

"Dear children! Also today, with great joy in my heart, I call you to follow me and to listen to my messages. Be joyful carriers of peace and love in this peaceless world. I am with you and I bless you all with my Son Jesus, the King of Peace. Thank you for having responded to my call."

—The 25th Day [June 2008] Of Each Month,
The Blessed Virgin Gives A Message To The Visionary Marija,
That Is To Be Given To The World.



Forgiving Yourself

by June Klins

One year on the feastday of Mary Magdalene, July 22, I was attending a St. Ann novena, and the priest, Fr. John, spoke about forgiveness. He said that Mary Magdalene trusted God enough to accept forgiveness and she also moved ahead to FORGIVE HERSELF. He said that it is very important in the spiritual life to forgive yourself, and that many people torture themselves with their sins of the past.

Father John said we must forgive ourselves so to accept God's forgiveness and love so that we can respond to God's love. He said that we are all guilty of doing things we regret, but God's mercy and forgiveness are beyond our comprehension. He gave 7 steps to self-forgiveness:

1. Decide to forgive yourself. This is the hardest step. No one can do this for you. It is an act of the will, not a feeling. No matter how horrendous the sin, you need to take this first step.
2. Forgiveness of self is tied to the image we have of God. Two thirds of the Gospel is about forgiveness. God forgives us if we forgive each other. If we see God as a loving Father it is easier.
3. Make use of the sacrament of Reconciliation - no matter how long it has been or how bad the sin(s).
4. You need to deal with guilt in a healthy way. If you still feel guilty for something you did 30 or 40 years ago and have confessed it, that is not healthy. When we deal with guilt in a sensible way it leads to self-forgiveness. Healthy guilt can actually bring us closer to God.
5. When the steps above are difficult, always take it to the crucified Jesus. Ask for the grace to forgive yourself and forget forever. Say things like "Father, forgive me for what I have done." The grace is already given but we have to ACCEPT it.

6. In the New Testament Jesus tells us we will be forgiven as we forgive others (not an Old Testament virtue). Some of us should bite our lips when, during the "Our Father" we say that part.

7. Forgiving ourselves is a PROCESS, and we have to be patient with ourselves. We have to persevere. This is especially hard for people who have committed sins against life, such as an abortion. It CAN be forgiven in the sacrament of Reconciliation and this is the place to start the process of self-forgiveness.

In summary, Father John said to forgive yourself for the sins of the past because it is essential for a healthy spiritual life. On June 25, 1988, Our Lady said, *"Surrender yourself to God so that He may heal you, console you and forgive everything inside you which is a hindrance on the way of love."*