



Father Gruner Answers Your Questions

General Absolution

Question: In our parish, at Easter and Christmas, we have a penitential (General Absolution) service where we go up to one of the priests standing around the altar and say, "I'm sorry for all my sins, please forgive me." I'm very concerned and I have written to our bishop, but I got a very unsatisfactory reply. Can you give a brief explanation, please?

[Father Gruner] First of all, the Pope and the Vatican have said a number of times that that so-called penitential service is not allowed. It should be stopped. The bishops in Canada, I know, have been told to do that, like bishops in the United States and other parts of the world.

The reason for that is the unchangeable Catholic doctrine of Confession. A lot of people think that Confession is not necessary for absolution, but they're mistaken. That is because Our Lord told the Apostles, "Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained." (Jn. 20:23)

Now unless the priest is like Padre Pio, who can know your sins before you tell him, the priest does not know whether to forgive your sins or retain them, unless you confess them. Confession is an integral part of the Sacrament of Penance. So, unless you go to Confession, you are most likely not forgiven your sins.

Now there is one exception to that, and that is when there is danger of death or an emergency. I will tell you what that means: It is not because there is an early Mass and everyone

wants to go and watch the television or for some other important thing to be done. The two kinds of exception are as follows: When there is an earthquake or some military danger of death, and there is not enough time to hear individual Confessions, then a priest can give General Absolution without first hearing and that he absolves on two conditions:

[1] that the people receiving absolution, first of all, are sorry for their sins, with a supernatural sorrow (not just with natural remorse) which is the most essential part, and firmly resolve not to commit them again,

[2] that they be resolved to fulfill the obligation to confess their sins at the first opportunity.

So without that condition, that you accept that responsibility to confess your sins — it is mortal sins we are talking about — at the first opportunity, the absolution doesn't work for you. So absolution without Confession is never a possibility. To receive absolution before Confession in the two emergency situations (I outline here, above and below.) you still **MUST** resolve

to go to Confession and do so at your first opportunity.

You cannot be given the exception to the rule if there is no danger of death, or one other exception, which I will now also give you.

When I was in the mission years ago, in Italy, there was an old priest, Father Merlot, who was 95 years old. He told me that he had been a missionary in Brazil, and he was on a pastoral visitation route of three years. He'd go from village to village. He'd spend three days in every village. Every day of those three days, he said Mass and then he heard confessions all day long and did nothing else except say his prayers and eat.

Then, after three days, he'd have to leave to go to the next village. And the people in these villages would not see him again until three more years had passed.

They wanted to be confessed, they lined up for Confession. But after three days of confessions, that was all he could hear. So in order to give them the graces of the Sacrament, he gave General Absolution to those he could not confess in those three days.

He did this under certain

conditions. It was on the understanding that they would be the first in line when he came back three years later and they would confess their sins then, that he would give them absolution.

But those conditions (i.e. such a lack of priests that penitents would have to wait one year or longer to go to Confession) don't prevail in North America or Europe, that I'm aware of. And so, General Absolutions are not allowed. Now, if there was a war or an earthquake here, it could happen then. In which case, then, it could be allowed. But other than that, General Absolution is not allowed. And it is not just the whim of the Pope, it happens to be the Divine Will, the institution of the sacrament.

Now all the Pope is doing, and his counselors there, when they rebuke this practice is because they have to, because it is not allowed by the teaching of Jesus Christ and His Church. And if you've been in one of those ceremonies, receiving General Absolution without Confession like that, if you had any mortal sin on your soul, consider yourself obliged — because you are — to confess those mortal sins at

your first opportunity. And if you don't, those sins still remain on your soul.

Nothing has changed in the Sacrament of Penance, except some confused people. Sister Lucy says that there are people in high places in the Church, that includes certain bishops and Cardinals, who are confused with a diabolical confusion. She says that in a number of her letters that she wrote in the 1970's. You can read them in *Frère Michel*.¹ You can also read it in *The Devil's Final Battle*,² in certain passages, as well.

Freemasonry, Communism and Communion in the Hand

Question: Pope Paul VI wrote the encyclical *Memoriale Domini*, condemning Communion in the hand. Why have we got it?

[Father Gruner] *The Devil's Final Battle* describes how the enemies of the Church have been trying to subvert the Church for 200 years. You have the testimony of both Masons and Communists saying they would do that.

The Masons Infiltrated the Church

I can tell you about Father Putti. Father Putti was the founder and editor of the magazine *Si Si No No* published in Rome, Italy. I met him in 1976. In twelve different issues of this paper, the headline would say, "Cardinal (and he named him) is a Mason." His article started describing what Cardinal so-and-so had done, and then he ended the article by saying, "He is a Mason. He joined on such and such a date. His code number is such and such. His code name is such and such," and he published it to the world.

