

SACRAMENTS OF HEALING



Opening Prayer

Heavenly Father, you sent your Son to bring healing to the world through his ministry of reconciliation. We ask you to help us experience the healing power of Jesus through the Holy Spirit working in our lives. We ask this through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Scripture Reading *John 20:19-23*

In his first appearance to the Apostles after the Resurrection, the Risen Jesus' first words are an offering of peace and the gift of the Holy Spirit to forgive sin. Through the gift of the Spirit, the Apostles and the successors of the Apostles are able to forgive sin in the person of Jesus and bring healing to those who are suffering.

What are the Sacraments of Healing?

- The Sacraments of Healing are Sacraments of Reconciliation and the Anointing of the Sick.
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation must be placed within the context of the Christian living experience.
 - Human beings fail, at times we do not live up to who we are called to be by virtue of our baptism, we sin.
 - Our need for reconciliation with God and the Church is in itself praise of God.
 - When we bring ourselves to share in the unity of the Eucharist, we must be reconciled with God and the Church.
 - Reconciliation should not be seen as a requirement, rather as an opportunity. Nonetheless, the precepts of the Church state that all Christians should receive the sacrament of Reconciliation at least once a year.
- The Church sees the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick within the context of human illness and the Christian obligation to care for the sick.
 - Through their faith, Christians grasp more deeply the mystery of suffering and their unity with Christ, who loves and cares for the sick.
 - Sickness is not a punishment inflicted on each individual for personal sins.
 - Those who are sick give witness to Christ through their suffering and serve as reminder of the essential or higher things of life.

What is the Sacrament of Penance?

- “In the sacrament of penance the faithful who confess their sins to a [confessor], are sorry for them, and intend to reform themselves obtain from God through the absolution imparted by the confessor forgiveness for the sins they have committed after Baptism and, at the same time, are reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by sinning” (Canon 959).

What are the different names for the Sacrament of Penance?

- **Sacrament of Penance:** We are called to change our ways through penance.
- **Sacrament of Confession:** The disclosure of sins is essential to the sacrament. Our confession is a form of praise to God.
- **Sacrament of Conversion:** We are returned to the Father from whom we stray.
- **Sacrament of Forgiveness:** God grants us “pardon and peace” through absolution
- **Sacrament of Reconciliation:** The sacrament gives us the love of God who reconciles.

Who is the minister of the Sacrament of Penance?

- Since Christ entrusted to his apostles the ministry of Reconciliation, bishops and priests continue to exercise this ministry.
- The confessor is not the master of God’s forgiveness, but its servant.
- Given the greatness of this ministry, the Church declares every priest who hears confession is bound under very severe penalty to keep absolute secrecy regarding the sins that his penitents have confessed to him.

What are the parts of the Sacrament of Penance?

- **Contrition:** the sorrow of the soul and detestation for the sin committed, together with the resolution not to sin again.
 - The reception of Reconciliation ought to be prepared for by an examination of conscience made in the light of the Word of God.
- **Confession:** through the admission of sins, individuals take responsibility for them; thereby, opening ourselves again to God and the Church.
 - In the sacrament of Reconciliation all mortal sins must be recounted in confession... “For if the sick person is too ashamed to show his wound to the doctor, the medicine cannot heal what it does not know” (Council of Trent).

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- **Penance:** Raised up from sin, the sinner must still recover his full spiritual health by doing something more to make amends for the sin: he must make restitution.
 - A penance can consist of prayer, an offering, works of mercy, service of neighbor, voluntary self-denial, sacrifices, and the patient acceptance of the cross we must bear. These penances help configure us to Christ, who alone offered himself for our sins once and for all; they allow us to become co-heirs with the Risen Christ.
- **Absolution:** the forgiveness of sins in the sacrament of Reconciliation.
 - "God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

What are the steps to go to Confession?

1. Make the sign of the cross.
2. Say: "Bless me Father for I have sinned. This is my first confession" or "It has been ___ months or years since my last confession."
3. Tell the priest your sins. At the end say, "I am sorry for all of my sins."
4. The priest will give a penance, which is an act of charity or a prayer.
5. Say the Act of Contrition:

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. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. Amen.
6. The priest will give you absolution:

God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
7. The priest will dismiss you in some way. Say a prayer of thanksgiving before leaving Church.

What are the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?

- “The **anointing of the sick**, by which the Church commends the faithful who are dangerously ill to the suffering and glorified Lord in order that he relieve and save them, is conferred by anointing them with oil and pronouncing the words prescribed in the liturgical books” (Canon 998).
- In the Anointing of the Sick, the Church prays that:
 - The sick person’s suffering may be eased and he or she may be given the strength to cope with it.
 - Physical healing of the sick person’s mind and body, in accordance to God’s will.
 - Forgiveness of the sick person’s sins.
- The Anointing of the Sick is not for those only who are at the point of death. The Sacrament may be received by:
 - Those who are seriously ill or advanced in age.
 - Those who are undergoing serious surgery.
 - Those who are suffering from chronic ongoing pain.
 - Those who are mentally unwell.
- The Sacrament may be repeated if illness should become more serious or relapses.

What are the symbols of the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?

- **Laying on of Hands**: A biblical gesture that indicates that this particular person is the object of the Church’s prayer of faith. It is a sign of blessing and an invocation of the spirit.
- Anointing with Oil: The **oil of the sick** signifies healing, strengthening, and the presence of the Spirit.
- **Viaticum**: The Eucharist given to a dying person, literally means “with you on the journey.”
- Reconciliation: In the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, the priest may invite the sick to the Sacrament of Reconciliation, in order to grant forgiveness for any sins committed. The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick forgives sin and restores unity with God and the Church.
- Prayers for the Sick:
 - As the priest anoints the forehead, he says: “Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”
 - As the priest anoints the hands, he says: “May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up. Amen.”

