

Penance

Anointing of the Sick

Viaticum

Holy Spirit RCIA

Sacrament of Penance

God is Rich in Mercy

Forgiveness of Sins

- Only God can forgive sins (Mk. 2:1-12, Mt. 9:1-8)
- Jesus was wholly God and wholly man and so uniquely able to reconcile the sinner with God
- On Easter Sunday night he gave that power to the Church:

Forgiveness of Sins

“As the Father has sent me, so I send you...Receive the holy Spirit. Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.”
(Jn. 20:21-23)

Forgiveness of Sins

- For sins to be *forgiven* or *retained* they had to be *heard*
- Christ's words make the Church a conduit for the forgiveness of sins
- Through Holy Orders, bishops and priests receive the faculty to hear and forgive sins
- They act in the person of Christ—not on their own—when they do so

Forgiveness of Sins

- Through Apostolic Succession, the Church's priests and bishops bring Christ's command to forgive or retain sins to us today
- The priest or bishop must hear our confession of sin to forgive or retain them
- This is the reason we confess our sins to a priest

Conversion, Confession, Forgiveness

The Sacrament of Penance must be seen in the context of Conversion, which is turning *away* from sin and *towards* God:

- Conversion of the heart is the beginning of the sinner's journey back to God
- The Holy Spirit initiates the conversion
- The sacrament of Penance makes conversion and forgiveness tangible and real

Conversion, Confession, Forgiveness

Animated by Conversion, we prepare by:

- Examination of our our conscience
- Feeling sorrow (contrition) for sins:
 - Perfect Contrition (CCC 1452)
 - Imperfect Contrition (CCC 1453)
- Confessing sins to the priest (Christ) for forgiveness

Sin

- Sin is:
 - A failure in genuine love of God and neighbor
 - “Contrary to the eternal law” (Augustine)
 - Turning of our hearts *away* from God
 - “Love of oneself even to the contempt of God” (Augustine)

Sin

There are two degrees of Sin,

- Mortal
- Venial

Sin

Mortal sin (CCC 1854-1862):

- “Destroys charity in the heart...by a grave violation of God’s Law”
- Must involve:
 1. Grave matter
 2. Full knowledge
 3. Deliberate consent

Sin

...Mortal Sin

- “A radical possibility of human freedom”
- Causes loss of Charity and Sanctifying Grace
- “If not redeemed by repentance and God’s forgiveness, it causes exclusion from Christ’s kingdom and the eternal death of hell.” (CCC 1861)

Sin

Venial sin (CCC 1862-1864):

- Involves less serious matter *OR* a grave matter without full knowledge or complete consent
- Weakens charity...demonstrates a disordered affection for created things
- If repeated, disposes us to commit mortal sin
- Does not deprive the sinner of sanctifying grace, or heaven

The Sacrament of Penance

- Provides tangible and assured forgiveness of our sins
- Reconciles us to God and neighbor
- Unburdens our conscience (We sleep better!)
- Helps us grow spiritually and avoid sin in the future

The Sacrament of Penance

Three Rites of Reconciliation:

1. Individual confession
2. Group service followed by individual confession
3. General (Only in extraordinary circumstances)

This presentation will focus on the Individual rite

The Sacrament of Penance

The sacrament has always been comprised of two essential acts:

1. The acts of the penitent (AP)
2. The acts of Christ through the Church (AC)

The Sacrament of Penance

Acts of: Penitent (AP), Christ/Church (AC):

- Greeting and blessing from the priest (AC)
- Reading from Scripture (Optional) (AC)
- Confession of sins (AP)
- Giving (AC) & accepting (AP) of a penance
- Act of contrition (AP)
- Christ's absolution through the priest (AC)
- Praising God (Both)
- Dismissal (AC)

The Sacrament of Penance

Absolution by the Priest (Christ):

- After confessing our sins, the priest may discuss them with us
- The priest will give us a penance and asks us to say an Act of Contrition
- Then the priest grants absolution, using the power of Christ to set us free from our sins.
- *These are good words to hear!*

The Sacrament of Penance

“Absolution takes away sin, but does not remedy all the disorders sin has caused (ccc 1459)

- To recover spiritual health the sinner must make amends for sin: This is called “penance”
- Given by the priest
- May consist of prayers and/or acts of charity
- Should be completed right after given

The Sacrament of Penance

- Must confess all mortal sins—if unsure, confess it
- Strongly Recommend to confess venial sins
- Frequency?
 - When aware of serious sin, ASAP. (*Do not receive Communion if aware of unconfessed mortal sin*)
 - A common interval is once-per-month

The Seal of Confession

Should you worry that the priest will tell someone your sins?

