



# Come Home To God's Mercy

GO TO CONFESSION THIS LENT

AND FIND OUT WHAT PEACE REALLY IS!

**A CONFESSOR IS AVAILABLE  
IN EVERY PARISH THROUGHOUT LENT  
IN THE DIOCESE OF WORCESTER  
ON TUESDAY EVENINGS FROM 7 -8:30 P.M.  
(February 23, March 2, 9, 16, 23 & 30)**

## **Why do we need the Sacrament of Penance?**

Because of human weakness Christians 'turn aside from their early love (cf. Rev 2:4) and even break off their friendship with God by sinning. The Lord, therefore, instituted a special Sacrament of Penance for the pardon of sins committed after baptism, and the Church has faithfully celebrated the sacrament throughout the centuries—in varying ways, but retaining its essential elements. This sacrament is a tangible experience of God's forgiveness and our reconciliation with the Church.

## **What happens in the Sacrament of Penance?**

In the Sacrament of Penance, "the sinner who by grace of a merciful God embraces the way of penance comes back to the Father who first loved us (cf. 1 Jn 4:19), to Christ who gave

himself up for us, and to the Holy Spirit who has been poured out on us abundantly. Likewise, those who by grave sin have withdrawn from the communion of love with God are called back in the sacrament of penance to the life they have lost. And those who through daily weakness fall into venial sins draw strength from a repeated celebration of penance to gain the full freedom of the children of God.

## **What if I haven't been to confession in a long time?**

Welcome home! The priest is waiting to welcome you with patience and joy. He will gently lead you through your confession. Don't worry about remembering anything. He will help you to receive this wonderful sacrament of mercy and peace.



*Maybe you know someone who's been afraid to come back to confession for a long time. Invite them to Come Home to God's Mercy in the Sacrament of Penance so that they can confess their sins and be forgiven by God. Christ waits for them with his mercy and his peace.*

# TWO ACTS OF CONTRITION

O My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. (*Rite of Penance, no.45*)

or

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended thee, and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell; but most of all, because they offend thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of thy grace, to confess my sins, do penance, and amend my life. Amen. (*traditional*)



Learn more about how the  
Sacrament of Penance  
can bring peace into your life.

Visit

[www.worcesterdiocese.org](http://www.worcesterdiocese.org)

today.

**1. Preparation**—Before going to confession, compare your life with the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, and the example of Christ and then pray to God for forgiveness. (*for other ideas for an Examination of Conscience, visit [www.worcesterdiocese.org](http://www.worcesterdiocese.org)*)

**2. Confessing**—After the Priest welcomes you, both of you make the sign of the cross. The Priest may read a short verse from the Bible. Then, after you tell the Priest how long it has been since you last went to confession, confess all of your sins. The priest will then offer suitable advice and impose a “penance,” which may include prayer, self-denial, or works of mercy.

**3. Act of Contrition**—The Priest will then invite you to pray a short prayer asking God for forgiveness. You can pray in your own words, or pray the “Act of Contrition” found on the other side of this sheet.

**4. Absolution**—The Priest prays the prayer of absolution, making the sign of the cross over your head during the final words. You answer, “Amen.”

**5. Dismissal**—Confession is completed when the Priest says *God Bless You*, or *Peace be With You*.