

***St. Rita Catholic Parish
Confirmation Preparation***

Packet #2 - "Sin"



Distributed: 10-Jan-2021

Due: 7-Mar-2021

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Create the Perfect Environment

1. Make sure you have adequate time to get through the packet, or the portion of the packet you wish to accomplish today. Please note that each packet takes approximately 2 hours to complete and a good chunk of that time is used for things PRIOR to the meeting. So schedule your time accordingly.
2. Make sure you have a comfortable environment; comfortable seating, a table to write on, minimal distractions.
3. Have with you, the following items:
 - a. A bible and a catechism
 - b. Your session outline
 - c. Your worksheet
 - d. Pen/Pencil/Paper
 - e. A positive, open attitude
 - f. A computer/notepad or phone with access to the internet
4. Provide a snack/meal to share. Take turns, if you wish, providing a snack to share.

Theme

This meeting will look at sin, what it is, why we do it, what it does to us, how to avoid it and how to recover from it. Sin is a distancing of ourselves from God. By pulling away from God we lessen our chance for eternal salvation. The first part of your meeting will focus on the understanding of God's plan for our salvation. In order to know what it is, we must read the instruction manual – the Bible. In it, we come to understand who God is, why we were made, how we should live, and what God's plan is for us.

The second part will consider the role sin, both personal and social, plays an important part in living out the role we are asked in God's Plan for Salvation.

Preparation (to be completed before the meeting)

1. **Read** through the entire packet.
2. In several spots, you are asked to answer questions, share an experience, a story or an opinion. **Do these BEFORE your meeting with your mentor.**

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God's Plan of Salvation

The central focus for this part of the meeting is God's plan of salvation. Why were we created? What is our purpose? How do we act, work, live, and treat one another? What comes after "here"? All of these are questions many have asked. Our Father, our Creator, provides those answers to us through his Word, the sacred writing of Scripture.

So how well do you know the Bible? Can you answer these questions?

1. Who wrote the Bible and when was it written?
2. Is everything there true, historical fact?
3. What are the two sections of the Bible and what language were they written in?
4. What is the difference between a Catholic Bible and the other bibles?
5. What are names of the four Gospels?
6. Who sat at Jesus' feet while her sister kept house?
7. How many books are in the New Testament?
8. Who wrote letters to the people of Corinth?
9. What are the first five books of the Bible and what is their significance to the Jewish religion?
10. Where would I find information in the Bible, about the afterlife?

Did you know that if you attended Mass every Sunday for three years (we are on a three year rotational cycle for our readings) that you would only hear about 40% of the entire Bible? That percentage increases to just over 70% if you were to attend Mass every DAY. That means the majority of Catholics only hear less than HALF of what was written.

Important issues to understand about the Bible

- God is the author of Sacred Scripture
- All of Sacred Scripture is divinely inspired.
- Scripture must be read and interpreted in light of the same Spirit by whom it was written, who it was written for, and the for the period of time it was written.
- For us to truly understand Scripture, we must rely on the inspiration of the Holy Spirit.
- The Old Testament, known as Hebrews Scriptures, is an indispensable part of Scripture.
- The New Testament has as its central object Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
- The Bible is one huge story, unfolding before us – it is the story of God's Plan of Salvation.

Many people never see how all of the pieces of the Bible fit together. Seeing it in light of a whole story helps bring it alive for us. It is the living word of God. In it we see the incredible story of God's Plan of Salvation.

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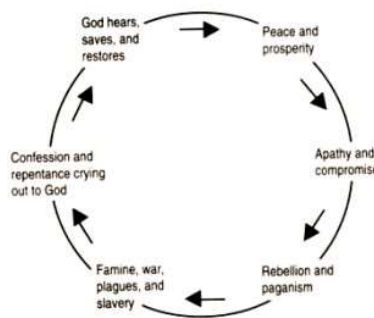
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God's Plan of Salvation – According to Sacred Scripture (the Bible)

- Creation – God created us in His image and likeness
- The Fall and Original Sin
- The Flood
- The Patriarchs
- Slavery in Egypt
- Moses (the burning bush, miracles, plaques, Passover and Exodus)
- The Promised Land
- The Kings
- Two Kingdoms
- The Prophets
- Exile (and return)
- The long-awaited Messiah (Jesus)
- The mission and ministry of Jesus
- The Apostles
- The Passion and Death
- The Resurrection
- The Pentecost
- The Ascension
- The Early Church
- The Judgement Day

SIN: We learn, predominately through the writings of the Old Testament, about the Cycle of Sin by the actions of the people of Israel. Note how things seem to circle back around. Israel would follow the Lord when there was a leader who reminded them of the ways in which they should walk, but with his death they again wandered off following other gods and their own desires.



So what drew them, and draws us into sin? Sin stems from "love of oneself even to contempt of God." (CCC 1850). When we have someone good to lead us, we follow along. But when we lose sight of our leader, we lose track of our path. We rely on our own judgment which can be clouded with greed, pride, lust, envy, laziness, etc. , or we may turn to others who may not be good, to follow. Society often plays a large part in our decisions. What people THINK is okay, often goes against what is true and moral.

