

SIN.

ACTUAL SIN. - THE CAPITAL SIN.

- 1.** *Actual* sin is every sin which we ourselves commit, whence it is also known as *personal* sin.
- 2.** It is called *actual*, because in its commission our will is the sole agent, that is to say, it is an *act* of our will, in this respect differing from *original sin*, of which we have contracted the guilt quite irrespectively of any act of our own.
- 3.** We render ourselves guilty of *actual* sin in four several ways - by thought, word, deed or omission.
- 4.** Thus to judge rashly is to sin *in thought*; to blaspheme is to sin *by word*; to do servile work on Sunday is to sin *by deed*; and not to communicate at Easter is to sin *by omission*.
- 5.** Actual sin is distinguished into *mortal* sin and *venial* sin.
- 6.** By committing *mortal* sin, we lose the grace of God and deserve everlasting damnation.
- 7.** It is termed *mortal* because it kills the soul by depriving it of the *life* of grace and its punishment is the eternal *death* of hell.
- 8.** For a sin to be a *mortal* it must be of grave matter with clear knowledge of the guilt and full consent of the will.
- 9.** Forgiveness of mortal sin is obtained through the Sacrament of Penance, or, in the absence of a priest, by an act of perfect contrition (see. page 22, para. 4) coupled with a sincere desire of going to confession at the first opportunity.
- 10.** Venial sin is an offence which diminishes sanctifying grace within us and merits some temporary punishment in this world or in Purgatory.
- 11.** We commit a venial sin whenever we disobey God in some minor matter, or, though the matter be in itself grave, full consent of the will is absent.

12. Venial sin also is to be carefully avoided, 1stly, because it is an offence against God; 2ndly., because it often leads to mortal sin; and 3rdly., because there is punishment for it in this world and in the next.

13. Venial sins are forgiven not only in the sacrament of Penance, but also either by an act of perfect contrition, or by hearing mass with devotion, or by the giving of alms, or by any good work done while in a state of grace.

14. There are seven *capital* sins, viz. Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy and Sloth. See also p. 17.

15. They are called *capital* sins because they are the sources from which all other sins take their rise.

16. A capital sin may be mortal or venial according as the subject of the sin is grave or of slight importance or there is more or less consent of the will in its commission.

Pride

17. Pride is an inordinate self-esteem, whereby we consider ourselves better than others and wish to put ourselves above them.

18. The first to commit the sin of pride was Satan when he rose in revolt against God.

19. The manifestations of pride are ostentation, presumption, hypocrisy, disobedience and contempt of others. The proud man seeks to parade the good qualities which he thinks he possesses: that is *ostentation*. There is nothing he thinks he is not capable of: that is *presumption*. He likes to appear better than he is: that is *hypocrisy*. He disobeys his parents and his superiors. He looks down on his equals and inferiors.

Explanation of the Plate.

20. *The main picture* depicts the battle between the good and the bad angels. In the middle we see St. Michael, the leader of the good angels,

engaged in single combat with Lucifer, the leader of the rebel angels. This latter and his followers had begun the battle shouting: *I will be like the Most High!* (Is. XVI, 14.) St. Michael and his host of good angels shouted back in defiance: *Who is like to God?* And immediately Lucifer and his hosts were precipitated into the depths of hell.

In the small picture on the left we see the Tower of Babel, which the descendants of Noah wished to raise up to heaven itself that their name might become famous. But God, to punish their stupid pride, « confounded their tongue » and « scattered them from that place into all lands », « and therefore the name thereof was called *Babel* », i. e. *Confusion*. (Gen, XI.)

On the right we see the Pharisee and the Publican of Christ's parable. The Pharisee, standing up, prayed with so much pride that he dared to consider himself better than every one else. The Publican, on the other hand, assuming a humble posture, prayed with infinite self-effacement and sorrow. His prayer justified him before God, whereas that of the Pharisee only served to aggravate his guilt, « because », as Jesus said, « every one that exalteth himself shall be humbled. » (Luke XVIII, 14.)
