

The Sacrament of Confession/Penance/Reconciliation

Who, What, When, Where, Why, How?

Who?

-established the Sacrament? ----Christ (John 20:19-23) Paul mentions it in 2 Cor 2:10, 2 Cor 5:17-20.

- is the minister? --- priest or bishop (*sacerdos*)

- is the subject? ----Baptized Catholic past the age of reason

What?

- is the purpose of the Sacrament? ---- reconciliation, restoration, justification, sanctification, strengthened in virtue, reception of sanctifying and sacramental graces, *transformation in Christ*

- is the form and matter? ---matter – acts of the penitent (contrition, confession, satisfaction) ---form – prayer of absolution by priest with faculties

When?

- after age of reason, once a year minimum if mortal sins are present (What are mortal sins? Serious matter, full knowledge, free will)

- Wednesday after 6:05 AM Mass, Wed 7:30 PM, Sat after 8 AM Mass and 3:30 PM.

- in history did we arrive at the current manner of administration of the sacrament?

Where?

- 2 ordinary forms: private confession to a priest, communal penance service including individual and integral confession and absolution

- 1 extraordinary form: general absolution in case of danger of death with no time or grave necessity if too many penitents/not enough ministers and penitents will be deprived of holy communion for a long while (very restrictive in circumstance)

- confessionals must have screen for optional use by penitent

Why?

- confess your sins to a priest? Why not go directly to God?

- 1) Jesus set it up that way
- 2) Know that your sins are forgiven
- 3) Some may be retained
- 4) Give practical advice
- 5) Graces received

- frequent confession if I only have venial sins?

- 1) More we go, the easier to remember --practice examination of conscience
- 2) Receive sanctifying and sacramental graces
- 3) We progress in our spiritual lives
- 4) Special encounter with Christ through the priest
- 5) Good to hear someone say, "your sins are forgiven"
- 6) Need opportunity to speak

How?

Prepare through Examination of conscience, practice act of contrition, remember last time, resolution to do penance and firm purpose of amendment

Individual Session with priest:

Bless me Father

Last confession was...

Pause

Confess sins (type and number of mortal sins and venial ones)

Listen to priest's response

Understand penance

Act of Contrition

Absolution

Go in peace – "Thanks be to God"