

## DIPPING INTO THE CATECHISM

32

From the Compendium of the Catechism: paragraphs: 295 – 305



### Why did Christ institute the sacraments of Penance and the Anointing of the sick?

Christ, the physician of our soul and body, instituted these sacraments because the new life that He gives us in the sacraments of Christian initiation can be weakened and even lost because of sin. Therefore, Christ willed that His Church should continue His work of healing and salvation by means of these two sacraments.

### The sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation

#### What is the name of this sacrament?

It is called the sacrament of Penance, the sacrament of Reconciliation, the sacrament of Forgiveness, the sacrament of Confession, and the sacrament of Conversion.

#### Why is there a sacrament of Reconciliation after Baptism?

Since the new life of grace received in Baptism does not abolish the weakness of human nature nor the inclination to sin (that is, *concupiscence*), Christ instituted this sacrament for the conversion of the baptised who have been separated from Him by sin.

#### When did He institute this sacrament?

The Risen Lord instituted this sacrament on the evening of Easter when He showed Himself to His apostles and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained” (John 20:22-23).

#### Do the baptised have need of conversion?

The call of Christ to conversion continues to resound in the lives of the baptised. Conversion is a continuing obligation for the whole Church. She is holy but includes sinners in her midst.

#### What is interior penance?

It is the movement of a “contrite heart” (Psalm 51:19) drawn by divine grace to respond to the merciful love of God. This entails sorrow for and abhorrence of sins

committed, a firm purpose not to sin again in the future and trust in the help of God. It is nourished by hope in divine mercy.

### **What forms does penance take in the Christian life?**

Penance can be expressed in many and various ways but above all in fasting, prayer, and almsgiving. These and many other forms of penance can be practiced in the daily life of a Christian, particularly during the time of Lent and on the penitential day of Friday.

### **What are the essential elements of the sacrament of Reconciliation?**

The essential elements are two: the acts of the penitent who comes to repentance through the action of the Holy Spirit, and the absolution of the priest who in the name of Christ grants forgiveness and determines the ways of making satisfaction.

### **What are the acts of the penitent?**

They are: a careful examination of conscience; contrition (or repentance), which is perfect when it is motivated by love of God and imperfect if it rests on other motives and which includes the determination not to sin again; confession, which consists in the telling of one's sins to the priest; and satisfaction or the carrying out of certain acts of penance which the confessor imposes upon the penitent to repair the damage caused by sin.

### **Which sins must be confessed?**

All grave sins not yet confessed, which a careful examination of conscience brings to mind, must be brought to the sacrament of Penance. The confession of serious sins is the only ordinary way to obtain forgiveness.

### **When is a person obliged to confess mortal sins?**

Each of the faithful who has reached the age of discretion is bound to confess his or her mortal sins at least once a year and always before receiving Holy Communion.

#### **Ancient image of Jesus**

*It is essential that every Catholic has access to good Catechesis to be able to deepen their faith. The Diocese of Plymouth recommends the many Catechetical Workshops from 'Franciscan at Home,' for more information on access to these and online or real group sessions contact [deborah.vankroonenburg@prcdtr.org.uk](mailto:deborah.vankroonenburg@prcdtr.org.uk)*