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When we commit sin, we distance ourselves from God. We position ourselves ahead of Him and things that are truly good for us. He wants the best for us, but also allows us the freedom to make our own choices, which is where we can fail. Our personal desires, weaknesses and doubts lure us into sin and turn us away from Him.

So what is considered a "sin"? There are many references to sin within Scripture. We are given a definition of right and wrong as early as when Moses receives the Ten Commandments on Mount Sinai. Those commandments are the basis for which we are to follow. When we disobey them, we sin. St. Paul talks about sin when he is speaking to the Galatians in Scripture (see Gal. 5: 19-21). We are told that sin is what keeps us from God and keeps us from heaven.

How do we avoid sin? By understanding what IS sinful, we can take actions to avoid it. Review the attached Examination of Conscience and see if you can identify with items on the list? These are the things that keep us from God.

Sin happens. We are not perfect. Fortunately, God has given us a wonderful way to cleanse ourselves of those sins and build the strength we need to combat against sin. This is through the Sacrament of Reconciliation. St. Augustine, countless other saints and doctors of the Church talk about the importance of knowing ourselves well. Through coming to know ourselves better, we realized how fallen we are, and how badly we need God's help and grace to get through life. Frequent Confession helps remind us to rely on God to help rid us of our sins. The grace we receive from the Sacrament of Confession helps us combat our faults and failings and break our habits of vice much more easily and expediently than we could otherwise do without the sacramental grace. Guilt from the sins we commit can make us feel all mixed up inside and cause us to lose our peace and joy. When we hear God's forgiving words to us from the lips of the priest in Confession, a burden is lifted off our shoulders and we can again feel the peace of heart and soul that comes from being in a good relationship with God.

As we talked about in our previous packet, one of the precepts of the Church is to go to confession at least once a year. This is for our own good not to give our priests something to do. We NEED forgiveness and the grace that comes from it to help us to be closer to God, and ultimately, fulfill our salvation in heaven.

If you have not received the Sacrament of Reconciliation within the last six months, **you will need to go before you meet with your mentor.** Record the experience on your worksheet before meeting with your sponsor for you will discuss it together.

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The Meeting

1. **Opening prayer:** Make the sign of the Cross and read aloud the passage from Galatians 5:13.
2. **God's Plan of Salvation:** God's plan for salvation includes US. We are part of the kingdom of heaven, if we chose to be. Discuss what that means to you.
3. **Sin:** Sin is something we all struggle with. There are two types of sins that we commit, mortal and venial. Use the internet (and reliable sources like EWTN, Catholic Answers, etc. – NOT Wikipedia) or the Catechism of the Catholic Church, and review the two types of sin. Come up with five examples of both. Record these on your worksheet.
4. **Reconciliation:** Discuss your recent experience at Reconciliation. Was it difficult to go? How did you feel afterwards? Discuss the Sacrament of Reconciliation and what it means to you. Share with your mentor your joys and struggles (if any) with the Sacrament. Make a plan to go to receive the Sacrament together sometime in the near future (before the next session). Record the date on your worksheet.
5. **Read and Discuss:** Read and discuss Matthew, Chapter 5 together. What stands out to you? What one (or more) things do you think are really important in this passage?
6. **Snack:** If you haven't already done so, share your snack. You are encouraged to work and discuss and eat.
7. **Closing Prayer:** Pray the Our Father together, stopping at the end of each line and discuss as indicated:

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by your name (*Do I really try to see you Lord as my Father, a true parent?*)

Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in heaven (*How hard do I work to do your will?*)

Give us this day our daily bread (*Do I always remember to thank you for that bread and to share it with others?*)

And forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us (*Would I have a problem if God forgives only as well as I do? That could be a scary thought!*)

And lead us not into temptation (*What are the temptations in my life? Do I use God's gift to me of free will and conscience to walk away from temptation?*)

But deliver us from evil (*Do I only remember you in bad times, do I bargain with you?*)

For the kingdom (*Am I helping or hurting the kingdom?*),

the power and the glory are yours, now and forever (*All that we will ever be is a gift from you.*)

