

## **DID YOU KNOW?**

Can we confess our sins directly to God or must we go to Confession?

The Sacrament of Penance or as it is more commonly referred to as Confession is one of the seven sacraments of the Catholic Church which Jesus Christ instituted himself on Easter as he appeared to his disciples after his Resurrection. Jesus told his disciples "As the Father has sent me, so I send you. And when he said this he breathed on them and said to them: Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them and whose sins you retain are retained." (John 20:21-23)

The purpose of confession is our reconciling with God when we have sinned. When we sin, either mortal or venial sin, we deprive ourselves of God's graces. Yes we should make acts of contrition which are the prayers in which we tell God we are sorry for our sins and ask Him for His forgiveness. But the question misses the point of the Sacrament. The Sacrament restores grace to our souls and help us to avoid sin. This is why the Church requires us to receive it at least once per year. Also, it was instituted by Christ for his disciples and priests to forgive our sins in His name.

To make a worthy confession one must be contrite (sorry for his/her sins), confess those sins and must be willing to do penance and make amends for his/her sins.

While a Catholic is only required to go to confession once a year. However, if we have committed mortal sin, we cannot receive the Holy Eucharist until we have gone to confession.