“Every priest who hears confession is bound under very strict penalties to keep absolute secrecy regarding the sins that his penitents have confessed to him. He can make no use of that knowledge that confession gives him about penitent's lives. This secret, which admits of no exceptions, is called the ‘sacramental seal,’ because what the penitent has made know to the priest remains ‘sealed’ by the sacrament.” (CCC 1467, Cf c 1388 §1)

The Seal of Confession

- This seal applies to *any person* who is present, an interpreter, for example, or someone who hears confession or parts of it accidentally (c. 983 §2)
- Violation by a priest always results in excommunication

The Seal of Confession

- Violation by others results in a sanction, possibly excommunication
- Civil Laws in the United States and other countries generally recognize the sacramental “seal”

Praise God and Imitate God's Mercy

- The Sacrament of Penance is an experience of the gift of God's boundless mercy
- It challenges us to exhibit the same mercy to those who sin against us
- Recognizing sin in our own lives helps us become aware of the reality of sin in the world

Indulgences

- Every sin has consequences
 - *Eternal punishment* for mortal sins
 - *Temporal punishment* for all sins—even forgiven mortal sins (CCC 1472-1473)
- Temporal punishment is the consequence that remains after a sin's guilt is forgiven
- Prayer, Fasting, Almsgiving, and acts of Charity can take away or diminish

Indulgences

- Come through the merits of Christ & authority of the Church (Mt. 16:13-20)
- Church attaches to certain prayers or actions the ability to remove *temporal punishment*
- Indulgences may be full (*plenary*)
- Or *partial*
- Can be applied to the dead

Questions?

Sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick

God is Rich in Mercy

Jesus Came to Heal

- Various examples in the Bible e.g., Mk. 2:1-2, Mk 2:5
- Often Jesus touched the person healed
- In this sacrament Jesus touches the sick person through the hands of the priest
- Provides Spiritual healing
- Sometimes provides physical healing

A Sacrament of Healing

When to Call for the Sacrament?

- When health seriously impaired by sickness, old age or before serious surgery
- While the person is capable of participating
- To celebrate with family members if possible

A Sacrament of Healing

- Before Vatican II called “Extreme Unction”
- Name change better reflects the Sacrament's purpose
- Incorrectly called “Last Rites” in contemporary society
- May be combined with Viaticum

A Sacrament of Healing

Ministering the Sacrament

- Priests or Bishops are ministers of the sacrament
- The oil, “OI” is olive oil blessed by the Bishop
- OI can be blessed by priest, but only during the rite
- Usually takes place in a liturgy of the Word outside Mass

A Sacrament of Healing

Rite Itself

- Introductory Rites
- Sprinkling with Holy Water (optional)
- Instruction about the rite
- Penitential Rite (Or private Confession)

A Sacrament of Healing

Rite Itself

- Reading from Scripture
- Litany
- Priest lays hands on the head of the sick person
- Priest anoints forehead and hands of the sick person

A Sacrament of Healing

Rite Itself

- Prayer
- Optional Holy Communion
- Concluding Rite

The Sacrament May be received again if the condition of the sick person warrants it

Questions?

Viaticum

Food for the Passage From Life to
Death

Viaticum

- Viaticum is Holy Communion with special prayers for the dying
- May take place during or outside Mass
- When received?
 - Anointing of the Sick should take place at the beginning of illness
 - Viaticum when death is near (Successive Days)
 - Circumstances may require them to be combined

Viaticum

Rite

- Greeting
- Instruction
- Private Confession (Priest) or Penitential Rite
- Apostolic Pardon (Priest)
- Scripture Reading
- Baptismal Profession of Faith

Viaticum

Rite

- The Lord's Prayer
- Communion (Viaticum itself)
- Silent Prayer
- Blessing given (Priest/Deacon) or Invoked (Lay Person)
- Sign of Peace Shared with the sick person

Questions?