

# Reconciliation

A Sacrament of Healing



# What are the sacraments?

Sacraments are an encounter with Christ, who himself is the original sacrament. [CCC 1210-1211]

The Latin word sacramentum means "a sign of the sacred." The **seven sacraments** are ceremonies that point to what is sacred, significant and important for Christians. They are special occasions for experiencing God's saving presence.

Persons encounter God in the Sacraments. The sacraments, most centrally the **Eucharist**, are the source and strength of the Catholic community and are essential to the life of the Church.[Thomas Richstatter]

St. Augustine said "A Sacrament is a visible sign of an invisible grace"

# Why do we need the sacraments?

In order to live a good, upright life!

We don't have to rely only on ourselves and our own strength.

Through faith we discover that we are God's children and that **God makes us strong.**

**When God gives us his strength, we call this "grace".....**

Especially in the sacred signs that we call the Sacraments, **God gives us the ability actually to do the good that we want to do.** [CCC:1691-1695]

# Why do we need the sacraments?

Just as our bodies must be fed, so do our souls!

**The sacraments are nourishment for the soul!**

# What are the sacraments?

Sacraments are uniquely special times when we experience unity with God and the Church community.

The sacraments are the principal action through which Christ gives his Spirit to Christians and makes them a holy people. [USCCB]

Remember: Sacraments are not merely dispensed. When we celebrate the Sacraments, recognize the sacred action by experiencing the moment, experiencing the community, and most of all experiencing God's presence and love.

# Reconciliation

- Why is it important?
- Why do we confess to a priest?
- Why is your First Reconciliation exciting?
- What can you expect?
  - What is the process?

# Why is Reconciliation Important?

- The Gospels record several accounts of Jesus forgiving sins:
  - ✓ The Pardon of the Sinful Woman. Luke 7:36-50
  - ✓ The Healing of a Paralytic. Matt 9:1-8
- The Epistles record the importance of forgiveness in the early Church:
  - ✓ If we acknowledge our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from every wrongdoing. 1 John 1:9
  - ✓ Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed." James 5:16

# Why is Reconciliation Important?

- Jesus recognized the importance of forgiveness and our need for forgiveness.
- Important words in any relationship
  - ✓ “I’m sorry.”
  - ✓ “You’re forgiven.”
  - ✓ “It’s okay. I love you.”





# Why is Reconciliation Important?

- It's one of the sacraments...
  - ✓ We receive God's grace.
  - ✓ This grace can help us to resist sin.
  - ✓ A tool to help us make good choices that will lead us to happiness
  - ✓ Help us stay on the right path.

# Why is Reconciliation important?

- It brings us closer to God...it's a special reminder that God's love and mercy is ever present in our lives.

- St. Francis de Sales wrote:

In confession you not only receive absolution from the... sins you confess, but also great strength to avoid them in the future, light to see them clearly, and abundant grace to repair whatever damage you have incurred. **You will also practice the virtues of humility, obedience, simplicity, and charity.** In the single act of confession you will exercise more virtues than in any other act whatsoever.

# Why do we confess to a priest?

- Jesus conferred the power to forgive sins to his Apostles which they conferred to their successors:

"On the evening of that day, the first day of the week," Jesus showed himself to his apostles. "He breathed on them, and said to them: 'Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained'" (Jn 20:19, 22-23).

# Why do we confess to a priest?

- This is the way Christ chose for us...the power to forgive sins was bestowed upon the Apostles and it was to be inherited by their successors, continuing His presence throughout time.
  - ✓ **Jesus is the one Mediator, but that doesn't prevent Him from choosing others to assist Him in his work.**

# Why do we confess to a priest?

- The power of a priest to forgive sins is given by Christ through the Holy Spirit.
  - ✓ God alone can and does forgive us our sins, but God in His plan for us chose to show His love, including His forgiving love, through the Church.



