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GOSPEL PEARLS

Frequent Confession

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02_01_2020

This is the testimony of John. When the Jews from Jerusalem sent priests and Levites to him to ask him, "Who are you?" He admitted and did not deny it, but admitted, "I am not the Christ." So they asked him, "What are you then? Are you Elijah?" And he said, "I am not." "Are you the Prophet?" He answered, "No." So they said to him, "Who are you, so we can give an answer to those who sent us? What do you have to say for yourself?" He said: "I am the voice of one crying out in the desert, 'Make straight the way of the Lord,' as Isaiah the prophet said." Some Pharisees were also sent. They asked him, "Why then do you baptize if you are not the Christ or Elijah or the Prophet?" John answered them, "I baptize with water; but there is one among you whom you do not recognize, the one who is coming after me, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to untie." This happened in Bethany across the Jordan, where John was baptizing. (Jn 1: 26)

The baptism of Saint John the Baptist does not have the power to purify from sin. Man's desire to raise himself to God is not enough if God does not first lower himself down to man. The man who presumes that he will succeed by himself in becoming free from his sins reduces God to his own advantage, because only the One who descends from Heaven can raise us up, rising together with Him. Thus the Baptist says that He is not the Messiah, because he is incapable, by himself, to free men from sin. Let us go to confession often so that we may access the Grace of God that purifies us. Saint Catherine of Siena and Saint Charles Borromeo went to confession every single day...may we learn from their example.