

Second Rite of Reconciliation

HOW TO GO TO CONFESSION

About the Second Rite

The second form of the sacrament of penance is a communal liturgical celebration from beginning to end. It begins with the community listening to the word of God. The homily emphasises our need for repentance and the infinite mercy of God. During the examination of conscience, the assembly reflects together on where and how they have fallen short of their baptismal commitment to follow Christ.

The individual confession and absolution that follows is communal too in that the penitents approach the confessors in full view of all present. The priests stand at appropriate points around the worship space in such a way that penitents can be seen but not heard by others. This is easily arranged in most churches. Those who wish to confess their sins approach one of the priests. While no restriction is placed on the individual's confession, good manners and common sense dictate that people limit the time they spend with confessors. More time for integral confession and spiritual guidance is available at the first rite. It is a moving experience to witness fellow Christians humbling themselves by publicly approaching a confessor for forgiveness. As they do, we pray for them, that they will know the fullness of God's grace and mercy.

After the confessions, the ceremony concludes with a proclamation of praise, a prayer of thanksgiving and a blessing. These are an integral to the celebration. *Elizabeth Harrington, Liturgy Brisbane*

The Liturgy lasts for one hour and consists of

- † **Introductory Rite**
The priest greets us and invites us to conversion.
- † **Liturgy of the Word**
We listen to God's Word.
- † **Examination of Conscience**
We prepare as a community. We listen to our hearts.
- † **Rite of Reconciliation**
Individually we go to the priest.
As this Rite is communal, it is prudent to keep
your confession of sins brief. Return to your seat to pray.
- † **Concluding Rite**
Together, as a community, we praise God and give thanks.
We go in the peace of Christ.

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BRING THIS LEAFLET WITH YOU

- Go to the priest and take a seat. He will greet you and guide you.
- Tell the priest your sins.
- When the priest has listened, he will speak with you and will suggest a penance.
This may be in the form of prayer or action.
- After you have received your penance, make a brief act of contrition if required. *See below*
- The priest will absolve you of your sins. Go in peace.
- Return to your seat and when invited, stand together with other penitents to participate in the Concluding Rite.
- You may like to carry out your penance before you leave the church.

Prayer of the Penitent (Act of Contrition)

Lord Jesus, you chose to be called the friend of sinners. By your saving death and resurrection free me from my sins. May your peace take root in my heart and bring forth a harvest of love, holiness, and truth. #45 [90]

or

Lord God, in your goodness have mercy on me: do not look on my sins but take away all my guilt. Create in me a clean heart and renew within me an upright spirit. #45 [92]