

Vatican laments drop in confessions

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VATICAN CITY (AP) — A Vatican official is lamenting that many faithful no longer confess their sins, and says some confuse a psychologist's couch for a confessional booth.

Archbishop Mauro Piacenza has told Vatican Radio the sacrament of penance has been experiencing a "deep crisis" for decades. Piacenza, an official for the Vatican office on clergy, says fewer people distinguish between good and evil, and as a result don't go to confession.

The archbishop said in the interview Tuesday that if faithful don't have a sense of sin, they might "confuse" confession with "the couch of a psychologist or a psychiatrist."

He says the Vatican plans to publish this year a kind of handbook on confession to drum up enthusiasm among Catholics toward the sacrament.

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