

I think it now becomes painfully obvious, that the vast majority of people who call themselves Catholics, have long ago given up the practice of sacramental confession.

And it is really a tragedy. Why? Because the sacrament of penance is a treasury of graces, a spiritual strength for us and our daily struggle against sin and temptation. Saint Pope John Pope II once made the statement that the great sin of our age is the denial of sin.

You see, it seems sin is one of those things that we don't want to talk about anymore. That word sin became a dirty little word, so that we don't even want to mention it anymore even from the pulpit. It seems like the more sin there is today, the less we say about it, and the less we speak against it. And this is ridiculous. This is theological insanity. It's a spiritual suicide. Because ultimately, there is only one thing that can separate us from God. And that is sin. To conceal the reality of sin is to play devil games, to fall into his trap. Today there is dangerous modern popular psychology and catholic theological fault especially in academic circles. Any discussion of sin, anything that might cause feelings of guilt or discomfort is rejected. Anything like that - is out of favor, out of practice.

St. Paul once wrote: "The day will come when men will no longer tolerate sound doctrine." The day will come when people will chase after teachers who will tickle their ears. I would suggest to you that that day has now arrived. That day is now upon us. We don't want to talk about sin. That is the word that seems to be passing from our theological vocabulary. Today, we would rather talk about how to feel good about ourselves. How to build up our self-esteem. How to maximize our human potential. How to achieve self-actualization. How to find our ultimate happiness, self-fulfillment and contentment here and now in this life. It seems like most people today are entirely concerned about what's happening in this life and they want to forget completely about what is going to happen in the life to come (in eternity). We tend to see time as being more important than eternity. We don't want to hear the truth. Because truth makes us feel uncomfortable at times. Because the truth places moral demands on us. The truth sometimes demands that we change, change our lives. Change our ways. Change our hearts back to God. There are many priests today, who will no longer speak out against great moral evils of our time from the pulpit. They will not speak out against sin for fear of offending. Especially sins against the 6th and the 9th commandment. There are some of us in the clergy today who want so much to be popular and accepted that we are so afraid of alienating someone. We are so afraid of rocking the boat. That we tend to shy away from speaking the truth. But God has given us the moral obligation to do. We shy away from preaching the Gospel in its fullness. We don't

want to tell people in other words, that mortal sin can separate us from heaven. We withhold the essential part of God's truth from his people who have every right to have it. We forget that Jesus said "Woe to you, when all speak well of you! For so did their fathers to false prophets." (Luke 6: 26) We don't want to be the sing of contradiction to the world that Jesus Christ is. There are far too many of us.

Let me ask you this: What would you think of a doctor, a physician who cared nothing about disease? A doctor who didn't want to talk about disease. Didn't want to treat it? Didn't want to be bothered about it? Didn't care a thing about the physical health of his patients? Suppose someone was suffering from a serious illness made a visit to this doctor. And even though, his symptoms were clear and obvious and dangerous, this doctor has some misguided fear of upsetting his patient and concealed from him the true nature. The true gravity of his illness and said to him "Now, don't worry about it. There is nothing wrong with you. It's all in your mind, it's all psychosomatic. You look great. You are going to be fine! Come back and see me next year." About a year from now, the patient may well be dead. What would you think of a doctor like that? We'd call the doctor incompetent. A doctor like that would be guilty of professional negligence and would be sued for malpractice. So then, what would you call a priest who is afraid or doesn't care enough to speak out against sin. What would you call the physician of the soul who will not deal with the one thing that can kill the life of grace in the soul – mortal sin? A patient who dies of his illness because the doctor was negligent? When a priest fails to speak out against sin, some of his people may well lose their immortal souls and suffer an eternal death. Jesus said "What would it profit a man to gain the whole world and lose his soul.

I find it amazing incredible today that a priest who loves and cares enough about souls and speaks out courageously against sin will very often be branded and labeled as rigid, insensitive and lacking in compassion. While at the same time those who maintain culpable silence and tell people only what they think they want to hear are seen as somehow being understanding, sympathetic, pastorally sensitive and merciful. I think you know this is nonsense. In the bible God said to the prophet Ezekiel, the priest, "If you do not speak out to one wicked man he shall die for his sin. But I will hold you responsible for his death." (3:18). How easy it is for us to forget today that the greatest love of all is concern for our neighbor's eternal salvation. And the first of the spiritual works of mercy is to admonish the sinner.