

'TEST YOUR FAITH KNOWLEDGE' QUIZ FOR ADULTS

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CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

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(Scroll down to pages 2 & 3 for the correct answers)

1. After the Second Vatican Council in 1965, what was called 'Confession' or 'Penance' before, became known as the 'Sacrament of Reconciliation'.
2. If we have not broken any of the 10 Commandments, our sins are not serious.
3. The Bible teaches us that the authority to forgive sins in the name of Christ was given by Jesus to His Church.
4. Different circumstances must be considered to determine if our sinful actions are very serious, less serious or not sinful at all.
5. If while attending Mass we realize we have committed serious sins then we must always refrain from going to Holy Communion until we go to Confession.
6. When we confess we must always tell the priest the exact number of times that we committed certain sins in order to be absolved and forgiven.
7. One aspect that makes a sinful action very serious is malicious and wilful intent to do physical, emotional, moral and/or spiritual harm.
8. A memorized Act of Contrition should be recited immediately after we confess our sins in the Confessional Room, and before exiting the Confessional.
9. The Penance that the priest gives to us in Confession is meant to actually or symbolically make up for the hurt or destruction that our sins have caused.
10. 'Absolution' is the name for the part of the Sacrament which forgives our sins.
11. A priest or Bishop can confess his sins to himself privately and then give himself Penance and Absolution.
12. When we are baptized as adults all our sins are forgiven without Confession.
13. The 'Seal of Confession' refers to the obligation of the Confessor to never reveal to anyone what he hears in the Confession, with no exceptions.
14. If the Seal of Confession is violated, the guilty priest is reprimanded by the Bishop.
15. Catholics can go to Confession, at any time and in any place.

CORRECT ANSWERS TO OUR QUIZ

- 1. TRUE** It was intended to remind us of the fact that when we sin, we not only hurt ourselves but we weaken the entire Community of Christians by our sinful actions. This Sacrament, then, does not only forgive our individual sins but it also reconciles the sinner with the Christian Community (the Church) that he/she has hurt by the sin.
- 2. FALSE** Christians must not only consider the 10 Commandments but also Christ's 8 Beatitudes as well as the moral teachings of Jesus in the Gospels. Going against these teachings may also result in committing serious sin.
- 3. TRUE** In the Gospel of John (20: 22-23) we read that after the risen Christ appeared to his Apostles who were gathered together in the upper room, ' He breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the Holy Spirit. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them and whose sins You shall retain, they are retained."
- 4. TRUE** For instance, to unintentionally kill someone in self defense is not the same as to maliciously kill someone in cold blood. The first is not a sin while the other is a grave and serious sin. The circumstances may also mitigate the gravity of a sinful action.
- 5. FALSE** This depends on the person's disposition. If you sincerely feel that you need to receive Communion at this time for your spiritual well being, then simply express sorrow to God for your sins, recite an Act of Contrition to yourself, receive Holy Communion and resolve to confess your sins as soon as you can after the Mass.
- 6. FALSE** We can simply say, "often", or "occasionally" if we cannot remember the number of times. The reason we give the numbers is to give the Confessor an idea as to whether the sinful action is a once only mistake or whether it is a repetitive and habitual sin that can lead to more serious sins in the future. To not remember the exact number of times you've sinned does not invalidate your forgiveness.
- 7. TRUE** The motive for the action usually indicates whether the action is seriously sinful, less sinful or not sinful at all. Remember, "if the motive is evil then the action is usually evil".
- 8. FALSE** Either an expression of sorrow for sin in one's own words or a memorized Act of Contrition, is required for the Sacrament but either one can be recited in the Confessional or afterwards in the Church or elsewhere.

9. **TRUE** In a small way it is done to right the wrong or hurt that the sin has caused.
10. **TRUE** The words of Absolution express this very clearly. They are:
"God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of His Son, has reconciled the world to Himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins. Through the Ministry of the Church, may God grant you pardon and peace, and I now absolve you and forgive all your sins, in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit". Amen.
11. **FALSE** Priests or Bishops or even the Pope himself are all obliged to confess their sins like all other Catholics, to another priest or Bishop for penance and absolution.
12. **TRUE** Baptism does not only give us new life and gift us with Faith and membership in the Church and Parish but it also frees us from Original sin with which we are born. It also forgives or "washes away" all other sins that we may have committed in life. Obviously infants who have not yet committed personal sins have no need for this kind of forgiveness but adults do and are therefore forgiven Original Sin and all other sins that they may have committed before their Baptism, without confession.
13. **TRUE** More specifically, the "Seal" of Confession is the obligation and responsibility of the Confessor to never reveal any aspect of a person's confession to anyone else, under any circumstances. The "seal" binds the priest to keep secret what he specifically hears in a Sacramental Confession or to say anything which might conceivably lead others to associate a confessed sin with the sinner who confessed it to him.
14. **FALSE** The offending priest is certainly reprimanded but the moral crime is punished more severely than that, to safeguard the inviolability of the Sacramental Seal. So serious is it for a confessor to directly violate this seal of confidentiality that, if he does, the priest himself would be automatically excommunicated from the Church, a penalty which would take away his privilege to celebrate Mass or any other Sacrament and to strip him of his position as a priest. This type of excommunication can only be absolved by the Pope himself. If the excommunication is lifted by the Pope, then the priest's life-long penance might be never to be able to hear Confessions again.
15. **TRUE** One can confess his/her sins at any time and in any place and, as often as he/she needs the Sacrament. However, individuals must be careful to avoid scrupulosity and not feel they have to confess every hour of every day to ensure forgiveness or, laxity, feeling that they never need confession because they are already perfect in every way!