How can I forget the most shameful confession I've ever had? I knew that if I really wanted God to forgive me and start over my friendship with Him, I had to go to confession. It was the first time I would open to someone *those parts* of my conscience. I was afraid. I was sure I would disappoint the priest, even more because he thought he knew me, and he had a very good concept of me. I walked in the confessional and he greeted me with the same gentleness of always. He invited me to sit down and immediately he started with the sign of the cross. I felt the blood galloping through my veins with such strength that I felt he could see the pace of my heartbeats through the trembling of my cheeks. **How could I confess the greatest sins of all my life, those sins that I had carefully hidden from the eyes of everyone?** After all, I knew that I needed that humiliation as a poor offering and as a true sign of repentance to God. So I went on. "Father, I confess myself of… and not only that… I even…" Silently, he just kept moving his head up and down with his eyes closed in an attitude of prayer. Tears started to roll down my cheeks while I kept saying my confession. I can't tell how long it lasted, but there, kneeling down before the priest, God was granting me true repentance. Before this, I thought I had repented enough because of surrendering myself towards that tremendous courage and humility that confession demands, and that I didn't have. Just until that moment of saying aloud my sins, of calling them by their name, with no make-ups, with no reductions, I was really sorrowing for having offended God, my Lord and Redeemer. There, in that little space of the confession, I felt like I was in heaven, and I felt heaven was celebrating for having me back.

The priest was the only witness I could see in that moment, but I knew that behind him, the entire choir of angels and saints was praising God for his mercy with me, for the beauty of this sacrament by which any person, even the most sinful, can regain the treasure of Christ's friendship forever.

Then it was his turn to speak. I will never forget his words of joy and consolation: "Today, dear Karla, when you walk out this confessional, your soul will be as pure and white as it was the day of your birth. Today, the mercy of God has triumphed in another heart; the good Shepherd has found his lost sheep and He is rejoicing with all the Church. Welcome back…"

I know that this priest, like all the priests around the world, is a man with a fallen human nature, just like me. However, Christ promised them that what they forgive on earth would be forgiven in heaven. After this confession, I understood that this promise is the greatest gift He could have given to me: the guarantee of his forgiveness, the *sure key to heaven*. Now I don't care how big my sins can be, as long as I am really repentant, ready to recognize my sins before my beloved Church and eager to keep fighting out of love for Him. Now I know that *only He is worthy of the sacrifice of my pride and arrogance.* Only He could transform my most shameful confession into the most sublime experience of His mercy.