

How to Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Following is a guide to celebrating the sacrament.

We often are anxious to 'do it right', especially since we may not celebrate the sacrament often.

This sacrament is a bit fluid and the priest will guide you through it.

Our most important component is to just come and be healed.

Come and leave all the pain, sorrow and sin behind.

Before entering the Reconciliation Room take some time in prayer to prepare yourself. Reviewing an Examination of Conscience may be helpful.

Enter the Reconciliation Room when the outside light is turned "on" and/ or the door is open. This way you know a priest is inside and no one else is. When you enter you do have a choice of sitting in the chair or kneeling behind the screen. The preference is to just sit down and relax.

After situating yourself (the Penitent,) in the Reconciliation Room...

- ♦ Begin saying aloud the "Sign of the Cross."
+ **In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**
- ♦ Then ask for a blessing. Say... **Bless me Father for I have sinned, this is my first confession.** or **"my last confession was ____."**
No need to be exact here. The priest is just trying to find a context for this celebration.
- ♦ The priest *may* read from the Scriptures at this point or even later after he has listened to your confession.
- ♦ **Now begin confessing your sins.** Speak honestly and clearly. Take your time. *There is no right or wrong way to do this. Just begin.*
- ♦ After listening to you, the priest may discuss your sins and concerns. Remember, he is there to be a helper and spiritual guide. Then he will give you a penance. *He may ask you what you think would be a good penance. You can even suggest something that will help you grow in faith and avoid this sin.*

- ♦ **Pray aloud the “Act of Contrition”.** Any version is fine.

The most common is:

“O my God, I am sorry and repent with all my heart for all the wrong I have done
and for the good I have failed to do,
because by sinning I have offended you,
who are all good and worthy to be loved above all things.
I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace,
to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid the occasions of sin.

Through the merits of the Passion of our Savior Jesus Christ, Lord, have mercy.

Rite of Reconciliation, 2023

There is often a card with this prayer available in the Reconciliation Room.

- ♦ The priest then extends his hands over the penitent’s head and prays the prayer of absolution:

“God, the Father of mercies, through the Death and Resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and poured out the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God grant you pardon and peace. And I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, + and of the Holy Spirit.”

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- ♦ You, the Penitent, answers: **“Amen.”**
- ♦ Priest then says, *“God bless you”* or *“Go in the peace of Christ,”* as you have now been reconciled to Christ and to the Church.
- ♦ Get up and leave the Reconciliation Room.
- ♦ Then take a few minutes for quiet prayer in church before leaving for home.