

**I Am Catholic** - We have the most sources of grace and healing to avoid spiritual death.

"The victor shall not be harmed by the second death." (Rev 2:11) "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Rom 6:23) "For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live." (Rom 8:13) "For since death came through a human being, the resurrection of the dead came also through a human being." (I Cor 15:21)

Many people fear the death of the body so much that they focus very little on the eternal consequences of sin. People who are ready for Heaven have very little to fear when it comes to death of the body. They have chosen Christ, placed their lives in His Hands, and with His grace, sin less and less. People who are rejecting Christ by their words and actions—by their following the ways and temptations of the world—have much to be worried about.

Often they don't realize it because their sins cause them to become spiritually hardened, and numb and deaf to Christ's call to repentance. They convince themselves their actions and thoughts are not sinful and focus on bodily pleasure while ignoring the soul. Their spiritual life is dying and they are spiritually deteriorating, but either they have no worries or subconscious worries they cannot explain.

"There they are, in great terror, in terror such as has not been! For God will scatter the bones of the ungodly; they will be put to shame, for God has rejected them." (Ps 53:5-6)

"Mortal sin is a radical possibility of human freedom, as is love itself. It results in the loss of charity and the privation of sanctifying grace, that is, of the state of grace. If it is not redeemed by repentance and God's forgiveness, it causes exclusion from Christ's kingdom and the eternal death of hell, for our freedom has the power to make choices for ever, with no turning back." (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 1861)

One of the key gifts of grace and healing is the Sacrament of Reconciliation. When we confess our sins with sorrow and contrition, Christ forgives them and heals the damage of sin. He also helps us to change our lives, to more readily resist and avoid sin, and more easily cooperate with his grace and Divine Will. "Mortal sin, by attacking the vital principle within us - that is, charity - necessitates a new initiative of God's mercy and a conversion of heart which is normally accomplished within the setting of the sacrament of reconciliation." (1856)

Another gift that helps us avoid spiritual death is the Eucharist. We believe the Eucharist contains the graces of all the other sacraments. "The other sacraments, and indeed all ecclesiastical ministries and works of the apostolate, are bound up with the Eucharist and are oriented toward it. For in the blessed Eucharist is contained the whole spiritual good of the Church, namely Christ himself." (1324)

Other spiritual gifts and sources of grace are the other sacraments, the Bible, 2,000 years of Church teaching, the teaching office of the Church that guides us in matters of morality and faith, writings of the saints and other spiritual treasures, devotions and devotionals, religious articles that inspire us and are physical reminders of God's presence and His grace, the faith community, ministries and organizations of the Church, and many other things. No other denomination or belief system comes close to having such a richness of God's gifts of grace to help us follow Christ to Heaven and avoid the things that bring eternal death.