

Healing from Sin

Sin, especially sins which are habitual or prevalent in a person's life, can be thought of as a "disease of the soul." As such, healing from sin is a spiritual process which restores sanctifying grace to the soul; i.e., a state of grace which is free from mortal sin and in a relationship of friendship with God.

Healing is one of the 5 elements of the process of repentance: (1) recognizing and identifying the sin or harmful behavior – this means taking the time to reflect on one's actions and motivations, even making a list of the most common sins or harmful behaviors in our lives, (2) the exercise of contrition – which includes remorse for the committed sin or behavior, hatred for the sin or behavior, and the resolution to turn away from the sin or behavior, (3) confessing or admitting the sin or behavior, (4) making reparation or restitution by actively making amends for the damage caused, and (5) seeking God's healing – spiritual, emotional and psychological healing can be a vital part of the process of repentance, especially if the sin or behavior was initially triggered or is being driven by past trauma.

In this reflection, we will focus on the element of healing. Healing itself is a process, but how does one go about it? A basic starting point is forgiveness – forgiveness is an act of the will which does two things: (1) letting go of the hurt caused by sin, and (2) willing to move on with life. Unforgiveness is like a cancer; it fosters resentment, bitterness, anxiety and stress that slowly erodes a person's inner peace, emotional and physical well-being.

Unforgiveness binds the trespasser to the one who trespassed, and this is a spiritually debilitating bond. As long as the unforgiveness remains, the trespasser remains a perpetual victim, under the control of the trespasser. Forgiveness opens the door for the trespasser to break this spiritually debilitating bond and to be set free.

Some people can forgive easily, but forgiveness does not come easily to others. Forgiveness is a voluntary process – one has to consciously choose to let go of resentment or bitterness, to leave the hurt behind and want to move on with life. Being aware of the stronghold that unforgiveness has over you can also bring you to look at the situation objectively, weigh the positives against the negatives, and make that final push to move on.



In a lot of cases, what holds people back is their misunderstanding of forgiveness. Some people think that to forgive is to forget. Whoever popularized that saying has done a great disservice to mankind. As a result, many people think that if I cannot forget, then I cannot forgive. That kind of understanding is not only wrong, it also puts an insurmountable obstacle in front of people. "To forgive is to forget" is not a direct quote from the Bible. In the biblical context, forgiveness means not to take vengeance. What the Bible says is "Beloved, do not look for revenge but leave room for the wrath; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.'" (Romans 12:19; cf. Deuteronomy 32:35). It commands believers to forgo personal revenge and to trust in divine justice, to leave judgment to God, who ensures perfectly the righteous and timely repayment for wrongs.

This is what forgiveness is not: (1) Not excusing behavior: Forgiveness does not mean condoning sin, nor does it mean to keep on trusting those who do harm to us. (2) Not forgetting: Forgiveness does not mean erasing the memory of the event which brought us harm, but choosing not to dwell on it. (3) Not allowing abuse: Forgiveness does not mean to put oneself back into a harmful situation.

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For Catholics, there is also the Sacramental component of healing: Catholics can avail themselves of the 2 Sacraments of Healing: the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation and the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick. When the inability to forgive becomes an obsession, Catholics can avail themselves of the sacramental graces of the 2 Sacraments of Healing, where the healing grace of God comes to their aid.

PARISH ANNOUNCEMENTS

Attention children and parents: We will have Sunday School class today!

Today is potluck Sunday! This is a great activity for everyone to foster fellowship in our church community. Lunch begins after the 10:30am Mass. Please bring your favorite dish to share. If you are celebrating your birthday in the month of January, we have ordered a birthday cake for you.

Fr. Teng Lin will lead our Lenten Parish Mission on Saturday, March 14. The morning session will be from 10:00am to 12:00pm, break for lunch, and the afternoon session will be from 1:00-3:00pm. We invite everyone to join us in the evening for dinner with Fr. Teng, exact time and place TBA. If you would like to join us for dinner with Fr. Teng Lin, please sign-up with Antonia Fu. On Sunday, March 15, Fr. Teng will offer a sharing after the 10:30am Mass. Fr. Teng Lin comes from the Liaoning Diocese of China. He is studying pastoral theology at St. John's University in New York, focusing on pastoral companionship, spiritual reflection, and life integration.

The Archbishop's Annual Appeal for 2026 has begun. Our goal is \$3,500. For your convenience, you can make your donations through our church. If you wish to donate through our church, please make sure your check is payable to HNOJ and write AAA in the memo. Please use the AAA envelopes provided. Thank you for your support.

Did you know that you can make donations to the church directly from your retirement account? Each time you make a distribution from your retirement account, it is counted as taxable income. However, if you make a donation (up to \$108,000), to qualified charities through QCD (Qualified Charitable Distributions), these donations, although not tax-deductible, are excluded from taxable income. Many older retired donors use this strategy to lower their taxable income, but it also satisfies Required Minimum Distributions (RMDs) without increasing their adjusted gross income (AGI). Consult your financial advisor or contact your retirement account specialist.

The 10th year anniversary of the dedication of our church will be on November 19, 2027. We would like all church members to have their picture taken for the 10th year anniversary commemorative parish book. Please sign up with Tommy Puk.

Prayer List: Bian Meiyi, Chen Shupeng, Ni Yufang, Lydia Chen, David Wang, Chen Jianxin, Liang Chenjing and Xu Taicheng.

Mass Schedule	Confessions	Bible Study
Sundays 10:30 AM (Chinese)	By Appointment	Wednesdays 10:00 AM (Chinese)
Sundays 2:00 PM (English)		
	Anointing of the Sick	Eucharistic Adoration
Mondays 12:00 PM (English)	First Sundays after 10:30 AM Mass	Sundays 9:00 to 10:00 AM
Tuesdays 12:00 PM (English)	First Fridays after 7:00 PM Mass	
Wednesdays 12:00 PM (Chinese)		
Fridays 12:00 PM (English)		
First Friday 7:00 PM (English)		