AMEN

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EXAMINATION of CONSCIENCE

1. **I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.**
Did I fail to love God, to make God first in my life? Do I give God time every day in prayer? Have I doubted or denied my faith? Did I have false gods in my life that I gave greater attention to than God, like money, drugs, TV, attention, pleasure, material things, etc.? Am I angry toward God because of illness or misfortune? Have I been involved with magic, horoscopes, Ouija boards or fortune-telling? Have I ever received Communion in a state of mortal sin? Have I ever deliberately told a lie in confession or have I withheld a mortal sin from the priest in confession? Do I say my prayers with real purpose and do I think of God at different times of the day? Have I really worked on my personal relationship with God, asking for special graces in times of temptation or important decisions or discussions?
2. **You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.**
Did I curse or swear? Did I use God's name in anger, lightly, carelessly, by blasphemy? In conversation, have I passively listened to slander and to jokes demeaning to the Church, or God's authority? Have I wished evil on another person? Have I insulted a sacred person or abused a sacred object?
3. **Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.**
Have I deliberately missed mass on Sundays or Holy days of obligation? Did I leave Mass early without a good reason? Am I voluntarily distracted at Mass? Do I talk to others during Mass? Do I participate in Mass? Did I receive Holy Communion in the state of serious sin? Did I show reverence to the presence of Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament? Have I allowed myself to become so dominated by my work, chores or other activities that I have not set aside Sunday for spiritual and family activities? Did I fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday? Did I eat meat on the Fridays of Lent or Ash Wednesday?
4. **Honor your father and your mother.**
Did I obey my parents? Do I try to get along with my brothers and sisters? Do I give a good example, especially to younger siblings? Do I respect others in authority: priests, nuns, police, elders, and baby-sitters? Have I talked back? Am I willing to help around the house or must I be nagged a hundred times? Do I blame my parents for my own shortcomings? Did I cause tension or fights within my family? Am I a tattletale or bully? Do I study hard and with order, realizing that by doing so I make best use of the talents God has given me, and show appreciation for the effort my parents make to educate me? Do I get angry if things don't work out as I plan or want? Do I respect authority and try to learn from disappointments rather than letting them get the best of me?
5. **You shall not kill.**
Did I get angry, impatient, envious, unkind, proud, revengeful, jealous, hateful toward another? Did I keep hatred in my heart? Have I ever struck anyone in anger, intending to injure the person? Have I abused alcohol or drugs? Do I say cruel things, or make fun of others to hurt their feelings? Do I say mean things about others behind their backs? Have I stopped speaking to anyone? Do I encourage others to do bad things? Do I treat my peers with respect and am I aware of the needs of others around me?

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6. **You shall not commit adultery.**

Did I consent to impure glances? Passionate kisses? Sinful touches? Did I give my mind over to lustful thoughts or fantasies? Was I immodest in dress or behavior? Did I look at pornography, impure books, magazines or videos? Am I guilty of impurity with myself (masturbation), premarital sex, or contraception by pills, devices etc? Did I use impure or suggestive words? Tell impure stories? Listen to them? Do I avoid laziness, gluttony, idleness and the occasions of impurity? Do I dress appropriately? Have I seen bad movies, TV shows, videos? Have I read immoral magazines, books or other materials? Have I looked at immoral sites on the internet or listened to inappropriate music? Have I allowed my companions to convince me to participate in any of these activities? Have I allowed myself to be carried away by desires opposed to my faith and actions I know are inappropriate? Do I avoid situations that could lead me to sin?

7. **You shall not steal.**

Have I stolen what is not mine? What or how much? Did I return it or make up for what I have stolen? Have I destroyed or misused another person's property for fun? Do I return things that I borrow? In good condition? Have I cheated on tests or homework? Have I written graffiti (this steals nature's beauty)? Do I seek to share what I have with the poor? Do I try to control my appetite for material things (food, clothing, possessions, and entertainment)? Do I get angry if things don't work out as I plan or want? Do I respect authority and try to learn from disappointments rather than letting them get the best of me?

8. **You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

Have I lied, gossiped? Talked about another person behind their back? Am I sincere? Did I reveal secrets that should have been kept confidential? Am I critical, negative or uncharitable in my talk? Have I injured the reputation of others by speaking about their failures and sins with little desire or intention to help them? Have I condoned prejudice and hatred toward people of other nationalities, races or religions?

9. **You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.**

Did I neglect to control my imagination or desire of other people? Have I rejected my family in my heart, wishing to distance myself emotionally and personally from them? Do I allow my parents to spend time with one another, or do I get jealous and want them to pay attention only to me? Do I get mad when I have to share my friends? Are there kids I will not play with or be mean to because they look different?

10. **You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.**

Is my heart greedy? Am I jealous of what another has? Am I envious of others because I don't have what they have? Do I always compare myself with others? Am I moody or gloomy? Do I work, study and keep busy to counter idle thoughts? Is my heart set on earthly possessions or on the treasures in Heaven? Do I try to control my appetite for material things (food, clothing, possessions, and entertainment)?

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Candidate Name _____

Mentor Name _____

Meeting Date _____

1. Prior to meeting with your mentor, you were asked to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Please record that here. I went to Reconciliation on _____ (date) at _____ (church).
2. Describe how you felt AFTER receiving the Sacrament.
3. My mentor and I have made plans to go to Reconciliation together (or at the approximate same time if not able to meet together) on _____ (date) at _____ (church).
4. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is offered weekly at St. Rita. Please list the day and time here. _____

FYI: Did you know that you can ask for the Sacrament of Reconciliation from a priest by just scheduling a meeting with them at your (and his) convenience?

5. Something I learned about myself is during this session is:
6. Something new I learned about my mentor is: