

Betrayal and Confession (Metropolitan Anthony Bloom)

[Ξένες γλώσσες / In English](#)



In the Name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Continuing my short sermons on Confession, I would like to say that in the first place Confession is an encounter and a reconciliation. It is our encounter with Christ Whose love to us has no limits, Who loves us with all His life and all His death, Who never turns away from us, but from Whom we sometimes, perhaps even often, walk away. It is an encounter that can be pure joy when during a lapse of time nothing separated us from Christ, when our friendship was pure, was whole, when our friendship wasn't broken by any unfaithfulness. Then we can come to Christ joyfully, happily. We can come to Confession and say, 'Lord! Thank You for your friendship. Thank You for your love, thank You for all that You are. Thank You that you allow me to come near you; thank You for everything. O, my Joy! O, my Happiness! Accept me and bless me to commune to Your Holy Mysteries. That is: to unite to You even more perfectly, for my joy to be perfect.'



It may happen. Perhaps it doesn't happen often. But sometimes such an encounter can fill all our life, be an inspiration for all our life, and give us the strength and power to live.

But more often we come to Christ after some kind of separation. Sometimes the separation was not a cruel one; not inimical; sometimes the separation was because we have forgotten Him, life has submerged us, we didn't have time to remember Him. There was so much in life. And all of a sudden we remember that apart from all that was our inspiration, our joy for some time, there is Christ, there is such a friend Who never forgets us, from Whom we walked away and Who is now alone. Then we must hurry to Him and say, 'Lord, forgive - I was submerged by life, I was carried away by this, by that and something else. Accept me back. You know that this enthusiasm is superficial but that the true thing is our friendship.' But before we can say that, we must ask ourselves a question: is it true that my friendship with Christ is deep enough so that my temporary forgetfulness cannot overshadow, even less destroy it?

But it happens that we have sinned before God. We have sinned by unfaithfulness not in something small but in something very deep. It can be a moment that has separated us in a very deep manner. You remember what happened when Christ was facing the Sanhedrin. A servant came to Peter and said, 'But this one also was with Him!' And Peter became afraid. He was frightened by what they would do to him because of the fact that he was with Christ; and he began to swear that, 'No, I

do not know this man!’ He could no longer stay in this yard and see through the window Christ undergoing judgement. And at that moment Christ turned His head and looked at Peter. The All-Knowing Son of God didn’t hear with His ears those words but they hit Him in His soul: one of His nearest disciples had declared that he didn’t know Him, didn’t want to know Him, that he preferred life, that he preferred tranquility. This look hit Peter in his soul in such a manner that he began to weep and went out.

It was just one moment of radical, frightful unfaithfulness. And later on, when Mary Magdalene met the Saviour in the garden after His resurrection, He instructed her, ‘Go to My disciples and Peter and tell them that I am risen,’ – because Peter couldn’t any more consider himself as one of the disciples, he was a traitor. He had renounced Christ, and that is why Christ mentioned him especially for him to know that he was not rejected, that the disciples fled away in fear, but without renouncing, and he fled away and renounced; but the love of Christ held him firmly. He can meet Him face to face. Oh, he can fall down at His feet, he can ask for forgiveness, but he knows that he is loved as he was loved in the most faithful times.