

Day 37

PILGRIMAGE OF GRACE

RECONCILIATION



John 20: 21-23

Jesus said to them again, "Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you." And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, "Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained."



Fathers Of The Church on Confession

Hippolytus (215 AD, Apostolic Tradition).

"[The bishop conducting the ordination of the new bishop shall pray:] God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. . . . Pour forth now that power which comes from you, from your royal Spirit, which you gave to your beloved Son, Jesus Christ, and which he bestowed upon his holy apostles . . . and grant this your servant, whom you have chosen for the episcopate, [the power] to feed your holy flock and to serve without blame as your high priest, ministering night and day to propitiate unceasingly before your face and to offer to you the gifts of your holy Church, and by the Spirit of the high priesthood to have the authority to forgive sins, in accord with your command"

Origen (248 AD. Homilies on Leviticus)

"[A final method of forgiveness], albeit hard and laborious [is] the remission of sins through penance, when the sinner . . . does not shrink from declaring his sin to a priest of the Lord and from seeking medicine, after the manner of him who say, 'I said, "To the Lord I will accuse myself of my iniquity"'"

Basil the Great (374 AD. Rules Briefly Treated)

"It is necessary to confess our sins to those to whom the dispensation of God's mysteries is entrusted. Those doing penance of old are found to have done it before the saints. It is written in the Gospel that they confessed their sins to John the Baptist [Matt. 3:6], but in Acts [19:18] they confessed to the apostles"

Cyprian of Carthage (251 AD, Letters)

“Of how much greater faith and salutary fear are they who . . . confess their sins to the priests of God in a straightforward manner and in sorrow, making an open declaration of conscience. . . . I beseech you, brethren, let everyone who has sinned confess his sin while he is still in this world, while his confession is still admissible, while the satisfaction and remission made through the priests are still pleasing before the Lord” (ibid., 28).

“[S]inners may do penance for a set time, and according to the rules of discipline come to public confession, and by imposition of the hand of the bishop and clergy receive the right of Communion. [But now some] with their time [of penance] still unfulfilled . . . they are admitted to Communion, and their name is presented; and while the penitence is not yet performed, confession is not yet made, the hands of the bishop and clergy are not yet laid upon them, the Eucharist is given to them; although it is written, ‘Whosoever shall eat the bread and drink the cup of the Lord unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord’ [1 Cor. 11:27]”

“But I wonder that some are so obstinate as to think that repentance is not to be granted to the lapsed, or to suppose that pardon is to be denied to the penitent, when it is written, ‘Remember whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works’ [Rev. 2:5], which certainly is said to him who evidently has fallen, and whom the Lord exhorts to rise up again by his deeds [of penance], because it is written, ‘Alms deliver from death’ [Tob. 12:9]”

