

Penance / Reconciliation / Confession

The **Sacrament of Penance** is one of two sacraments in which the Lord continues His healing ministry. The other is the Anointing of the Sick. Reconciliation is a celebration of God forgiving love as witnessed by Christ in the Gospels. As Christians, we are called to live a life of ongoing renewal, constantly striving to grow in our ability to love both God and our neighbor in the way that Jesus has taught us to love. When our human selfishness gets the better of us (sin), we need to turn to God with sorrow for our failure to love, and we need to hear God's words of forgiveness, to know that God *always* forgives us. That is what happens in the Sacrament of penance. We are given a fresh start; we become signs of reconciliation and healing for others.

At times, this sacrament is referred to as the Sacrament of Penance, or the Sacrament of Reconciliation, or as Confession. All three titles refer to the same sacrament and each emphasizes a different aspect of what occurs in the sacrament.

The Sacrament of Penance is celebrated at a number of our churches on a regular basis or by appointment. Please check the home page of our website or call our parish office at (607) 733-3484 for the most current schedule.

The parish provides preparation for children and adults who would like to celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time. Preparation is a two-year process with general preparation in the faith during the first year and specific preparation in the second year. Typically, children receive the sacrament of Reconciliation in the second grade but it can be anytime from the age of 7 on. The child must celebrate their First Penance/Confession prior to preparing for First Holy Communion. Specific information about the classes and preparation (for children and adults) is available by calling the Faith Formation Office at (607) 733-3484.

