quality of each person's work. ¹⁴ If what has been built survives, the builder will receive a reward. ¹⁵ If it is burned up, the builder will suffer loss but yet will be saved—even though only as one escaping through the flames.

¹⁶ Don't you know that you yourselves are God's temple and that God's Spirit dwells in your midst? ¹⁷ If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for God's temple is sacred, and you together are that temple.

1 Corinthians 3: 10-17. We may be saved only as through fire.

Paul is warning the Corinthians that even though they are currently saved they are sitting against God and risking loss of their souls.

Chapter 3 opens with Paul's repeating his warning about the Corinthians worldliness and divisive attitudes. He says, for you are still in the flesh. For while there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving like ordinary men? After affirming their equality in spite of their factious ways, Paul says that each shall receive his wages according to his labor. For we are God's fellow workers: you are God's field, God's building. Paul then reveals the potential consequences on the day of judgment of the Corinthian sins: according to the Commission of God-given to me, like a skilled master builder I laid a foundation and another man is building upon it. Let each man take care how he builds upon it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that is which is laid which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble --- each man's work will become manifest; For the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of

work each one has done. If the work which any man has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward. If any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire. Do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in you? If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him. For God's temple is holy, and that temple you are.

Let us unpack this crucial passage. We first note that Paul is teaching by using a string of metaphors. As we saw in Matthew 5:25-26, this means we have to interpret the metaphors because they represent underlying truths. Paul first tells the Corinthians that they are God's building. Then Paul says that he as a skilled master builder, laid a foundation and that each man builds upon it. Paul then says that the foundation is Jesus Christ. Thus we see that Paul a skilled master builder laid the foundation Jesus Christ of the building the Corinthians. In other words, Paul as a minister of the gospel revealed to the Corinthians the truth of Jesus Christ, who must now be the foundation of their entire lives.

Paul also says that the Corinthians, as God's fellow workers, must build upon the foundation he laid for them. Paul explains how one can erect this building on the foundation of Christ with various types of materials – gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, and stubble. These materials are metaphors for the deeds that the Corinthians perform during their lives. The gold, silver, and precious stones represent good works, and the wood, hay, and stubble represent bad works. Paul elsewhere connects deeds with laying a foundation to secure one's eternal life when he writes they are to do good, to be rich in good deeds, liberal and generous, thus laying up for themselves a good foundation for the future, so that they take hold of life which is eternal. This is why Paul says once more to the Corinthians that one builds on the foundation, and then says each man's work will become manifest. The materials with which one builds on his foundation represent the person's good

and bad works or deeds and they will be subject to God's strict judgment. In addition to calling the Corinthians God's building, he also calls them God's temple. Paul explains his use of this alternative metaphor when he says, for God's temple is holy, and that temple you are. In other words, Paul is explaining to the Corinthians that they are not some ordinary building. Rather they have become the very dwelling place of God, through the gift of grace. This is why Paul says, do you not know that you are God's temple and that God's spirit dwells in you? Later in the letter Paul also says do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you which you have from God? The Corinthians have literally become tablets of God, Paul says let each man take care how he builds upon it.

The Corinthians must be careful in building their spiritual edifice, because God will examine the structure when they die. Paul says, for the day will disclose it, because it will be revealed with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done. The phrase the day refers to the person's day of judgment. Earlier in the letter, Paul says Christ will sustain the Corinthians to the end in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ, in reference to their individual judgment. Later in the letter, Paul says he has excommunicated a member of the church so that his soul may be saved on the day of the Lord Jesus.

Thus, Paul reveals that God will judge the Corinthians according to their works on the day of judgment. Giving his previous admonitions, it is clear that Paul has the Corinthian sense of worldliness and fractiousness on his mind. Paul affirms he is speaking of God's judgment in the next chapter when he says therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in the darkness and will disclose the purpose of the heart. Then every man will receive his commendation from God. This reiterates Paul's teaching on other passages of Scripture

about God's judgment of one's works. For he will render to every man according to his works: to those who by patience and well doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, he will give eternal life; but for those who are factious and do not obey the truth, but obey wickedness, there will be wrath and fury.

