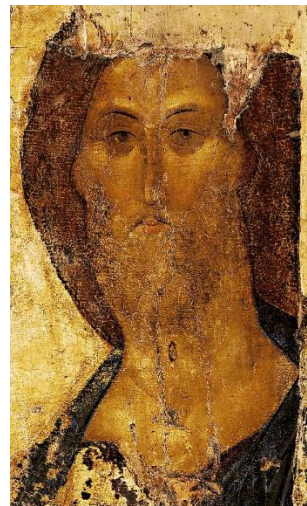


# Guide to the Celebration of the SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION



## The Individual Rite of the Sacrament of Reconciliation

is celebrated every Saturday at 4:00 p.m. An option for anonymity is available in the Reconciliation Chapel. *Each year during Advent and Lent a Communal Liturgy of penance is celebrated; the Sacrament of Penance is available following the Services.*

The Rite of Reconciliation for Individual Penitents is worship—the celebration of a Sacrament. The “shape” of the Liturgy of this Sacrament from the **RITE OF PENANCE OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH** is as follows:

### Greeting and Welcome

When you enter the priest will begin with the sign of the cross and a prayer. (Note: The Rite of Penance does not use the words “Bless me Father for I have sinned.” *These words are from the rite before its reform and are no part of the rite.*)

### THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

The priest will proclaim a short **READING FROM SCRIPTURE**, provided in the Rite of Penance. You may also choose a short scripture passage yourself, reflecting your confession and your trust in God’s mercy.

### CONFESSION OF SINS

You may then offer your confession remembering that as you do so you also confess your trust in God’s mercy and love. Following the confession, the priest may speak briefly with you, reminding you that through the Sacrament of Reconciliation the promises of your baptism are renewed and with the whole Christian community you are immersed in the death and resurrection of Christ, dying to sin and rising to new life.

### PENANCE / SATISFACTION

The priest will then offer a penance, or “satisfaction” in dialogue with you. The penance or “satisfaction” reflects both your experience of and the need for a “change of heart” and continuing conversion in your life. It may take the form of prayer, self-denial, and especially service to neighbor or and works of mercy. (Rite of Penance #18)

### PRAYER OF THE PENITENT

Then you may pray a prayer of sorrow, based on the words of Scripture, such as the following from the options provided in the Rite Penance.



**LORD JESUS, YOU CHOSE TO BE CALLED THE FRIEND OF SINNERS.  
BY YOUR SAVING DEATH AND RESURRECTION FREE ME FROM MY SINS.**

**MAY YOUR PEACE TAKE ROOT IN MY HEART  
AND BRING FORTH A HARVEST OF LOVE, HOLINESS, AND TRUTH.**

*(Or you may pray the Lord’s Prayer with the priest.)*

### PRAYER OF ABSOLUTION AND FORGIVENESS

Then raising his hands over you and/or **LAYING HANDS** on your head (if you are facing him) the priest offers the Prayer of Absolution and Forgiveness.



### PROCLAMATION OF PRAISE OF GOD

Following the prayer of forgiveness, the priest may invite you to repeat these words of praise after him:

**GIVE THANKS TO THE LORD, FOR HE IS GOOD!**

**GOD’S MERCY ENDURES FOREVER!**

**Please remember that the priest will guide you through this sacrament and support you in this moment of liturgical prayer and encounter with the abundant mercy and love of God.**

**USE THE GUIDE ON THE BACK OF THIS SHEET TO ASSIST IN YOUR PREPARATION FOR THE SACRAMENT.**

# Preparing to celebrate the SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Spend some special time in preparation, reflecting on your PERSONAL life, on your life as a FAMILY, on your life as a MEMBER of the Church.

How well do you HAND ON THE FAITH to your children? How well do you work at living your faith day to day? Are you faithful to Sunday Mass, to your place at the Lord's Table: Is it a priority in your life and in the life of your family? Do you pray? Do you pray as a family?

REMEMBER those you may have forgotten, ignored, or treated poorly. REMEMBER those against whom you may have sinned. As you prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation determine to DO SOMETHING ABOUT IT: Intend to call the person/s, say you are sorry, ask for forgiveness. Remember sin is about breaking relationships.

REMEMBER those who have sinned against you: those who have treated you poorly.

Begin NOW to offer your forgiveness and understanding. REMEMBER the command of Jesus: "Love the Lord your God with your whole heart, your whole soul and your whole mind: LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOU LOVE YOURSELF!"

REMEMBER the **Ten Commandments**. How well do you work at living them?

REMEMBER the **Beatitudes of Jesus** (Matthew 5:1-12). How well do you work at living them?

REMEMBER the promises you have made: The promise of **BAPTISM**, to reject sin, to turn from the darkness, to believe in God: Father, Son and Spirit; to faithfully belong to the Church, the Body of Christ.

How well do you work at FAITHFULNESS to promises made? Promises of faith, love, friendship, marriage, relationship?

REMEMBER THE WORLD in which you dwell with others: DO YOU SEE BEYOND YOUR OWN NEEDS AND GIFTS? Are you willing to be "in touch" with the needs and gifts of others, especially the STRANGER?

What about sins of hatred, prejudice, racism, discrimination, hunger, sexism, abuse, greed, poverty, pollution—the "sins of the world"? How do you participate? How do you respond?

REMEMBER ANY SERIOUS SIN which turns a person away from God, another, others and the Church, that is (as described by Pope John Paul II) "an act by which a person **freely and consciously** rejects God, God's law, the covenant of love that God offers, and prefers to turn in on self or some created and finite reality", must be confessed personally to the priest in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. We personally confess such serious sins in order to face the reality in our life, to confess our trust in a merciful and loving God, and with the Church, represented by the priest, to begin the process of conversion—that is changing our heart, our mind, our ways and our life. A person who has been away from the Church for some time is reconciled through the individual Rite of Penance and/or through the Re-Membering Church process (which is an extended experience of the Sacrament of Reconciliation).

REFLECT ON YOUR LIFE: what is happening; where are you going; what are your dreams?

Examine your ATTITUDES. WHAT MUST CHANGE IN YOUR LIFE?

Be SILENT, reflect on the presence of God: SEARCH for that presence both close and far beyond, TRUST in God's great LOVE FOR YOU AND ALL OTHERS.

REMEMBER your goodness, the kindness you have offered others; REMEMBER your gentleness, your thoughtfulness, your love. REJOICE in the greatness of God welling up within YOU!

*The opportunity to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation personally is available each Saturday afternoon in the Chapel of Reconciliation at 4:00 p.m. or anytime by appointment.*

*At this time of prayer and worship you will hear both the challenge and comfort of God's word, you will name your sin; confess your trust in God's loving mercy; and experience God's loving welcome.*

*Here you will embrace hope instead of fear, and be forgiven in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ!*

