

# Sacraments of Healing



In Brief — Catechism of the Catholic Church

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*"On the evening of that day...He breathed on them, and said to them: Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven..." — Jn 20:19, 22–23*

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## THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE & RECONCILIATION

- 1485 Jesus showed himself to his apostles. *"He breathed on them, and said to them: Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained"* (Jn 20:19, 22–23).
- 1486 The forgiveness of sins committed after Baptism is conferred by a particular sacrament called the sacrament of **conversion, confession, penance, or reconciliation**.
- 1487 The sinner wounds God's honor and love, his own human dignity as a man called to be a son of God, and the spiritual well-being of the Church, of which each Christian ought to be a living stone.
- 1488 To the eyes of faith no evil is graver than sin and nothing has worse consequences for sinners themselves, for the Church, and for the whole world.
- 1489 To return to communion with God after having lost it through sin is a process born of the grace of God who is rich in mercy and solicitous for the salvation of men. One must ask for this precious gift for oneself and for others.
- 1490 The movement of return to God, called **conversion and repentance**, entails sorrow for and abhorrence of sins committed, and the firm purpose of sinning no more in the future. Conversion touches the past and the future and is nourished by hope in God's mercy.
- 1491 The sacrament of Penance is a whole consisting in **three actions of the penitent and the priest's absolution**. The penitent's acts are repentance, confession or disclosure of sins to the priest, and the intention to make reparation and do works of reparation.
- 1492 **Repentance (contrition)** must be inspired by motives that arise from faith. If repentance arises from love of charity for God, it is called *"perfect" contrition*; if it is founded on other motives, it is called *"imperfect."*
- 1493 One who desires to obtain reconciliation with God and with the Church, must confess to a priest **all the unconfessed grave sins** he remembers after having carefully examined his conscience. The confession of venial faults, without being necessary in itself, is nevertheless strongly recommended by the Church.

- 1494 The confessor proposes the performance of certain acts of "**satisfaction**" or "**penance**" to be performed by the penitent in order to repair the harm caused by sin and to re-establish habits befitting a disciple of Christ.
- 1495 Only priests who have received the faculty of absolving from the authority of the Church can **forgive sins in the name of Christ**.

**1496 — The spiritual effects of the Sacrament of Penance are:**

- Reconciliation with God by which the penitent recovers grace
- Reconciliation with the Church
- Remission of the eternal punishment incurred by mortal sins
- Remission, at least in part, of temporal punishments resulting from sin
- Peace and serenity of conscience, and spiritual consolation
- An increase of spiritual strength for the Christian battle

- 1497 **Individual and integral confession of grave sins** followed by absolution remains the only ordinary means of reconciliation with God and with the Church.
- 1498 Through **indulgences** the faithful can obtain the remission of temporal punishment resulting from sin for themselves and also for the souls in Purgatory.

## THE SACRAMENT OF THE ANOINTING OF THE SICK

- 1526 *"Is any among you sick? Let him call for the presbyters of the Church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith will save the sick man, and the Lord will raise him up; and if he has committed sins, he will be forgiven"* (Jas 5:14–15).
- 1527 The sacrament of Anointing of the Sick has as its purpose the conferral of a **special grace on the Christian experiencing the difficulties inherent in the condition of grave illness or old age**.
- 1528 The proper time for receiving this holy anointing has certainly arrived when the believer begins to be in **danger of death because of illness or old age**.
- 1529 Each time a Christian falls seriously ill, he may receive the Anointing of the Sick, and also when, after he has received it, **the illness worsens**.

1530

Only **priests (presbyters and bishops)** can give the sacrament of the Anointing of the Sick, using oil blessed by the bishop, or if necessary by the celebrating presbyter himself.

1531

The celebration of the Anointing of the Sick consists essentially in **the anointing of the forehead and hands of the sick person** (in the Roman Rite), the anointing being accompanied by the liturgical prayer of the celebrant asking for the special grace of this sacrament.

**1532 — The special grace of the Anointing of the Sick has as its effects:**

- The uniting of the sick person to the Passion of Christ, for his own good and that of the whole Church
- The strengthening, peace, and courage to endure in a Christian manner the sufferings of illness or old age
- The forgiveness of sins, if the sick person was not able to obtain it through the sacrament of Penance
- The restoration of health, if it is conducive to the salvation of his soul
- The preparation for passing over to eternal life

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*"Is anyone among you sick? Let him call for the elders of the church and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord."*

*— James 5:14*

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