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Pope Asks Priests: Be Available for Confessions

“As the great saints did,” Benedict XVI asks priests to be generous in dedicating time to hearing confessions. Saints he mentions as an example in this regard include Padre Pio, St. John Bosco, and St. Josemaría Escrivá.

03/29/2011

“Faithful and generous availability by priests to hear confessions,

following the example of great saints of the recent past (St. Jean-Baptiste Marie Vianney, St. John Bosco, St. Josemaría Escrivá, St. Pio of Pietrelcina, St. Joseph Cafasso, and St. Leopoldo Mandić), shows that the confessional is a ‘place’ of true sanctification.”

The Pope was speaking during a forum organized by the Apostolic Penitentiary. He told those present that every confession is a lesson in humility and faith for the priest himself, since it reminds him that it is not he who pardons, but God.

Benedict XVI stressed how important it is for the penitent to tell his sins to the priest, because “often it is the only opportunity to speak in depth” about matters of conscience.

He added that the advice the priest gives in confession helps the penitent to grow in self-knowledge and in interior peace.

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(08/21/2025)