

# Topic: Sacraments of Healing & Service

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IHM

Rite of Christian Initiation of Adults (RCIA)

# Opening Prayer

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

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



# Sacraments of Healing:

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# Sacrament of Reconciliation

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- Rooted in Scripture:

- John 20:23—Jesus sending the apostles out to forgive sins.
- 2 Corinthians 5:16-20—St. Paul calls us to be ministers of reconciliation, helping to reconcile the world to Christ.
- James 5:16—we are admonished to confess our sins to one another.

- Historical evolution:

- Canonical Penance (2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> C.)
- Celtic Penance (5<sup>th</sup> C.)
- Confession (7<sup>th</sup> C.-Vatican 2)
- Various liturgical and communal forms of Reconciliation (Vatican 2—1960's)



# Theology of Sacrament of Reconciliation

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- Most accurately called the Sacrament of Reconciliation, as this is the primary character of the sacrament—God’s initiative to reconcile us to him and one another. (vs. Penance, Confession, etc.—our actions)
- As a Sacrament, it is a reminder that God continues to come to us in tangible ways; in this case our words to Christ through the priest, and Christ’s words of absolution to us through the priest.
- This sacrament also recognizes that sin is also always communal, and not merely individual. Our actions affect not only us, but our community, and thus this sacrament reconciles us to God and one another. (The priest acts as a representative of both God and the Christian community.)
- Only “required” once a year if one has committed a mortal sin, and for children before receiving Communion for the first time. (CCC #1457) Though recommended much more frequently and for venial sins as well.
- Mortal sin=grave matter, full knowledge, & deliberate consent. (CCC #1857)
- Venial sin=harms our relationship with God, but does not break it, like mortal sin does. Can be forgiven through prayer, charitable acts, and the Eucharist.

# Process of Sacrament of Reconciliation

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- (1) Examination of Conscience
  - Can be done individually, or communally within the context of scripture readings and/or reflections
- (2) Act of Contrition
  - Our acknowledgement of having sinned, and our genuine sorrow for having done so.
  - Can be individual, or communal; a memorized prayer, or one composed freely from the heart.
- (3) Confession
  - Sharing the nature (and number) of sins to God, through the Priest.
- (4) Absolution
  - The priest, acting in the person of Christ, utters these words: “God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give 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. Amen.”
- (5) Penance
  - As a way not only to show our genuine sorrow for our sin, but as a means to help keep us from sinning again, we perform a penance given by the priest. This can be prayers or actions, or a combination of the two.



# Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick

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- Rooted in Scripture:

- Jesus' constant ministry of healing, and commissioning his apostles to do the same. (Mark 6:7-13)
- Anointing the sick with oil, praying for one another, and the forgiveness of sins. (James 5:14-15)

- Historical evolution:

- Time of the apostles and early Church, laying on of hands, anointing with oil, healing and exorcising demons.
- Gradually became reserved more and more until the time of death ("Extreme Unction"); with focus on the forgiveness of sin.
- Vatican 2—renewed focus on communal celebration and healing; for any serious illness not just the moment of death; repeatable sacrament.

# Sacrament of Anointing of the Sick

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- Theology:
  - We are united as a community; even when celebrated outside of Mass (ie., a home or hospital setting); it is a reminder that the whole Christian community is praying with and for the sick person.
  - The “tangible” part of this sacrament is not only the words and prayers, but the physical anointing of our bodies with oil.
  - This sacrament is for not only physical healing, but mental, emotional, and spiritual healing as well, and can be repeated as often as needed.
- Process:
  - Can take place within Mass, or in a more private setting.
  - Prayer over the oil: “Make this oil a remedy for all who are anointed with it; heal them in body, in soul, and in spirit, and deliver them from every affliction.”
  - Readings from Scripture & prayers.
  - Laying on of hands, and anointing the forehead and hands of the sick.
  - Priest says: “Through this holy anointing may the Lord in his love and mercy help you with the grace of the Holy Spirit.” Respond: “Amen.” Priest continues: “May the Lord who frees you from sin save you and raise you up.” Respond: “Amen.”
  - Communion and the Sacrament of Reconciliation may also be offered.



# Sacraments of Service

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The Sacrament of Marriage



Sacrament of Holy Orders

# Sacrament of Marriage

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- Rooted in Scripture:

- Story of Adam & Eve in Genesis; Jesus' first miracle is at a wedding in Cana.
- Song of Songs in the Old Testament speaks of the passionate love between a young couple and was often used at Jewish weddings and also seen as a metaphor for God's love of Israel (and the Church).
- New Testament echoes this theme, speaking of Christ's love for the Church in spousal, marital terms. (Ephesians 5:21-33)

- Theology of Marriage:

- Total self-giving to one another.
- Permanence, like God's love.
- Fruitful—it is life-giving for the couple, but for the community and God as well.
- “Tangible” aspect of the Sacrament; the words and vows exchanged, as well as the marital act.
- The Sacrament is conferred by the couple; the priest merely witnesses.
- Communal celebration, so should normally take place within a Church (may or may not include Mass).



# Sacrament of Holy Orders

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- Theology of the Sacrament:

- Common priesthood of all believers by virtue of their Baptism vs. Ministerial priesthood.
- Ministry of service, not merely leadership or cultic.
- “Tangible” aspect is the vows of ordination and laying on of hands by the Bishop.

- Evolution of the Sacrament:

- First were Bishops (successors to the apostles); role focusses on teaching.
- Presbyters assisted the Bishop; became known later as Priests; role focusses largely on celebrating Mass and the sacraments.
- Diaconate began as a role of service to help the apostles with the poor; largely focusses on ministry to the poor and assisting the priest with preaching at Mass, baptizing, witnessing a marriage and helping with funerals.

# Discussion Questions

- Please share:

- What questions did this topic and readings raise in your heart or mind?
- What about the sacraments of healing (Reconciliation & Anointing of the Sick) do you find appealing? What fears or questions might you have about these sacraments?
- How does viewing marriage as a sacrament, as well as a vocation of service, affect your views and approach to your own marriage or relationship?
- Are there any questions you have about the sacrament of Holy Orders?



## Closing Prayer: Act of Contrition

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.  
Amen.