

THE ROMAN RITUAL

RENEWED BY DECREE OF
THE MOST HOLY SECOND ECUMENICAL COUNCIL OF THE VATICAN
AND PROMULGATED BY AUTHORITY OF POPE PAUL VI

THE ORDER OF PENANCE

ENGLISH TRANSLATION ACCORDING
TO THE TYPICAL EDITION

For Use in the Dioceses of the United States of America

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United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
and Confirmed by the Apostolic See

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CHAPTER I

THE ORDER FOR RECONCILING INDIVIDUAL PENITENTS

The Reception of the Penitent

41. When the penitent comes to confess his (her) sins, the Priest welcomes him (her) with kindness and greets him (her) with friendly words.
42. Then the penitent and, if appropriate, the Priest as well, sign themselves with the Sign of the Cross, saying:

**In the name of the Father, and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

The Priest invites the penitent to have trust in God, in these or similar words:

**May God, who has shone his light in our hearts
grant that you may truly know your sins
and his mercy.**

The penitent replies:

Amen.

Other optional texts, nos. 67–71.

The Reading of the Word of God (Optional)

43. Then, if appropriate, the Priest reads or recites from memory a text of Sacred Scripture in which God's mercy is announced and people are called to conversion.

The texts are found at nos. 72–84.

The Confession of Sins and the Acceptance of Satisfaction

44. Next, the penitent confesses his (her) sins, after first saying, where it is the custom, a general formula for confession (e.g., I confess to almighty God).

If necessary, the Priest assists the penitent to make an integral confession, offers him (her) suitable counsel, and urges him (her) to have contrition for his (her) faults, reminding him (her) that through the Sacrament of Penance a Christian, by dying and rising with Christ, is renewed in the Paschal Mystery. Then the Priest proposes a work of penance that the penitent accepts to make satisfaction for sin and to amend his (her) life.

The Priest should take care that he adapts to the penitent's circumstances in every way, whether in the manner of speaking or even in the counsel provided.

The Prayer of the Penitent and the Absolution

45. The Priest then invites the penitent to express his (her) contrition, which the penitent may do in these or similar words:

O my God,
 I am sorry and repent with all my heart
 for all the wrong I have done
 and for the good I have failed to do,
 because by sinning I have offended you,
 who are all good and worthy to be loved above all things.
 I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace,
 to do penance,
 to sin no more,
 and to avoid the occasions of sin.
 Through the merits of the Passion of our Savior Jesus Christ,
 Lord, have mercy.

Other optional texts, nos. 85–92.

46. Then the Priest, extending his hands over the penitent's head (or at least extending his right hand), says:

**God, the Father of mercies,
 through the Death and Resurrection of his Son
 has reconciled the world to himself
 and poured out the Holy Spirit for the forgiveness of sins;
 through the ministry of the Church
 may God grant 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.**

The penitent replies:

Amen.

The Proclamation of Praise of God and the Dismissal of the Penitent

47. After the absolution, the Priest continues:

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good.

The penitent concludes:

For his mercy endures for ever.

Then the Priest dismisses the penitent who has been reconciled, saying:

The Lord has forgiven your sins.

Go in peace.

Other optional texts, no. 93.

CHAPTER II

THE ORDER FOR RECONCILING SEVERAL PENITENTS WITH INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION

The Introductory Rites

Liturgical Song

48. When the faithful are gathered, and as the Priest enters the church, if appropriate, a Psalm, antiphon, or other appropriate liturgical song may be sung, e.g.:

Answer us, Lord, for your mercy is kind;
in the abundance of your mercies, look upon us.

Or:

With boldness let us approach the throne of grace,
that we may receive mercy
and find grace as a timely help.

Greeting

49. When the singing is concluded the Priest begins with the Sign of the Cross, then greets those present:

Grace, mercy, and peace to you from God the Father
and Christ Jesus our Savior.

R. And with your spirit.

Or:

Grace and peace to you from God the Father and from Jesus Christ,
who loved us and washed away our sins in his Blood.

R. To him be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

Other optional texts, nos. 94–96.

Then the Priest himself or another minister instructs those present with a brief address about the importance and purpose of the celebration and about the order of the service.

Prayer

50. Then the Priest invites all to pray, in these or similar words:

**Let us pray, brothers and sisters (brethren),
that God, who calls us to conversion,
will grant us the grace of true and fruitful repentance.**

And all pray in silence for a while. Then the Priest says the prayer:

**Graciously hear the prayers of those who call upon you,
we ask, O Lord,
and forgive the sins of those who confess to you,
granting us in your kindness both pardon and peace.
Through Christ our Lord.**

All:

Amen.

Or:

**Set your Spirit in our midst, O Lord,
to wash us in the cleansing waters of repentance
and to make of us a living sacrifice to you,
so that, as he gives us life,
we may everywhere praise your glory
and confess your mercy.
Through Christ our Lord.**

All:

Amen.

Other optional texts, nos. 97-100.

The Celebration of the Word of God

51. Then the celebration of the word begins. If there are several readings, a Psalm or other appropriate liturgical song or even a period of silence should intervene between them, so that the word of God may be understood more deeply by everyone and heartfelt assent be given to it. If there is only one reading, it is desirable that it be taken from the Gospel.

FIRST EXAMPLE

“Love is the fullness of the law”

FIRST READING

Love the Lord your God with all your heart.

