

Dear Padre,

I'm a recovering heroin addict. Do I need to confess my addiction? Addiction is a disease, not a sin, right?

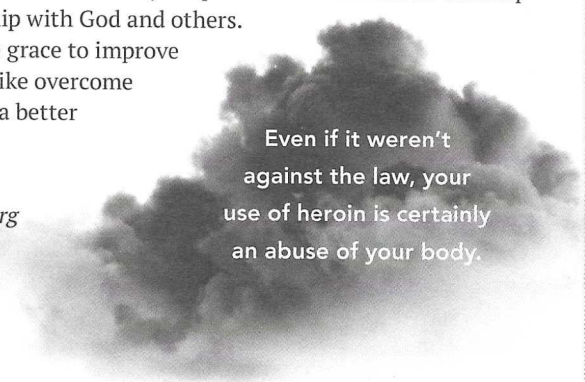
Right, but addiction and using drugs are two different things. As you know, recovering addicts who don't use drugs are still addicts, and that in itself isn't a sin. But it's against the law to use heroin in the United States, so even if you never committed a secondary crime to get it, the "getting it" was a crime.

More important, though, the body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, and it's a sin to abuse ourselves in any way. Even if it weren't against the law, your use of heroin is certainly an abuse of your body.

The sacrament of reconciliation is more than just receiving absolution for sins. It also helps us look more deeply at our lives. Before you go, examine your conscience: Ask yourself how your addiction has affected your body, your life, your relationship with God, and the welfare of others.

If you bring honest answers to those questions as well as an open heart and an open mind, your conversation with your priest at reconciliation will help you heal your relationship with God and others. You will also receive the grace to improve your life and do things like overcome addiction so you can be a better person.

Fr. Patrick Keyes, CSSR
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SHUTTERSTOCK

Calendar

Monday

OCTOBER 17
St. Ignatius
of Antioch,
Bishop and Martyr
Eph 2:1–10
Lk 12:13–21

Tuesday

OCTOBER 18
St. Luke,
Evangelist
2 Tm 4:10–17b
Lk 10:1–9

Wednesday

OCTOBER 19
Sts. John de
Brébeuf and Isaac
Jogues, Priests, and
Companions, Martyrs
Eph 3:2–12
Lk 12:39–48

Thursday

OCTOBER 20
Weekday
Eph 3:14–21
Lk 12:49–53

Friday

OCTOBER 21
Weekday
Eph 4:1–6
Lk 12:54–59

Saturday

OCTOBER 22
Weekday
Eph 4:7–16
Lk 13:1–9

Sunday

OCTOBER 23
Thirtieth Sunday in
Ordinary Time
Sir 35:12–14, 16–18
2 Tm 4:6–8, 16–18
Lk 18:9–14



A WORD FROM *Pope Francis*

I encourage all of you...to pursue your commitment to increasing awareness and offering support to those who have emerged from the tunnel of drug addiction....They need our help and accompaniment so that they in turn will be able to ease the pain of so many of our brothers and sisters in difficulty.

ADDRESS TO CONFERENCE ON DRUG ADDICTION,
DECEMBER 1, 2018