

Repent. Turn away from sin and toward Jesus

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Lent is a season for reconciliation. *Unleash the Gospel* reminds us that the Sacrament of Reconciliation is a “preeminent place” where “the Holy Spirit brings about life-changing encounters with the Lord Jesus,” where we “receive the Father’s Mercy.” This is all good! Yet we too seldom accept Christ’s invitation to repentance. Even when we remember how good it feels for Confession to free us from the weight of sin, we take too little advantage of this beautiful encounter with Grace. Why so reluctant to receive this gift from God? Vinny Flynn proposes in “7 Secrets of Confession” that we put up barriers and offers these reminders to help us approach Confession with humble confidence.



- **Our sin does not change God.** That sounds weird but we act that way when we think our little, venial sins make God annoyed or disappointed in us; or that our big sins, the mortal ones that put our eternal souls at risk, make God mad at us. The ‘secret’ is *that there is nothing we can ever do to change God’s unfailing love for each one of us.* God is unchanging eternal love!
- **It’s more than forgiveness.** Yes it’s about forgiveness. The ‘secret’? Reconciliation is a Sacrament of *Healing*. We also go to Confession to heal inclinations, habits and attitudes that lead us to do the same sins over and over. And we should not get depressed about giving in to the same weaknesses. “After all ... you wouldn’t want to keep coming back with *new* sins!”
- **Again, it’s about God’s love and mercy,** His desire to be Our Father; for us to be in close relationship with Him. Mr. Flynn writes: “The goal of confession is new life ... restoration of friendship, and communion with God, so that [we] can begin living *in a whole new way.*” Confession is a step back toward Jesus Christ, with our whole hearts.

Unleash the Gospel reminds us that “... reconciliation is an open doorway for return. No sin is unforgiveable, and through the sacrament of the Father’s embrace and a fresh start,” a renewed “movement of the Holy Spirit” awaits us. And “... even more, the spiritual healing and forgiveness [each person] receives through the sacrament cause Grace to flow through the whole community.”