

CHAPTER 4
HEAVEN TOUCHES EARTH
Topic 1: The Sacred and the Profane Meet: Forgiveness
and Armor

“Restore us to thyself, O LORD, that we may be restored.” (*Lam 5:21*)(CCC1432)

Throughout history man has cried out to God for forgiveness. From our profane existence we cry out to the sacred for healing and mercy. We have all been wounded; we are all in need of healing. Sexual sins can be the most difficult sins to overcome because we have sinned not only against our body, but against the body of another. Many of us have learned how emotionally painful ending a relationship built on sex can be for both persons involved. Sexual sins are a disease of the soul causing us to hide before our God in shame just like Adam and Eve in the garden. Deep inside our hearts we know what we’re doing is wrong, but our bodies betray us. Satan’s marks are left within us. Our body and soul are divided.

How did we get to this point? Perhaps the answer lies in the cost of sin. Sin divides. It divides us from God and it divides the unity of our body and soul. It is only in our being restored to God that we find the restoration of our body and soul. God forgives us. It is through the forgiveness of Christ that we receive the grace that aids us in the struggle of conversion that leads us to holiness. The process of conversion is not just a human task. It is a sorrowful heart that has been moved by the grace to respond to God’s mercy. (Cf.

CCC 1428)

Romans 5: 1-5 Therefore, since we are justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. Through him we have obtained access to this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in our hope of sharing the glory of God. More than that, we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and

endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.

But what happens when we choose, in our human weakness, to ignore the graces of God? Without the interior conversion of the heart, penances remain sterile and false. (Cf. CCC 1430) When we approach God and ask for forgiveness with a contrite heart, our body and soul are united and true healing takes place.

Psalms 65: 2-4 O thou who hearest prayer! To thee shall all flesh come on account of sins. When our transgressions prevail over us, thou dost forgive them.

For those of us who have lost our virginity, there is hope. We can begin again. When our body and soul are reunited we can begin to truly love. For those who are still virgins, the road that lies ahead is difficult. Original sin destroyed the spiritual will over the body, causing tension between man and woman that result in lust and domination. (Cf. CCC 400) The consequences of original sin left what tradition calls concupiscence.

Concupiscence is *the inclination toward evil*. Although Baptism erases original sin, turning a man back to God, the consequence of original sin leaves us weakened and inclined toward sin. We are in the midst of a spiritual battle. (Cf. CCC 405) But there is hope. With God's forgiveness, continued prayer, and grace from God we can move forward to find the true love we seek. Our relationships can bear the burdens of past mistakes as long as we place our trust in God. Man and woman, in the act of creation, exist in a natural state that is elevated to a supernatural state by God. (The Sacraments, FUS) Within the Sacrament of marriage, heaven touches earth. Man and woman can experience and overcome the challenges of love on earth.