

“The rite and formulas of Penance are to be revised in such a way  
that they more clearly express the nature and effects of this sacrament.”  
(*Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy*, #72)

The Roman Ritual  
THE RITE OF PENANCE

Decree of the Sacred Congregation for Divine Worship (2 December 1973)

INTRODUCTION

- I. The Mystery of Reconciliation in the History of Salvation (#1-2)
  - Jesus’ ministry of reconciliation
  - Jesus’ ministry given over to the Apostles and the Church
  - the three sacraments of reconciliation
  
- II. The Reconciliation of Penitents in the Church’s Life (#3-7)
  - the Church is holy but always in need of purification
  - penance in the Church’s life and liturgy
  - reconciliation with God and with the Church
  - the sacrament of Penance and its parts
  - the necessity and benefit of the sacrament
  
- III. Offices and Ministries in the Reconciliation of Penitents (#8-11)
  - the community in the celebration of Penance
  - the minister of the sacrament
  - the pastoral exercise of this ministry
  - the penitent
  
- IV. The Celebration of the Sacrament of Penance (#12-14)
  - the place of celebration
  - the time of celebration
  - liturgical vestments
  
- A. Rite for the Reconciliation of Individual Penitents (#15-21)
- B. Rite for the Reconciliation of Several Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution (#22-30)
- C. Rite for the Reconciliation of Several Penitents with General Confession and Absolution (#31-35)
  
- V. Penitential Celebrations (#36-37)

VI. Adaptations of the Rite to Various Regions and Circumstances

- adaptations by episcopal conferences
- the competence of the Bishop
- adaptations by the minister

CHAPTER I: RITE FOR RECONCILIATION OF INDIVIDUAL PENITENTS (#41-47)

CHAPTER II: RITE FOR RECONCILIATION OF SEVERAL PENITENTS WITH INDIVIDUAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION (#48-59)

CHAPTER III: RITE FOR RECONCILIATION OF SEVERAL PENITENTS WITH GENERAL CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION (#60-63)

CHAPTER IV: VARIOUS TEXTS IN THE CELEBRATION OF RECONCILIATION

For the Reconciliation of One Penitent

- invitation to trust in God (#67-71, 5 options)
- short readings from scripture (#72-83, 12 options)
- prayer of the penitent (#85-92, 9 options)
- after the absolution (#93, 4 options)

For the Reconciliation of Several Penitents

- greeting (#94-96, 3 options)
- opening prayers (#97-100, 4 options)
- biblical readings
  - o readings from the Old Testament (#101-132, 32 options)
  - o responsorial Psalms (#133-147, 15 options)
  - o readings from the New Testament (#148-175, 28 options)
  - o readings from the Gospels (#176-201, 26 options)
- invitation of the minister for a general confession of sins (#202-203, 10 options: 5 if the prayer is directed to the Father; 5 if directed to Christ)
- penitential intercessions (#204-205, 2 options if addressed to the Father, and 2 options if addressed to Christ)
- proclamation of praise (#206, 14 options, all psalm texts)
- concluding prayers (#207-214, 8 options)

APPENDIX I:

- Absolution from Censures
- Dispensation from Irregularity

APPENDIX II: Sample Penitential Services

- preparing penitential services
- penitential services during Lent
  - o first example: penance leads to a strengthening of baptismal grace

- second example: penance prepares for a fuller sharing in the paschal mystery of Christ for the salvation of the world
- penitential celebrations during Advent (one example)
- common penitential celebrations
  - sin and conversion
  - the son returns to the Father
  - the beatitudes
  - for children: God comes to look for us
  - for young people: renewal of our lives according to the Christian vocation
  - for the sick: the time of sickness is a time of grace

### APPENDIX III: Form of Examination of Conscience (3 models)