Sin and Forgiveness. A Monthly four-minute retreat for Parents, Alumni and Faculty

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Introduction

In a document of the Society of Jesus, Jesuits are described as "sinners and yet called". Even Pope Francis has called himself a sinner. It is okay to be a sinner. Sin has touched all of our lives. So, what is it? Sin is choosing someone or something over our relationship with God and love our brothers and sisters. These primary relationships are set aside and short term wants, desires, or pleasures determine our choices. We create idols we bow before. On the human level when a relationship gets broken, we hurt, we experience loss, we are confused, we become lost. Sin leaves the same footprints in our hearts,

All is not lost

All of us can feel guilty and sometimes punish ourselves when we sin. And most of us find it even more difficult to forgive ourselves. We can turn to God who is always waiting for his prodigal sons and daughters to return. Jesus issued an invitation that has touched hearts for ages: "Come to me all you who labor and are burdened and I will give you rest." (Matthew 11.28) The rest Jesus promises is not a nap, but peace for our restless souls when we have sinned. Jesus' consistent message is forgiveness and mercy have no limits. Forgiveness is another way God loves us. "Ask and you shall receive."

Scripture Hosea 11.1-4

When Israel was a child I loved him, and I called my son out of Egypt. But the more I called them, the further they went from me, they have offered sacrifices to the Baals and set their offering smoking before the idols. I myself taught Ephraim to walk, I took them in my arms, yet they have not understood that I was the one looking after them with leading strings of love…We will not longer say "Our God to the work of our hands." I will heal their disloyalty; I will love them freely."

Reflection Questions

1) Do I believe that God has been this caring for me? Recall some instances.
2) Do I believe that holiness is not being sinless—no one is--- but it is reducing the amount of time between when I sin and turn to God for forgiveness?

Action

Listen to song, "Hosea," by Gregory Norbert, OSB, "Come back to me with all your heart, don't let fear keep us apart."