

An Encounter with Christ

As are all the sacraments, The Sacrament of Penance is first and foremost an encounter, an exchange between a penitent sinner and the forgiving Christ (in the person of the priest). The form of the sacrament assists us to experience this.

The penitent and Christ greet one another warmly; we make the sign of the cross recalling that this is a sacred moment; we may share a line or two from Scripture to heighten our consciousness to this time; and using the traditional words, "Bless me Father . . ." or other words, we own our sinfulness and place it in Christ's hands.

Owning our sinfulness means to go beyond just listing what we have done or failed to do according to the commandments or teaching of Jesus. Rather, it means uncovering the roots of sin in our hearts and behavior. Here the seven capital sins serve as a good guide. These are recognized by Christian teachers and pagan philosophers as the source of most evil in the world. In this sacrament we resolve, with the help of Christ, to strike at the roots and not just prune the branches.

Christ then speaks to us through the priest, giving us wise counsel and direction for attacking sin's roots. This is the purpose of the penance that is assigned.

With heartfelt gratitude to God for His mercy and understanding we express our contrition and resolve to move forward as His sons and daughters. Our contrition may be expressed in our own words or with any suggested formula.

Finally we hear the words of absolution assuring us that we are forgiven, that we are reconciled with God, with His Church, and within our own being. To this we can only say, AMEN.

And we go, in peace.

Seven Capital Sins

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| 1) Lust | 2) Gluttony | 3) Greed | 4) Envy |
| 5) Anger | 6) Pride | 7) Sloth | |



YEAR OF FAITH 2012
2013

LIVING
OUR
Relationship
WITH
JESUS CHRIST



"Christ then speaks to us through the priest, giving us wise counsel and direction for attacking sin's roots"

**Diocesan Wide
Sacrament
of Penance**
February 20, 2013
5 p.m. to 8 p.m.