

1. Introduction to Penance

- a. Heals wounds to oneself and the Church (mortal and venial)
- b. Sacrament of conversion, penance, confession, forgiveness, and reconciliation
- c. It is a sacrament - The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us. The visible rites by which the sacraments are celebrated signify and make present the graces proper to each sacrament. They bear fruit in those who receive them with the required dispositions.(CCC 1131)
- d. God gave Peter the keys to the Kingdom, thus he has authority.
- e. Man acts and God acts
- f. Bishop or Priest forgives in the name of Jesus Christ
 - i. there is nothing that God can't figure
 - ii. We have to ask to be forgiven though. .
- g. Read absolution prayer (CCC #1449)

God, the Father of mercies,
through the death and the 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 from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.⁴⁸

2. Why

- a. Immediate effect – reconciliation with the Church
- b. Church has the power to forgive sins, sins forgiven
- c. Sacramental encounter, receive grace and guilt removed
- d. Requirement of contrition helps me to take it seriously, reform life
- e. Grace given which includes help to overcome the sin.
- f. Confession is part of penance and satisfaction, humbling
- g. Wouldn't be perfect contrition if no desire to confess and also I don't know if my contrition is perfect.
- h. Human and psychological good to tell someone else
- i. Throughout history there has been a need for it.
 - i. Old Testament
 1. Jonah and Ninevah – fasting, sack cloth and ashes, alms
 2. Yon Kippor – feast of forgiveness of sins
 - ii. New Testament
 1. John the Baptist preaching forgiveness
 2. Jesus starts our ministry with forgiveness, important
 3. Jesus forgives sins throughout ministry
 4. Power of binding and loosing given to apostles
 - iii. Early (Canonical penance)
 1. public penance – different kinds
 2. Penance done before to show contrition and stress seriousness of sin
 3. done only once in life and at death
 4. done only for grave sins(adultery, apostacy, murder and more over time), venial sins forgiven through prayer, fasting, ad giving alms.
 5. Not popular and led to new form

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- iv. Gradually over time, 6th c – 12th c switched to tariff penance
 - 1. Penitential book with list of sins and penances
 - 2. Tariff one had to do penances before getting absolution and penance could take a lifetime
 - 3. St. Columba and missionaries changed it since hard to go back to same priest
 - 4. Penance done after absolution and in private
 - j. We are all sinners because of the original sin of Adam and Eve, we fall just like they did
 - i. Original sin
 - ii. Actual sin (sins we commit)
 - 1. mortal
 - a. serious matter
 - b. aware something wrong
 - c. full consent
 - 2. venial - less serious
2. What
- a. Matter (quasi matter) penitent's contrition, confession, and satisfaction (Man's action)
 - i. necessary matter – all mortal sins species, number, and kind
 - ii. optional matter – venial sins
 - b. Form
 - i. words of absolution (God's action)
 - ii. Forgive in the name of Jesus Christ
 - c. Three forms
 - i. Individual
 - ii. Communal
 - iii. General absolution (grave necessity CCC 1483, diocesan bishop is the judge).
 - iv. All require individual confession
 - 1. Christ heals individually
 - 2. Christ addresses each one individually.
3. Who
- a. A person is in a sense judging oneself as will be done at the end of the world.(CCC 1470)
 - b. Minister – priest with faculty to do it, basically anywhere except Rome
 - c. Secrecy of confession called the sacramental seal or secret which binds the priest not to reveal anything in confession
4. When
- a. receive once reach age of reason
 - b. Children must go to confession before receiving holy communion for first time (CCC #1457)
 - c. Are supposed to go at least once a year
5. How - 5 steps to receive sacraments
- 1. Examine conscience carefully
 - 2. Contrition(sorrow for sin) (CCC #1451)

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- a. Perfect (contrition of charity) (remits venial sins and mortal if firm resolution to go to confession as soon as possible)
- b. Imperfect (contrition of fear)
- c. It is a choice not a feeling
- d. Psychological Elements of Contrition
 - i. cognitional element – recalling past sins and acknowledge that I have sinned
 - ii. affective element – sorrow and detestation of ones sin
 - iii. volitional element– firm resolve to sin no more and to make amends for ones' sin.
3. Resolution (resolve not to commit again)
4. Confession of sins to priest and absolution (Confession to a priest is essential (CCC #1456)
 - e. All mortal sins must be confessed Venial sins confessed help form one's conscience (CCC 1458)
 - f. Sin is forgiven but effects can still remain in sinner and others. Need to work to overcome affects.
 - g. Tell sins to priest because he represents Christ (Confessor is minister of Christ)
 - h. Private vs face-to-face
 - i. should be able to choose
 - ii. this should not be a factor to discourage the penitent
 - i. Acceptance of penance
 - j. Absolution
 - i. All sin can be forgiven except those which special permission is needed, second time abortion
 - ii. Have to have contrition (sorrow and they are going to confession) and firm purpose of amendment
 - iii. Conditional absolution can be given to a person who is unconscious
 - iv. Only sin which can't be forgiven is when don't ask for forgiveness, sin against Holy Spirit.
 - k. After confession – penance/satisfactino
 - i. Atone for sin
 - ii. It remits temporal punishment
 - iii. Repairs the harm caused by sin.
 - iv. Promote amendment of life
 - l. Effect of sacrament is a restored relationship with God and the Church. (CCC 1468)