Catechism Question for Week of June 5- June 11, 2016

QUESTION 7 (Part 4): From where, then, comes this depraved nature of man?
ANSWER: From the Fall and disobedience of our first parents, Adam and Eve, in Paradise, whereby our nature became so corrupt, that we are all conceived and born in sin.

Exposition (continued from last week)

OF SIN IN GENERAL The questions which are usually discussed, in relation to sin in general, are chiefly the following:

1. From what does it appear that sin is in the world, and also in us?
2. What is sin?
3. How many kinds of sin are there?
4. What is the origin of sin, or the causes of it?
5. What are the effects of sin?

5. WHAT ARE THE EFFECTS OF SIN? Having defined and considered what sin is, and whence it proceeds, we are now prepared to investigate the effects which necessarily follow the transgression of the Divine Law; a knowledge of which is of great importance to a proper understanding of the magnitude of the evil of sin. These effects are temporal and eternal punishments; and because God often punishes sins with sins, subsequent transgressions may be said to be the effects of preceding sins. **(Rom. 1:24; 2 Thess. 2:11; Matt. 13:12)** That this may be the better understood, the following explanations are especially necessary.

> **1. Original sin**, or the depravity of the entire nature of man, or the destruction of the image of God in man, in the sense in which we have explained it, is the effect of the fall of our first parents in Paradise. (**Rom. 5:19)**
> **2. All actual sins** are the effects of original sin. **"It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwells in me." (Rom. 7:17)**
> **3. All subsequent actual sins** are the effects of preceding ones, and an increase of them; since, according to the just Judgment of God, men often run from one sin into another, as Paul teaches concerning the Gentiles, in the first chapter of his Epistle to the Romans.
> **4. The sins of other men** are also frequently the effects of actual sins, inasmuch as many persons are made worse through the reproach and bad examples of others, and are thus enticed and urged on to sin, as it is said: **"Evil communications corrupt good manners." (1 Cor. 15:33)**
> **5. An evil conscience**, and a fear of the judgment of God, invariably and constantly follow the commission of sin. (**Rom. 2:15; Ish. 57:21**)

6. All the various calamities of this life, together with temporal death itself, are the effects of sin: because it is on account of sin that God has inflicted all these things upon the human race, according to the declaration: **"In the day that you eat thereof, you shall surely die." (Gen. 2:17)**

7. Eternal death is the last and most extreme consequence of sin, in all those who have not been delivered therefrom by the death and merit of Christ: **"Cursed be he that confirms not all the words of this law to do them." "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth, shall awake to shame and everlasting contempt." "Depart from me, you cursed, into everlasting fire." (Deut. 27:26; Dan. 12:2; Matt. 25:41)**

All sins, therefore, whatever may be their character, deserve, in their own nature, eternal death, which is most plainly affirmed in these and similar passages of God's word. **"Cursed be he that confirms," etc. "Whosoever shall offend in one point, he is guilty of all." "You shall by no means come out thence, till you have paid the uttermost farthing." (Deut. 27:26; James 2:10; Matt. 5:26)** Yet all sins are not equal. They differ according to certain degrees, even in the Judgment of God; as it is said: **"All sins shall be forgiven unto the sons of men, and blasphemies; but he that shall blaspheme against the Holy Spirit has never forgiveness." "He that delivered me unto you has the greater sin." Mark 3:28, 29; John 19:11)** So there will also be degrees in the Punishments of hell: for the Punishments of the lost will be in proportion to the sins which they have committed; although, as it respects the duration of these Punishments, all will be eternal. **"That servant which knew his Lord's will, and did not according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes." "It shall be more tolerable for Tyre and Sidon at the day of judgment, than for you." (Luke 12:47; Matt. 11:22)**