How will God judge a man's works? Paul says that God will reveal the work with fire, and the fire will test what sort of work each has done. As we have seen, scripture uses fire both metaphorically to represent God's divine justice and literally to represent what God uses to purge and destroy. Just as God tests our hearts during our lives to purify and perfect us for heaven, God tests our work with fire after we die to evaluate how we finished the race. Thus, Paul reveals three outcomes of God's judgment after his testing by fire: the man who built with only good materials will receive a reward. The man who built with both good and bad materials will have his bad materials burned up by fire; he too will have to pass through the same fire but will then be saved. The man who built only with bad materials has destroyed God's temple and God will destroy him.

Because the phrase "suffer loss" in 1 Cor. 3:15 refers to temporal punishment after death, and this postmortem punishment for the saved is irreconcilable with Protestant theology, Protestant apologists have to neutralize this phrase. To that end, the Protestant correctly notes that the man who builds with good materials receives a reward and the man who built with both good and bad materials suffers loss. Based on the continuum of the building metaphor, the Protestant concludes that suffering loss is the opposite of receiving a reward. Thus the Protestant is forced to equate suffering loss with losing rewards and not with temporal punishments. In other words, God is granting rewards to the man in verse 14, and removing rewards from the man in verse 15 --- but saving both of them. Is that what verse 15 says? No.

Verse 15 actually says if any man's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though he himself will be saved, but is only as through fire. It is the work that is burned up not the reward. The person who builds both good and bad materials does not lose his reward, because salvation is the reward. Thus, the scriptural and Catholic view is that the works determine both whether salvation is attained, and, if so, how it is attained. Works serve as a basis to advance or delay salvation, depending upon what materials were used to build his spiritual edifice, a concept and amical to Protestant theology. What about the man who built with only bad materials? Paul says that he has destroyed God's temple, and thus God will destroy him. This means that the person will be condemned, for the fire has consumed the entire edifice and there is nothing left for God. We therefore see a continuum in Paul's metaphor, the man who builds with only good materials is rewarded with salvation, the man who builds with both good and bad material suffers a delay but ultimately receives salvation and the man who built with only bad materials loses his salvation. This continuum refutes the Protestant argument that the man in verse 15 is losing rewards but not incurring punishments. It also parallels Jesus' teaching in Luke 12 where the ignorant and lazy servants are punished temporarily after their earthly life, while the wicked servant is punished eternally.

Other passages:

Rejoice, though now for a little while you may have to suffer various trials, so that the genuineness of your faith, more precious than gold which though perishable is tested by fire, may redound to praise and glory and honor at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 1Peter1:6-7.

Beloved, do not be surprised at the fiery ordeal which comes upon you to prove you, as though something strange were happening to you. But

rejoice in it so far as you share Christ sufferings, that you may also rejoice and be glad when his glory is revealed 1 Peter 4:12-13.

Blessed is the man who endures trial, for when he withstood the test he will receive the crown of life which God has promised to those who love him. James 1:12 Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to throw some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and for ten days you will have tribulation. Be faithful unto death and I will give you the crown of life.

Therefore, I counsel you to buy from me gold refined by fire, that you may be rich and white garments to clothe you and to keep the shame of your nakedness from being seen, and salve to anoint your eyes, that you may see. Those whom I love, I reprove and chasten; so be zealous and repent. Revelations 3:18-19

2 Maccabees. So they all bless the ways of the Lord, the righteous judge, who reveals the things that are hidden; And they turn to prayer, beseeching that the sin which had been committed might be wholly blotted out. And the noble Judas exhorted the people to keep themselves free from sin, for they had seen with their own eyes what had happened because of the sin of those who had fallen. He also took up a collection, man by man, to the amount of 2000 drachmas of silver, and sent it to Jerusalem to provide for a sin offering. In doing this he acted very well and honorably, taking account of the resurrection. For if he were not expecting that those who had fallen would rise again, it would have been superfluous and foolish to pray for the dead. But he was looking to the splendid reward that is laid up for those who fall asleep in godliness. It was a holy and pious thought. Therefore, he made atonement for the dead, that they might be delivered from their sin. 2 Maccabees 12:41-45