# Why do we confess to a priest?

- The priest also represents the community
  - ✓ When we are asking for forgiveness, we are also asking to be reconciled with the community.
  - ✓ Sin is both personal and communal. It affects me, my relationship with God, but also my relationship with others.
    - "We, though many, are one body in Christ and individually parts of one another." Romans 12:5

# Why do we confess to a priest?

- Words matter...
  - ✓ It means something to say “I’m sorry”.
  - ✓ It means something to hear “You’re forgiven”.
- Confession of sins to a priest gives us the assurance that our sins are forgiven.

Busted Halo's  
Sacraments 101: Penance

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wz5-vu6A58E>



# Why is First Reconciliation Exciting?

- You are deepening their relationship with God.
- You are moving closer to God
- God loves you and this is also a special way for you to tell God you love Him.
- The sacrament of Reconciliation directs us toward the Eucharist, the source and summit of Christian life.
- You are moving to living your Christian life to the fullest.

# What can you expect?

- Let's walk thru the process...
- Reconciliation involves five elements:
  - (1) Contrition
  - (2) Sincere desire to change
  - (3) Confession
  - (4) Absolution
  - (5) Penance
- It's okay to have a note sheet, if you are nervous.
- There's nothing to be nervous about. The priest will be compassionate and welcoming
- Anything you confess to the priest will remain confidential.

# What can you expect?

- Remember it's a sacrament, meaning you are receiving God's love, God's graces.
- Grace is "God's free, loving gift to us, His helping goodness." YouCat #338
- "Grace is being looked upon by God, our being touched by His love."

*Grace is when God  
gives us what we  
don't deserve.  
Mercy is when God  
doesn't give us what  
we do deserve.*

# What is the Process?

1. Start with an Examination of Conscience

<http://www.usccb.org/prayer-and-worship/sacraments-and-sacramentals/penance/sacrament-reconciliation-children-examination-conscience.cfm>

[http://www.ncregister.com/info/confession\\_guide\\_for\\_children/](http://www.ncregister.com/info/confession_guide_for_children/)



# What is the Process?

- Have I prayed every day?
- Have I been moody and rebellious about praying and going to church on Sunday?
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me whenever I have been tempted to sin?
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me do what is right?
- Have I been obedient and respectful to my parents?
- Have I lied or been deceitful to them or to others?
- Have I been arrogant, stubborn or rebellious?
- Have I talked back to parents, teachers or other adults?

# What is the Process?

- Have I been selfish toward my parents, brothers, and sisters, teachers, or my friends and schoolmates?
- Have I gotten angry at them? Have I hit anyone?
- Have I held grudges or not forgiven others?
- Have I treated other children with respect or have I made fun of them and called them names?
- Have I used bad language?
- Have I stolen anything? Have I returned it?
- Have I been helpful and loving toward my family?
- Have I been kind and generous with my friends?

# What is the Process?

2. You have the option to go to confession anonymously behind a screen or face to face.
3. The priest will greet you in the name of Christ, afterwards make the sign of the cross. The priest may choose to recite a reading from Scripture, after which you say: "Bless me Father for I have sinned this is my first confession. These are my sins...."

# What is the Process?

4. You should tell your sins simply and honestly to the priest. The priest will help you along.
5. You should listen to the advice the priest gives you. The priest will give you a penance to perform. It might be a pray, an act of kindness, or a reading from scripture.



# What is the Process?

6. Then you'll make an Act of Contrition for your sins. "For these and all my sins I am sorry".

Afterward, you'll receive absolution. The priest says, "I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." We respond, "Amen."

7. The priest will then dismiss you.

# What is the Process?

8. The priest will then conclude with: "The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace." And you respond by saying: "Thanks be to God."
9. Afterward, allow yourself to spend time in reflection thanking God and praising Him for His mercy, and of course to try to perform the penance as soon as possible.

# Act of Contrition

Oh my God,  
I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.  
In choosing to do wrong  
And failing to do good,  
I have sinned against you  
whom I should love above all things.  
I firmly intend, with your help,  
to do penance,  
to sin no more,  
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.  
Amen.

Go in peace to love and serve the Lord