

RCIA: SESSION SIXTEEN

THE SACRAMENTS OF HEALING

Week: 30/01/23 - 05/02/23

Catechism References: #1420-1532

Introduction

Through the sacraments of Christian initiation, we receive the new life of Christ. But the weakness of human nature and our inclination to sin continues to remain and affect our lives. The Church offers us the sacraments of healing to assist in our daily journeys of conversion and reconciliation.

During his earthly ministry, Jesus forgave sins and healed those who were physically and spiritually broken. Those he forgave were healed, renewed in faith and restored to health of mind and body. The Church continues even today, in the power of the Holy Spirit, the healing work of Jesus Christ. This is the purpose of the two sacraments of healing: the sacrament of Penance and the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick.

There are two sacraments of healing in Catholic sacramental life, the **Sacrament of Reconciliation** and the **Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick**. The goal of each sacramental rite is to bring God's healing to the sick through Jesus the Christ and in the power of the Holy Spirit.

The **Sacrament of Reconciliation** is an encounter with the mercy of God. It is the process whereby a person whose actions or lack of actions has wounded one's relationship with himself/herself, with others and or with God. Jesus has given the community of His disciples a way to be reconciled with the whole People of God who has been affected by the reality of human sin and evil. Through the ministry of the priest confessor, a person who seeks healing from sin can be assured that (s)he has been forgiven both by God and the community through the confession of sins, the absolution of God through the church and the doing of one's penance to begin making up for the harm caused by one's words, actions or lack of action.

Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick, in the course of our human life, we experience physical, psychological or spiritual illness. The Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick was given by Jesus to be a sign of his healing presence in the life of the sick person so they might be healed of the cause of one's illness. The Sacrament of the Sick is administered by the priest by anointing the sick person on the forehead and the palms of the hands, invoking God to bring healing to the ill person through the power of the Holy Spirit. This sacrament heals the cause of sin in one's life so they can be healed and set free. This sacrament may be received as often as necessary to help restore the sick to full health once again.

What is the Sacrament of Penance?

Catechism References: #1420-1498

Scripture References: Mark 1:15; 2:1-12

Luke 7:48; 15:18

John 20:19, 22-23

Matthew 18:21-22

Pope John Paul II, Reconciliation and Penance,

Reconciliatio et paenitentia, 1984

“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).

Overview

- a. When Jesus forgave sins he also pointed to its effects: the reconciliation of sinners with God and with the community of believers. He gave the apostles his own power to forgive sins and the power to reconcile sinners to God and to the Church. (CCC 1443-1445)
- b. Only God forgives sins. Jesus willed that the Church be the sign and instrument of the forgiveness and reconciliation he won for us on the cross with his blood. He entrusted the power of absolution to the apostles and instituted the sacrament of Penance by which the baptized are offered a new possibility of conversion, forgiveness and healing.
- c. Interior repentance is a radical reorientation of our whole life, a return to God with all of our heart, a turning away from sin and the resolution to change one's life with hope in God's mercy and grace. (CCC 1430-1433)
- d. The sacrament of Reconciliation comprises two essential elements: the actions of the penitent who undergoes conversion in the Holy Spirit,

namely contrition, confession and penance; and God's action through the Church's mediation. Penance is a liturgical action (CCC 1480-1484)

- e. The 'confessor' (the priest) is not the master of God's forgiveness but its servant. He forgives sins in the name of Jesus Christ so that when he says, 'I absolve you', the 'I' is that of Christ. The 'sacramental seal' of penance means that every priest who hears confessions is bound to keep absolute secrecy regarding the sins confessed to him. What the penitent has made known to the priest remains 'sealed' by the sacrament. (CCC 1466-1467)

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. (John 20:23)
- 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 to keep absolute secrecy regarding the sins that the penitents have confessed to him.

In the practice of the Sacrament of Penance, four acts of the penitent are required:

- Sorrow for sins committed
- A resolution or firm purpose of amendment,
- The sincere confession of sins.
- Satisfaction or sacramental penance

What are the parts of the Sacrament of Penance?

The sacrament of Reconciliation comprises two essential elements: the actions of the penitent who undergoes conversion in the Holy Spirit, namely contrition, confession and penance; and God's action through the Church's mediation, namely absolution. (CCC 1480-1484).

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).

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 neighbour, 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 in making a Confession?

Examination of Conscience

Penitents prepare for the Sacrament of Confession by praying and reflecting on those moments where their words, actions, or inaction, caused them to sin.

Make the sign of the cross. Together with the priest, make the sign of the cross. Being your confession by saying: “Bless me Father for I have sinned. This is my first confession” or “It has been ___ months or years since my last confession.”

Confession

Tell the priest your sins. At the end say, “I am sorry for all of my sins.”

Penance:

The priest will give a penance, which is an act of charity or a prayer. He may also offer some encouragement, guidance or counsel on how to better live the Christian life.

Act of Contrition:

O my God, I thank you for loving me. I am sorry for all my sins; for not loving others, and not loving you; help me to live like Jesus and not sin again. Amen.

Absolution:

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.

Dismissal

The priest will invite you to go in peace.

Prayer of thanksgiving:

Say a prayer of thanksgiving before leaving Church.



What is the Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick?

Catechism References: #1499-1532

Scripture References: Luke 6:19

James 5:14-16

Mark 1:41; 3:10; 6:56

Matthew 10:8; 25:36

“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.

Gospel Reflection: Sunday 05/02/23 is the Fifth Sunday in Ordinary Time and the Gospel reading is Mt 5:13-16. The text of the reading is below. The following format will be used for all Gospel reflections:

- Read the text aloud.
- Pause for a minute's silence.
- Read the text aloud again.
- Ask everyone to pick a word or a phrase that struck them. They just say the word or phrase without comment or discussion.
- Read the text again.
- Ask those present to comment on their word or phrase. What struck them about it? Why/how is it speaking to them?
- Continue with the discussion. The following questions may be helpful: What does this mean to me? How does it make me feel? Did I find the text disturbing/hopeful/confusing? What images of God emerge for me? What do I think that God is saying in this text? What impact does this have on my life?

GOSPEL READING

Reader: The Lord be with you.

Response: And with your spirit.

Reader: A reading from the holy Gospel according to Matthew.

Response: Glory to you, O Lord.

Jesus said to his disciples: 'You are the salt of the earth. But if salt becomes tasteless, what can make it salty again? It is good for nothing, and can only be thrown out to be trampled underfoot by men.

'You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill-top cannot be hidden. No one lights a lamp to put it under a tub; they put it on the lamp-stand where it

shines for everyone in the house. In the same way your light must shine in the sight of men, so that, seeing your good works, they may give the praise to your Father in heaven.'