

a year. In Oberriet, my home village, those who only did the barest minimum of Catholic duty were called 'horse rogues' (because those who are like horse thieves go to Confession and Communion only at Easter). By way of illustration a little anecdote: As my father died, such a 'horse rogue' came into our aunt's shop saying: „Hey, that's a real shame: this Paul, he should have stayed. GOD could have better taken me!“ My aunt, rather a straightforward person, retorted: „Well, excuse me, but the SAVIOUR is not a rag-and-bone gatherer, you know!“

Confession – Spring for the Heart

Is it not something wonderful when at this time early in the morning the sun is already shining, the birds are chirping their concert ... Now, after such a long time of misty, gloomy and cold weather. The mind really sighs with relief again. You will surely feel that as well. I am very pleased because as a result people also are not as frosty, as gloomy as they used to be because they are becoming more sensitive and softer in their hearts again. My beloved, it is exactly the same with a Confession: Your mind can heave anew a sigh of relief, your heart once more will be open to GOD's grace, joy and warmth can come in.

Excerpt from the sermon of 1 March 2009



Schwert-Bischof
JESU CHRISTI

**Be blessed by GOD TRINITY,
the + FATHER and the + SON
and the + HOLY GHOST. Amen!**

Schwert-Bischof
JESU CHRISTI
sb.

Sermon

of the *Schwert-Bischof*

The Sacrament of Confession Medicine for Body and Soul

My beloved, a striking phenomenon of our time is: the less confession is heard, the more the waiting rooms of the psychologists and psychotherapists are filled. They may well listen to their patients, explain many a misery, even comfort them and give them some good advice, yet one thing they are incapable of doing: setting people free from their guilt. So they are not really set free. More than 70% of all diseases are a result of sin, which is in man. Also imperfections and man having no or only a lukewarm relation to GOD cause disease, distress and misery. The psychotherapist may well be able to pep you up a bit, but he cannot release you from this burden of guilt and sin. It is granted only to the ordained priest by saying: „I absolve you of your sins ...“

Penitential Devotions Are not a Sacrament

The penitential devotions common in many places cannot replace the sacrament of Confession. It may well arouse repentance and good intentions, but forgiveness of grave and death-bringing sins is only possible with a priest in an individual Confession. The SAVIOUR says: „Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.“ (John 20,23) But how could the priest in penitential devotions say to a single person: „You there, at the back, in the fifth pew, your sins are not forgiven!“ without hearing the confession of his sins? And if the sins of this person were known to him, he would never be allowed to uncover them before all those present. „To retain sins“ would be the priest's duty if, for instance, it is a case of adultery and there is no resolution to avoid it. In penitential devotions, the priest cannot comply with the command of JESUS to forgive sins or retain them.

The majority of those entrusted to me fortunately come to holy Confession once every four weeks or even more often, but some only once or twice