Now, when Father Putti was threatened indirectly by somebody in the Vatican in a public announcement in the press, Father Putti published the next day in a press release saying, "Up to now, I only released the facts. But if I'm suspended or excommunicated, I will publish the documents." The very next day, a Vatican spokesman said, "There is no intention of suspending or excommunicating Father Putti." That was the end of the discussion.

The editor of the *L'Osservatore Romano* at the

time said something against Father Putti's reputation. He sued him in court and won, and the editor of the *L'Osservatore Romano* had to pay damages.

Father Putti said these things in public and stood by them. He said, "Before I published them, I brought them to the Holy Office, I showed them the documents, as is my duty in Canon Law. They never said to me, 'Don't publish them'; and so I published them." And he named about twelve Cardinals [as Masons].

One of them he did not call a Mason was Cardinal Garrone. That is why I went to see him. He didn't call Cardinal Garrone a Mason, but he said at the end of his article: "Now if Cardinal Garrone had been given a commission by an enemy of the Church, say for example, the head of the Masons or the devil himself, he could not have done a better job of destroying Catholic education around the world."

I said, "Father Putti, you don't say that Cardinal Garrone is a Mason, but you certainly imply it." He said, "That is correct, I do. I don't have the documents, so I can't claim that he is. He most



The great Popes of the past such as Blessed Pope Pius IX, Pope Leo XIII, Pope St. Pius X and Pope Pius XII would not recognize the new liturgy as an authentic Catholic Mass. Indeed, Father Gelineau said that, with the creation of the New Mass, the Roman Rite has been destroyed.

likely joined in France. I don't have access to their documents. But," he said, "look at his track record. There are lots of other clergy who are Masons who have left them or no longer do anything the Masons want them to do, and I leave them alone." But those who were continuing to promote the Masonic agenda in the Church, he was justified in publicly exposing. No one ever gainsaid when he named a Cardinal as a Mason. No one proved him wrong on any one of them. This was in

the mid-70's.

I did tell Father Putti, "Well, if you keep this up Father, you might end up dead one day." He said, "So much the better. Then I'll be a martyr. I'll bypass Purgatory and go straight to Heaven."

Are there Masons in the Church? There were then, and I expect there still are today. As Father Putti said, as Our Lord Himself said, "By their fruits you shall know them." (Mt. 7:16) So if they promote Masonic ideals, then it really doesn't matter so

much whether they are a card-carrying member and you can prove it, the fact is they are working for the Masons, and for the devil.

If you don't know much about Masonry, Father Fahey, a great Irish priest, wrote a lot about Masonry and how they would work against the Church and for the devil. But there are other books on it as well. Leo XIII said that the Masons' "god" is the devil, that they worship Lucifer in the 33rd degree. Some satanic people will make a distinction between Lucifer and Satan, but it is the same evil spirit.

Communism Infiltrated the Church

However, at the end of the day, they're not the only ones. Lenin said he would destroy the Church by infiltration. He said that quite publicly. You have the testimony of Bella Dodd, who was a Catholic, who became a Communist, who was converted back by Bishop Fulton Sheen to the Catholic Faith. And she testified in public that she personally sent more than one thousand young men into the seminaries to destroy the Church from within. And when she was giving her public testimony, she said,

"Already, some of them are bishops." And she was speaking in the late 40's and early 50's.

So, where did she send them? To what countries?

She was in the United States and she sent them to the United States to corrupt seminaries there, best I know. She was the Attorney General designate of the Communist Party in the early 40's. In case they ever got elected, she would become the Attorney General of the United States.

But she is not the only one. Manning Johnson gave some similar testimony. You'll find also a document published by the Chinese Communists, which was published in Cuba, which we have published in our *Fatima Crusader Issue #19*, outlining it in great detail.

I personally have met a priest who was a Communist. When I was in the seminary in Rome in the 1970's, he misunderstood my Italian – my Italian has since improved – he misunderstood something I said, so he told me what he was up to. So I didn't disabuse him of his idea of me; I pumped him for the next six hours for information. These people really exist.

There is a book called AA-

1025. Even if the book is in literary form, I think the substance of the book is true. There are various books on the subject.

Why Is This Happening?

It is happening because our enemies have a purpose. It just didn't happen by itself. That is why Our Lady of Fatima came in the first place, to tell us of the danger to the Church and that we had to pay attention, and we really can't do it all by ourselves.