A reading from the Book of Deuteronomy

5:1–3, 6–7, 11–12, 16–21a; 6:4–6

Moses summoned all Israel and said to them,
“Hear, O Israel, the statutes and decrees
which I proclaim in your hearing this day,
that you may learn them and take care to observe them.
The LORD, our God, made a covenant with us at Horeb;
not with our fathers did the LORD make this covenant,
but with us, all of us who are alive here this day.”

He said:

“I, the LORD, am your God,
who brought you out of the land of Egypt,
that place of slavery.

You shall not have other gods beside me.

‘You shall not take the name of the LORD, your God, in vain.
For the LORD will not leave unpunished
him who takes his name in vain.

‘Take care to keep holy the sabbath day
as the LORD, your God, commanded you.

‘Honor your father and your mother,
as the LORD, your God, has commanded you,
that you may have a long life and prosperity in the land
which the LORD, your God, is giving you.

‘You shall not kill.

‘You shall not commit adultery.

‘You shall not steal.

‘You shall not bear dishonest witness against your neighbor.

CHAPTER III

**THE ORDER FOR RECONCILING
SEVERAL PENITENTS
WITH GENERAL CONFESSION
AND ABSOLUTION**

60. For reconciling several penitents with general confession and absolution, in the cases provided for in the law, everything is done as described above for a celebration for reconciling several penitents with individual confession and absolution, with the following changes only.

Instruction

After the Homily, or in the Homily itself, the faithful who wish to receive general absolution should be instructed that they should be properly disposed, that is, each one should repent of his (her) transgressions and resolve to abstain from these sins, to intend to make reparation for any scandal and harm he (she) may have caused, and also to resolve to confess individually at the proper time each of the grave sins that cannot now be confessed. In addition, some satisfaction (an act of penance) to be performed should be proposed to all, to which each individual may add something if he (she) desires.

General Confession

61. Then a Deacon or other minister or the Priest himself invites the penitents who wish to receive absolution to indicate this by some kind of sign. For example:

Let those who now wish to receive sacramental absolution kneel and make the general confession.

Or:

Let those who now wish to receive sacramental absolution bow down and make the general confession.

The penitents say a formula for general confession (e.g., I confess to almighty God), after which, a litany or appropriate liturgical song may occur, as described above for reconciling several penitents with individual confession and absolution (no. 54). At the end, the Lord's Prayer is always added.

CHAPTER IV

VARIOUS TEXTS TO BE USED IN THE CELEBRATION OF RECONCILIATION

I. FOR THE RECONCILIATION OF ONE PENITENT

Invitation to Trust in God

67. Come with trust to the Lord,
who does not wish the sinner to die
but to turn back to him and live. (Ez 33:11)
68. May the Lord Jesus welcome you.
He came to call sinners, not the just.
Have confidence in him. (Lk 5:32)
69. May the grace of the Holy Spirit illumine your heart,
so that with confidence you may confess your sins
and come to know the mercy of God.
70. May the Lord be in your heart,
that you may confess your sins with a contrite spirit.
71. If you have sinned, do not lose heart.
We have an advocate with the Father,
Jesus Christ the Righteous One:
he is the atonement for our sins,
and not for our sins only but for those of the whole world. (1 Jn 2:1-2)

Short Readings from Sacred Scripture

72. Is 53:4-6

Let us look to Jesus,
who suffered for our salvation and rose again for our justification.

It was our infirmities that he bore,
our sufferings that he endured,
While we thought of him as stricken,

Prayer of the Penitent

85. Remember, Lord, the compassion and mercy you showed long ago.
Do not recall my sins and failings.
In your mercy remember me, Lord, because of your goodness.

(Ps 25 [24]:6–7)

86. Wash me, O Lord, from my iniquity and cleanse me from my sin.
I acknowledge my offense; my sin is before me always. (Ps 51 [50]:4–5)

87. Father, I have sinned against you
and I am not worthy to be called your son.
Be merciful to me, a sinner.

(Lk 15:18; 18:13)

88. O God, most merciful Father,
like the Prodigal Son, I turn to you and say:
I have sinned against you;
I am no longer worthy to be called your child.

O Jesus Christ, Savior of the world,
like the thief to whom you opened the gates of paradise, I beg you:
Lord, remember me in your Kingdom.

O Holy Spirit, fount of love,
with trust I call upon you:
Purify me;
make me walk as a child of the light.

89. Lord Jesus,
who opened the eyes of the blind, healed the sick,
forgave the sinful woman,
and, after his denial, confirmed Peter in your love,
hear my plea:
forgive all my sins,
renew me in your love,
and grant that I may live in perfect communion
with my brothers and sisters
and so proclaim your salvation to all.

90. Lord Jesus,
who chose to be called the friend of sinners,
through the mystery of your Death and Resurrection,
free me from my sins.
May your peace grow strong in me,
that I may bear the fruits of charity, justice, and truth.
91. Lord Jesus Christ, Lamb of God,
who take away the sin of the world,
through the grace of the Holy Spirit
be pleased to reconcile me with your Father;
cleanse me in your Blood from every fault
and make me fully alive to the praise of your glory.
92. Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your merciful love;
turn your face from my sins
and blot out all my guilt;
create a pure heart in me, O God,
renew an upright spirit deep within me.

Or:

Lord Jesus, Son of God,
have mercy on me, a sinner.

Or:

O my God,
I am heartily sorry for having offended you,
and I detest all my sins because of your just punishments,
but most of all because they offend you, my God,
who are all good and deserving of all my love.
I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace,
to sin no more
and to avoid the near occasions of sin.
Amen.