. There are three elements connected to our study of purgatory. The first is a reference to the judge who is God. This is the same judge of Matthew 5 the second element is Judas Maccabeus performing a ceremony on behalf of the dead. After exhorting the people to be free from sin, Judas takes up a financial collection and sends it to the temple to pay for a sin offering. A sin offering generally involved the sacrifice of a lamb, goat, a prayer for the dead. This passage closely follows 1 Corinthians 15:29 because Judas like the Corinthians performs the ritual by taking account of the resurrection. The third element is why these ceremonies for the dead were performed. The last verse in the previous passage provides the answer: that the dead might be delivered from their sin. This verse explicitly professes a belief in purgatory, where the dead are detained in a prison beyond the grave as they pay their debt to the judge of all men. As the last first says, the actions of Judas his prayers and sacrifice were able to make atonement for the dead. That is, Judas was able to make satisfaction for the temporal punishments the deceased were required to undergo in the afterlife. As we have said before, there is no need forgiveness of sin in heaven, and no possibility of forgiveness of sin in hell. Judas was praying and making atonement for the souls in purgatory. Even if Protestants do not accept the canonicity of the books of Maccabees they can see that purgatory is not a Catholic invention. God revealed the truth of purgatory to the Jews long before the coming of Christ. Moreover, there are other examples in the Old Testament scriptures those that Protestants accept as canonical of ritual prayer and penitent mourning for the dead for specific periods of time period the Jews understood that these practices freed departed souls from their painful state a purification and expedited their journey to God. This is why Naomi cried out blessed be he by the Lord, whose kindness has not forsaken the living or the dead. Ruth 2:20. The Jews would perform acts of kindness for

the dead to free them from their sufferings. Hence, the book of Sirach says: graciously give to all the living and withhold not kindness from the dead.

CHURCH FATHERS

To argue that the Fathers we're wrong about purgatory is essentially to argue that Christ abandoned his church from the beginning, even though Jesus promised that the gates of hell will not prevail against his church. The unanimous interpretation of the Fathers is further supported by the inscriptions on the tombs, sepulchers, and catacombs of the first martyrs and departed faithful of the Catholic Church. In many of these inscriptions some dating back to the 1st century the deceased Christian begged for the prayers of the living. In this study of the inscriptions of many catacombs in Rome, Father John O'Brien saw the last words of dying Christians: in your prayers to remember us who have gone before you. These inscriptions reveal the early church's belief in purgatory and the efficacy of prayers to assist the dead. The earliest liturgies of the church also reflect a belief in purgatory. From the very beginning, the church and the holy Mass would remember the faithful departed, with prayers for their peace and the forgiveness of their sins. One of the oldest liturgies, attributed to the apostle James, contains the prayer, we who commemorate all the faithful dead who have died in the true faith we ask we entreat we pray Christ our God, who took their souls and spirits to himself, that by his many compassions he will make them worthy of the pardon of their faults and the omission of their sins. In the 4th century Jerusalem expressed the church belief that the souls of those for whom prayers are offered during Mass receive very great relief period in the traditional Latin Mass which was originally composed by Peter and Paul in Rome, the priest offers the sacrifice for the living and the dead that he may avail both me and them for salvation into everlasting.

In the 2nd century the early Christians believed in a state in the afterlife that is neither heaven nor hell.

HOW TO AVOID {PURGATORY

Penances, sacraments, and indulgences. **Penances** We have seen that we're able to assist the souls in purgatory, as well as to avoid purgatory ourselves, by making satisfaction for sins through penance. Penance also called suffrages is the means by which we convert our hearts to God and turn away from evil, and is expressed in various signs gestures and good works. Jesus Christ explicitly commands it where he says do penance for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand. And bring forth therefore fruits worthy of penance.

THE THREE FORMS OF PENANCE

Prayer, fasting and almsgiving. Through the Mystical Body, these works make up for the punishment that both we and the souls in purgatory owe to God.

Protestants often argue that prayer cannot make satisfaction for sin because it is no penal, but pleasurable. This is partly true. Some forms of prayer are joyful, but other forms are works of satisfaction.

Although the Holy Souls are members of the Mystical body who are assisted by our prayers, we don't know for certain whether they're able to pray for us. Although they are closer to God than we are, their suffering is greater than ours. This great suffering means that they are in no condition to pray for us but in a condition that demands our prayers for them.

Secondly, because the Holy Souls do not yet enjoy the Beatific Vision, they're unable to know whether we're asking for their prayers.

Nevertheless, because the souls in purgatory are united to us by supernatural charity, there is no reason to contend that they are unable to pray for us.

