

Pope Francis Speaks about Lent and Confession

In his morning homily today, Pope Francis implored us, *“God is able to transform us. He is able to change our heart, but it’s necessary to take the first step: to return. It’s not to go to God, no: it’s to return home.”*

Lent, the Pope pointed out, always points to this conversion of heart that, in the Christian custom, is embodied in the Sacrament of Confession.

“It’s the moment,” Pope Francis said, *“to let God whiten us, God purify us, God embrace us.”*

What If I Cannot Leave Home...

The Holy Father recognized that before Easter, many faithful go to Confession to meet with God again.

“However,” he acknowledged, *“many will say to me today: ‘But, Father, where can I find a priest, a confessor, because one can’t leave home? And I want to make peace with the Lord, I want Him to embrace me, that my Papa embrace me . . . What can I do if I can’t find priests?’”*

“Do what the Catechism says,” the Pope stressed, *“it’s very clear: if you don’t find a priest to hear your Confession, talk with God, He is your Father, and tell Him the truth: ‘Lord, I’ve done this, and that, and that . . . I’m sorry,’ and ask Him for forgiveness with all your heart, with the Act of Contrition and promise Him: ‘Afterwards I will go to Confession but forgive me now.’”*

If you do all this, Pope Francis said, *you will return to God’s grace immediately. As the Catechism teaches, he reminded, you yourself can approach God’s forgiveness without having a priest at hand.*

“Think: it’s the moment! And this is the right moment, the opportune moment. An Act of Contrition well made, Pope Francis said, *will make “our soul become white as snow.*

“It would be good if today this “return” resounded in our ears, “return to your Papa, return to your Father,” Pope Francis said, *underscoring: “He is waiting for you and He will celebrate you.”*

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