There are some people who know this and a lot more than what I just said by the dint of their studies. I'm all in favor of them learning these things for themselves, but it is not enough to know the facts. You also have to know the solution, and without Our Lady we can't do it.

Even many Catholic priests who are traditional or orthodox, I don't think give enough place to Our Lady's role in the Church, because they don't appreciate, as Leo XIII said, all graces come to us from God the Father through the Sacred Humanity of Jesus Christ through the Blessed Virgin to us.

There is not one grace we receive that does not come

through Her hands.³ It has not yet been defined, in technical terms, that She is the Mediatrix of all graces, but it has been taught by the Popes for two hundred years. It could be defined tomorrow, theologically. The people may not be prepared, but it is the teaching of the Catholic Church by the Ordinary and Universal Magisterium.

When you apply the truth of that doctrine, then you realize the central importance of the Blessed Virgin's role in salvation. You know that outside of God, there is no salvation. St. Paul says in Hebrews 11:6: No man can come to God unless he believes that God exists and rewards those who seek Him. Outside the Sacred Humanity of Jesus Christ, there is no salvation. There is no name under Heaven by which men are saved, except the Name of Jesus. (Acts 4:12)

Also, there is no salvation outside the Blessed Virgin Mary. You'll find that proven quite thoroughly by St. Alphonsus Liguori. He quotes many saints on the subject in *The Glories of Mary*. There is a chapter on that. After that, outside the Catholic Church, there is no salvation.

The order of things is:

God; Our Lord Jesus Christ in His Sacred Humanity; the Blessed Virgin Mary; then the Church, in that order. The Blessed Virgin is not just for the pious. Everyone must be devoted to Our Lady to save his soul. Being a child of Mary is more important than being a child of the Church, and being a child of the Church is necessary to save your soul.

What Makes You Catholic?

Don't confuse being a child of the Church with the false opinion that to remain as a child of the Church you must obey every command that a priest, bishop, Cardinal or Pope gives you when the command is sinful or outside the God-given limits of authority of the person who commands you.

What makes you a Catholic is, first of all, your belief in the Catholic Faith and holding on to it; secondly, your Baptism into the Church; and third, it is your recognition of legitimate authority. But if a priest, including myself, or a bishop or a Cardinal or a Pope were to tell you to do something contrary to the Law of God, you are not being disobedient if you don't obey him, because your obedience is first

given to God. You must obey God, rather than men, says St. Peter. (Acts 5:29) That is the distinction that many theologians stumble on in practice, but I'm sure they'd all agree with me in principle.

Some people told me recently, "Well, we're not subject to the Church or the bishop. We have a Traditional chapel." I said, "Having a chapel doesn't make you disobedient. The bishop does not have the right to forbid you to have a Tridentine Mass. That is established in law." All authority, even the Pope's authority, is limited. Even God Himself limits His authority. He does that because He is God and because He is reasonable. But certainly, if God's authority is limited, certainly everyone else underneath Him is limited. And that is the whole purpose of the law of the Church: to define who has authority in what matters, and how far.

That is something that needs to be clarified, because it is not somebody saying that you are not Catholic that makes you not Catholic. It is either you not being baptized when you know you should be baptized, not keeping the Catholic Faith, or not recognizing legitimate authority. It

is not disobeying this or that command that is beyond the authority of the person giving it. You are Catholic when you obey God, even if you are not obeying men.

The first English martyrs were several Carthusian monks who were martyred under the cloud of “disobedience”. Their superiors in France in the Charter House had told them to submit to Henry VIII. I’m sure the intention of their Superiors was very good, but they weren’t informed. The Carthusians that went to the gallows on May 4, 1535 were disobedient to their immediate superiors. However, they died martyrs and are canonized today for it.

It is important to make proper distinctions. Certainly, they died as Catholics and they died as obedient sons of their founder and obedient sons of the Church, but not to human appearances for those who didn’t study the matter. **FC**

Notes: (1) *The Whole Truth About Fatima*, Vol. III: *The Third Secret*, (Immaculate Heart Publications, Buffalo, New York, 1990), pp. 749-762. (2) *The Devil’s Final Battle*, (The Missionary Association, Terryville, Connecticut, 2002), p. 34. (3) Thus is confirmed that law of merciful meditation of which We have spoken, and which St. Bernardine of Siena thus expresses: “Every grace granted to man has three degrees in order; for by God it is communicated to Christ, from Christ it passes to the Virgin, and from the Virgin it descends to us.” *Jucunda Semper Expectatione*, §5.



We see a fine example of children serving Our Lady of Fatima and spreading Her soul-saving Message.