

**Homily Outline for the 26<sup>th</sup> Sunday of the Year - Cycle A**  
**Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception**  
**September 27, 2020**

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- I. Last two weeks' Scriptures were about *forgiveness*; today we focus on forgiveness for *what*? In order to appreciate forgiveness, we must know what it means to sin.
  - A. Our first reading today is from the prophet Ezekiel (Ez 18:25-28): If a sinner "turns from the wickedness he has committed, does what is right and just, he shall preserve his life; since he has turned away from all the sins which he committed, he shall surely live, he shall not die."
  - B. In the Gospel parable today (Mt 21:28-32), Jesus tells the chief priests and the elders that tax collectors and prostitutes were turning from their sins and were entering the kingdom of heaven.
  - C. Jesus calls people to change their minds, turn from their sinful ways, and believe him.
  
- II. What does it mean to sin?
  - A. Last Sunday in my homily I said we should make an examination of conscience to prepare for a good confession.
  - B. Make an examination of conscience; they can be found online, e.g., USCCB, EWTN, etc., using 10 commandments,
  - C. I do a daily general examination of conscience before I go to bed using an acronym based on the seven deadly sins: PEAAGLS - Pride, Envy, Anger, Avarice, Gluttony, Lust, and Sloth. A few words about each from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:
    1. Pride is undue self-esteem or self-love, which seeks attention and honor and sets oneself in competition with God (1866).
    2. Envy is resentment or sadness at another's good fortune, and the desire to have it for oneself; envy is contrary to the tenth commandment (2539).

3. Anger is an emotion which is not in itself wrong, but which, when it is not controlled by reason or hardens into resentment and hate, becomes one of the seven capital sins. Christ taught that anger is an offense against the fifth commandment (1765, 1866, 2262).
4. Avarice or Greed arises from a passion for riches and their attendant power. It is also against the tenth commandment (2336).
5. Gluttony - Overindulgence in food or drink (1866).
6. Lust is disordered desire for or inordinate enjoyment of sexual pleasure. Sexual pleasure is morally disordered when sought for itself, isolated from its procreative and unitive purposes (2351).
7. Sloth is a culpable lack of physical or spiritual effort; also called acedia or laziness (1866, 2094, 2733).

D. Avoiding the near occasions of sin.

1. Just as we are taking precautions against a contagious disease by keeping safe distancing, we should distance ourselves from sin.
2. Sin is highly contagious; we call that scandal.
3. Just as we avoid situations and people that can make us sick, unless we are caring for them to heal their sickness, so we should avoid situations and people who can lead us into sin, unless we are actively seeking to help them turn away from their sinful ways and follow Jesus Christ.

E. Each of the seven deadly sins has an antidote, called a virtue. Just as vices are bad habits, virtues are good habits, so we should cultivate virtues to avoid the near occasions of sin.

1. The antidote to pride is humility.
2. The antidote to envy is kindness.
3. The antidote to anger is meekness.
4. The antidote to avarice is generosity.
5. The antidote to gluttony is temperance.
6. The antidote to lust is chastity.
7. The antidote to sloth is diligence.

- F. Remedies for the seven deadly sins as suggested by St. Robert Bellarmine, an Italian Jesuit and a Cardinal of the Catholic Church. He was a professor of theology and later rector of the Roman College, and in 1602 became Archbishop of Capua.
1. According to St. Robert Bellarmine, "The remedy for pride is that a man will rest upon holy humility with all diligence, i.e., that he might understand himself to be nothing, and whatever we have is the gift of God and he should consider others better than himself and hence, esteems himself less than others and subject to all; outwardly and inwardly he will honor men in no matter what degree they are. It also helps to consider in the first place, that pride makes a man similar to the devil, and it is especially hated by God."<sup>1</sup>
  2. The remedy for envy "is to devote oneself to the exercise of fraternal charity. . . . For the envious man inflicts himself and consumes himself inwardly, and God often raises us a thing to be envied in such a way that the envious man who desired the thing is downcast and humbled. We see that the devil repulsed the first man from earthly paradise by envy, but in the time that God sent Christ into the world, he gave back earthly paradise due to His merits."<sup>2</sup>
  3. St. Robert Bellarmine said the remedy for anger "is devote oneself to the virtue of mildness and patience, by considering the examples of the saints and of Christ himself, who gloriously triumphed over vices of this sort by forbearance and patience. For it does not happen infrequently among mundane men that they propose to take vengeance very severely on their own enemies."<sup>3</sup>
  4. The remedy for avarice or greed "lies in the virtue of liberality and in consideration that we are travelers and pilgrims in this life, and for that reason it is especially useful to not burden oneself with these goods but to divide them amongst our fellow pilgrims, that we might carry them together on our journey to our heavenly homeland, and it is more expedient that we prepare to unburden ourselves on our road."<sup>4</sup>
  5. "The remedy for gluttony is to be vigilant in temperance and abstinence, as well as to put the benefit of the soul in a higher regard than that of the body. In particular, one must carefully consider that the delight of gluttony is very brief and very often the pain of the stomach and head – which follow – are longer."<sup>5</sup>
  6. "The remedy for lust is to engage oneself in fasting and prayer as well as to avoid bad company, for these are the means discovered to preserve chastity and apart from these neither to trust too much to one's self nor to his own virtue and sanctity, but to stay very far away from dangers and to guard his senses, by considering the strength of Samson, the great holiness of David and the

great wisdom of Solomon and yet how they were deceived by this vice and incurred a great blindness of the mind.”<sup>6</sup>

7. Finally, according to St. Robert Bellarmine, “Sloth comes from a Greek word (*acedia*) and has the sense of weariness and contempt, and so it is a capital sin when one tires of any good work and is moved by contempt. Moreover, it displeases him that he is obliged to observe the divine precepts and to persevere in the path of the virtues.”<sup>7</sup> “Diligence is the virtue that tells us to fulfill our duties in life, even if they get to be tiresome. These duties include our work, our home, our country, our church, and our families.”<sup>8</sup>

III. The way to conquer deadly sin to use the antidotes of the virtues and the remedies available to us by God’s grace.

- A. In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we receive the grace of God’s mercy.
- B. In the Eucharist, we receive the very presence of Christ.
- C. With our sins forgiven, we stay close to Christ through His gift of the Eucharist.

IV. May God give us this grace. Amen.

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<sup>1</sup> Fr. Dennis Kolinski, SJC, *Manual for Conquering Deadly Sins* (Charlotte, North Carolina: Tan Books, 2017) p. 273.

<sup>2</sup> Fr. Dennis Kolinski, SJC, *Manual for Conquering Deadly Sins*, p. 236.

<sup>3</sup> Fr. Dennis Kolinski, SJC, *Manual for Conquering Deadly Sins*, p. 217.

<sup>4</sup> Fr. Dennis Kolinski, SJC, *Manual for Conquering Deadly Sins*, p. 170.

<sup>5</sup> Fr. Dennis Kolinski, SJC, *Manual for Conquering Deadly Sins*, p. 137.

<sup>6</sup> Fr. Dennis Kolinski, SJC, *Manual for Conquering Deadly Sins*, pp. 112-113.

<sup>7</sup> Fr. Dennis Kolinski, SJC, *Manual for Conquering Deadly Sins*, p. 177.

<sup>8</sup> “The Virtues, *Catholic Bible 101*, accessed online at <https://www.catholicbible101.com/thevirtues.htm>.