Fasting ---because fasting tames the body's desire for food, it also subdues the lusts of the flesh. Fasting promotes chastity. Fasting also raises the mind to the spiritual realm and makes us more docile to the will of God. Finally, fasting makes satisfaction for sins because God responds by relenting of His punishments. Joes 2:12-13. Jonan 3:7-10. Judith 4:13.

Almsgiving

Which literally means mercy, is any material favor performed to assist the needy. Almsgiving must always be prompted by the virtue of charity, and not for selfish motives.

While almsgiving is a work of mercy, it is also an act of justice that makes satisfaction for sin. This is because giving alms takes away from one who has and gives to one who has not. Because this act restores the equity of justice, it avails for the satisfaction of temporal punishments.

Not only does almsgiving atone for sin, but it is necessary for our salvation. If we fail to build with the "precious stones" of almsgiving and build only with "wood, hay, and stubble," God will destroy us at the judgment 1 Cor 3:17. Jesus is clear that our almsgiving---how we assist the hungry, the thirsty, the naked, the stranger---determines our eternal destiny Mt 25:31-46.

SACRAMENTS

Just as Jesus redeemed us through the sacrifice of His physical body, He applies the fruits of His redemptive work through His Mystical Body, the

Catholic Church. Christ “sanctifies” the Church –that is, the members of His body—through the sacraments.

Baptism --- confession --- the Mass

The Church Fathers frequently refer to the Sacrifice of the Mass as assisting the souls in purgatory. We see these references as early as AD 211 in the writings of Tertullian, as among great Fathers like Cyril of Jerusalem, Ambrose and Augustine. Many saints have received very vivid revelations of souls leaving the flames of purgatory by virtue of the Mass. Imploring forgiveness for the sins of the dead at the Mass has been the practice of the Catholic Church since the very beginning. The Mass assists the holy Souls because it is a sacrifice and, therefore, has satisfactory power. This means we can and should offer the Mass with the intention of remitting punishment for sin, both for the living and the dead.

By consuming Christ’s flesh and blood, Catholics receive an infusion of grace that washes away venial sin, remits the debt of temporal punishment, and increases their merits for greater glory in heaven. Catholics can offer the satisfactory benefits from Communion for their souls as well as for the souls in purgatory.

Mortal sins? No. Because a person turns away from God by committing mortal sin through an act of pride, God requires the sinner to return to Him through an act of humility: confessing his sins to a priest. This humbling and penitential act is a movement contrary to the sinner’s proud and stubborn will and begins in earnest the process of making satisfaction for his sins.

Anointing of the Sick

Jesus instituted this sacrament to commend those who are seriously ill to the mercy of God, so that He might heal them both spiritually and

physically. This is another sacrament that forgives sin and remits punishment to help souls avoid purgatory. Eyes, ears, nose, tongue, hands and feet.

The principal benefit of this sacrament is the forgiveness of sin. The grace of the sacrament of anointing remits all venial sin as well as remnants of sin, that is, those lingering defects that otherwise prevent the soul's total and complete union with God---the defects that detain souls in purgatory. Apostolic Blessing. All these graces, which flow from the Passion of Christ, prepare the soul for immediate entrance into heaven, thereby avoiding the need for purgatory.

INDULGENCES

As with the Church's authority to forgive sin, a person obtains an indulgence through the Church by virtue of the power of the keys. This means that the authority of granting indulgences rests with the pope who alone holds the keys. We recall that Christ promised to Peter that whatever he bound or loosed on earth would be bound or loosed in heaven.

The Church is able (through the power of the keys) to remit temporal punishment due to sin because of its treasury of merits. This includes not only the superabundant merits of Jesus Christ, but also the abundant merits of the saints. By God's grace, many members of the Mystical Body have performed works of satisfaction that exceed the requirement of their debts. These merits, along with the infinite merits of Christ, are the common property of the whole Church and are distributed to the members of the body according to the judgment of the Vicar of Christ who holds the keys to the kingdom of heaven.

While indulgences can be applied to both the living and the dead, there is an important distinction in their application: those who are living on

earth are subject to the Church's immediate jurisdiction whereas those who have died are subject directly to God's jurisdiction. Thus, the church grants indulgences to the living as an exercise of its judicial authority, but applies indulgences to the dead by way of petition.

They remit temporal punishment only.

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