

## Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults

### SACRAMENTS OF HEALING: Confession and Anointing

#### Introduction

Be prepared to share the following: “When I think about going to confession, the thought that comes to mind is...”

#### Presentation

1. 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.*
  - a. While Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist and POWERFUL, they do not make us perfect instantly. It will take time.... Sometimes lots of time!
  - b. Jesus understands this.
2. 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.
3. 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; Mark 1,15 & 2,1-2; Luke 7,48 & 15,18; John 20, 19-23)
  - a. “WHY DO I NEED TO GO TO CONFESSION, I CAN JUST TALK WITH GOD?” True, but God wants you to be reconciled with the Church as well, our sin hurts other people too! (we need to be reconciled to the Church community as well as to God)
  - b. Also, this was the way that God chooses to forgive us. How rude to say – “no, I want to do it another way”/
4. 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. 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)
  - a. While Jesus gave the sacrament to the Church in those days between Resurrection & Ascension, it would take the current “form” of the sacrament hundreds of years to develop
  - b. Early Days; Order of Penitents; the Irish Monks

5. 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)
  - a. This is what I did (name the sin and how many times – especially confessing our “mortal or deadly sins”); I am sorry; I am going to really try to not do it again (form purpose of amendment)
  - b. Forgiveness is given with the grace to begin again
6. The 'confessor' (the priest or bishop) 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)
7. The sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick strengthens the baptized when they experience grave illness or old age. The sacrament unites the sick person to the suffering of Christ and strengthens them to endure the sufferings of illness or old age. (CCC 1499-1532)
8. Throughout his life Christ healed the sick and commanded his disciples to continue this ministry as well (Luke 6, 19; Mark 1, 41 & 3,10 & 6,5-6; Matthew 10,8 & 25,36)
9. The celebration of the Anointing of the Sick consists in the anointing of the forehead and hands of the sick person accompanied with a liturgical prayer asking for special graces of strength, peace and courage.
  - a. The grace: sometimes physical healing. Always the spiritual healing and grace of knowing we are not alone as we carry the cross of illness.
  - b. Catholics will often refer to a final anointing as “The Last Rites”
10. Recall our definition: **A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.**
  - a. **Reconciliation:**
    - **Outward Sign:**
    - **Instituted when?**
    - **What is the grace?**
  - b. **Anointing:**
    - **Outward sign:**
    - **Instituted when?**
    - **What is the grace?**