

RCIA

RCIA HO Class 4 Adam and Eve and the Original Sin (begin reading the story in Genesis 2:16).

When God created Adam and put him in the Garden of Eden He told him that he could eat the fruit from any of the trees in the garden except the fruit of the Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil. After God created Eve to be Adam's wife the serpent came and tempted Eve telling her that it would be good if she ate from the Tree of the Knowledge of good and evil. Eve knew that it was wrong, but the serpent convinced her to do it anyway. She did, and convinced Adam to eat it as well. After eating it, they knew that they had sinned and hid themselves from God.

God came to visit them in the garden and asked them this question, "Where are you?" Of course, God knew where they were. He was really saying to them, "Wherever you are, you are no longer with me". By disobeying God, they sinned against Him and put themselves out of communion with Him. Adam blamed Eve and Eve blamed the serpent. Because they were no longer in communion with Him, God put them out of the garden and locked the gates, placing angels with fiery swords at the gates so they could not get back in and eat from the Tree of Life and live forever. He did not want them to eat from the Tree of Life and live forever out of communion with Him.

This stain of Original Sin was passed on to their sons Cain and Abel. Cain was jealous of his brother Abel because God was pleased with Abel's sacrifice, but not with Cain's. We don't really know why because the Bible doesn't tell us. Out of jealousy, Cain murdered his brother Abel and then lied to God about not knowing where Abel was after he had killed him.

These two parts of the Book of Genesis show us that sin has now entered the world and will be passed on to everyone who is born. We call this Original Sin. St. Paul refers to this Original Sin in the Letter to the Romans (5:12) when he explains that sin entered the world through one man (Adam) but the forgiveness of sins entered the world through one man also (Jesus).

This means that no one could enter heaven (the Garden) until Jesus came into the world and brought grace and forgiveness because He was God made man. All those people like Moses and Abraham and the other followers of God in the Old Testament had to wait after they died for Jesus to come and open the gates of Heaven by His suffering, death, and Resurrection before they could get in.

The ordinary way that this stain of Original Sin is taken from us is by the Sacrament of Baptism. Baptism puts us back into communion with God. Then we are able to spend the rest of our lives in communion with God by using the other sacraments, especially Holy Communion and Confession.

Confession puts us back in communion with God when we sin after we have been baptized. Holy Communion feeds our souls and makes them strong and healthy as regular food feeds our bodies and makes them strong and healthy.

We can easily feel when our bodies are not strong and healthy because of a lack of food, but it is not always so easy to feel when our souls are not strong and healthy because of a lack of the grace (soul food), which comes to us from the sacraments.

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RCIA WKSH Class 4 Adam and Eve Genesis chapters 2-3 (BCL#5)

- 1) The story of Adam and Eve is well-known to most people, but many do not know the lessons that the story teaches us. God put Adam in the Garden of Eden and explained to him that he could eat the fruit of any of the trees in the garden except the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God said that if he ate from that tree he would die. But the serpent tricked Eve into eating from the tree and Eve convinced Adam to do it, too. This sin of Adam and Eve is called the Original Sin or the First Sin. If you had to name Adam and Eve's sin in one word, what word would you choose?
- 2) After Adam and Eve ate the fruit that they were not supposed to eat because God had told them not to eat it, they knew they were naked (which they had not known before) and they hid themselves from Him. Why do you think they hid themselves from God?
- 3) When God came to visit them in the Garden after they sinned and were hiding, he called out to them saying, "Where are you?" Of course, God knew where they were because He is God and knows everything. What do you think God meant when He asked, "Where are you?" even though He knew where they were?
- 4) When Adam answered God (because he knew he could not hide from God) he blamed Eve for making him sin. Eve then blamed the serpent for making her eat the fruit when she wasn't supposed to do it. You don't have to write down your answer to this question, but have you ever blamed somebody else for what you did wrong?
- 5) After all this God kicked Adam and Eve out of the Garden and locked the gates so they could not get back in. Remembering that all of this took place long before the time of Jesus, if the Garden of Eden represents Heaven, why could Adam and Eve not get back in?
- 6) What do we call the sin that Adam and Eve brought into the world that everyone is stained by when they are born into this world?
- 7) How is the guilt of that sin washed away from our souls?
- 8) When we sin after we have been baptized, how do we have our sins forgiven by God?
- 9) Adam and Eve (and we) were created in the image and likeness of God. This means we have a free will, and a rational (thinking) and immortal (undying) soul. Our free will makes it possible for us to sin or not to sin. What else does it make possible for us to do?
- 10) Why do you think God made us like this?