

RCIA 2021 Sacraments of Reconciliation and Anointing of the Sick
St Mark the Evangelist Indianapolis

Confession (also known as Reconciliation, also known as Penance)

Why Confession? Is it Biblical?

Daniel 4:27 “wipe away your sin by doing righteousness, and your wrongdoings by showing mercy to the poor”

Galatians 2:16 “we have believed in Christ Jesus that we may be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified”

Romans 6:2-4 “How can we who died to sin yet live in it? Or are you unaware that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were indeed buried with him through baptism into death, so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might live in newness of life.”

Luke 11:41 “give alms [money to help the poor], and behold, everything will be clean for you. “

Matthew 19:21 “Jesus said to him, “If you wish to be perfect, go, sell what you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven. Then come, follow me.”

3rd Century: *Novationism* (teaching that those who sin after baptism cannot rejoin the Church) rejected as heresy

4th century theologian Augustine: “we should amend our lives and give alms to beg God’s mercy for our past sins...in his mercy he cancels the sins we have already committed, provided we do not neglect to make appropriate satisfaction”

Augustine again: “the Lord’s words, *give alms, and everything is clean for you* (Lk 11:41) apply to any work of mercy that benefits somebody”

Confession and penance in the Church for serious sins used to be public, and the periods of penance lasted years before reconciliation was finished

Irish monks in the Middle Ages developed idea of private confessions, writing handbooks for Priests to help them give penitents the right amount of penance to perform (almsgiving or works of mercy)

Is confession biblical? **Penance** is biblical. Why confession to a Priest? Historical reason: to help assign the right **penance** for sins (almsgiving or work of mercy, which can include prayer).

Throughout these changes there is a growing awareness of the power of ***Christ's mercy – the power of Christ's death to forgive all sins, working in and through the Sacraments of the Church:***

the 'treasury of the Church' is the infinite value, which can never be exhausted, which Christ's merits have before God. They were offered so that the whole of mankind could be set free from sin and attain communion with the Father. In Christ, the Redeemer himself, the satisfactions and merits of his Redemption exist and find their efficacy (Catechism of the C.C. 1476)

Parts of Confession:

1. Contrition – feeling sorry for your sins – this is caused by God's grace working in your heart.
2. Confession – confessing your sins out loud to a priest who represents Christ.
3. Absolution – Christ, speaking through the priest as a minister, says “I absolve you from your sins”
4. Penance – our alms or works of mercy involve Christ's grace working as well: they “have their efficacy from him, by him they are offered to the Father, and through him they are accepted by the Father” (Catechism of the C.C. 1460)

Anointing of the Sick (older name/practice: Extreme Unction)

James 5:14-15: “Is anyone among you sick? He should summon the presbyters of the church, and they should pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord, and the prayer of faith will save the sick person, and the Lord will raise him up. If he has committed any sins, he will be forgiven.”

How does Anointing of the Sick help a sick person?

1. Prayer for physical healing
2. Prayer for spiritual healing
3. Joining to Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection