



I can't

Contributed by: Sharon Hunt, author unknown

# Fr. Pat



- Fr. Pat, was serving as a hospital chaplain intern just outside of Boston several years ago.
- Fr. Pat was making his rounds one summer morning when he was called to visit a patient admitted with an undiagnosed ailment.
- John, a man in his sixties, had not responded to any treatment; medical tests showed nothing; psychological tests were inconclusive.
- Yet he was wasting away; he had not even been able to swallow for two weeks.
- The nurses had tried everything.

# Death was near

- They called the chaplain's office, they knew that death was near.
- When Fr. Pat walked into the room, John was sitting limply in his bed, strung with IV tubes, staring listlessly at the wall.
- He was a tall, handsome man but his skin hung loosely on his face, neck, and arms where his weight had once been.
- His eyes were hollow.
- Fr. Pat was terrified; he had no idea what to do but John seemed to brighten a bit as soon as he saw Fr. Pat and invited him to sit down.
- As they talked Fr. Pat sensed that God was urging him to ask some questions.
- He knew he should ask John if he wanted to receive Communion.
- Chaplain interns were not encouraged to ask this type of question in this public hospital, but Fr. Pat did.

# Confession

- At that John broke down. “I can’t!” he cried. “I’ve sinned and can’t be forgiven.”
- Fr. Pat paused a moment, he asked John if he wanted to confess his sin, John nodded.
- John wept as he confessed.
- Fr. Pat laid hands on him, hugged him, and told John his sins were forgiven.
- Then Fr. Pat got the second urging from the Holy Spirit and ask him if he wanted to receive Communion later that day.
- He did.
- Fr. Pat gave John a Bible and told him he would be back right after he said Mass in the chapel.



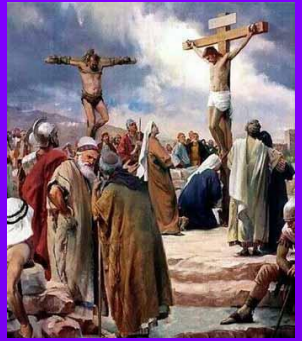


# Three Days Later

- Already John was sitting up straighter, with a flicker of light in his eyes.
- After Mass Fr. Pat returned to John's room with the body and blood of Christ.
- John took communion and perked up a little.
- It was the first time in weeks he had been able to take solid food by mouth.
- He had been set free.
- Within three days John walked out of that hospital.



# The Good Thief



- In Luke 23:35-43 we see four types of people interacting with Jesus in His last moments on earth.
- Israel's rulers, the soldiers, a criminal with no desire for repentance.
- Like John it was the "Good Thief" who recognized his need to repent.
- John just like the tax collector praying in the temple, knew he needed to repent.
- John just like Zacchaeus, knew he needed to repent of his past sins.
- John just like the good thief knew he needed to beg for God's mercy so he could look forward to the Resurrection.

# Don't Wait

- John just like the Sadducees who tried to trick Jesus had to admit that there is a Resurrection.
- Fortunately, John, unlike the good thief is still alive.
- John was able to leave the weight of his sin behind and go on with his life.
- We know that the good thief and John were both forgiven by Jesus Himself.
- The good thief has been in heaven since the day of his earthly death on the cross.
- It's never too late to repent.
- You are the only one who can start the repentance process.
- Repentance is important to your eternal future.
- John and the good thief nearly waited too long.