

LITURGY PREPARATION FOR THE

Sacrament of Reconciliation (for Baptized Candidates only)

(see RCIA 482 and National Statutes 36)

*The sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated for the candidates before the Rite of Reception/Easter Vigil.
The elect will celebrate this sacrament on some date following their Baptism.*

Questions to Prepare for the Rite

BEFORE THE RITE

1. When will the Sacrament of Reconciliation be celebrated for the Candidates?

Candidates may celebrate this sacrament at a parish communal penance service, as part of a Lenten retreat, at a regular parish confession time, or by making an appointment with a priest. Ideally, the sacrament should be made available as close to the Easter Vigil as is feasible. As far as is possible, each candidate should be given the opportunity to choose the priest to whom they will make their first Confession.

2. When will the Sacrament of Reconciliation be celebrated for the newly-baptized

The newly-baptized will celebrate this sacrament at an appropriate time following their Baptism. They may do so at a regular parish confession time or by making an appointment with a priest. Another idea is to hold a special communal celebration with the Christian initiation group or the entire parish in the Easter season.

IF AT A PARISH COMMUNAL PENANCE SERVICE

3. Will there be priests specifically designated for the candidates?

Some candidates may spend a considerable amount of time celebrating this sacrament for the first time. It may be a good idea to designate one or two priests to hear their confessions in consideration for others from the parish.

4. Will the candidates (and their sponsors) be seated together and/or in a special place?

The support of sponsors and other initiation team members might make some candidates more comfortable celebrating this sacrament. Sponsors and team members should also consider going to Confession at this time, to model person commitment to the sacrament, to prepare their own souls for Easter, and to show solidarity with the candidates.

5. May the elect attend a communal celebration of this sacrament prior to the Easter Vigil?

It may be beneficial to invite the elect to attend a communal celebration prior to the Easter Vigil so that they may join in the Liturgy of the Word and the examination of conscience, and observe the celebration of the sacrament. They DO NOT celebrate the sacrament, however, since they have not yet been baptized (see CCC 1213).

ASSISTING CANDIDATES (AND LATER, THE NEWLY-BAPTIZED) TO CELEBRATE THIS SACRAMENT

6. How will you aid the candidates and newly-baptized to prepare for and celebrate the sacrament?

Incorporate some or all of the following ideas in the Lenten catechesis on this sacrament:

- ☉ Provide an examination of conscience
- ☉ Show the elect and candidates the reconciliation room/confessional
- ☉ Walk through the Rite, explaining the various parts
- ☉ Create a sheet with the Act of Contrition and an outline of the Rite for penitents to take with them
- ☉ Explain the seal of confession

Checklist

- Reserved pews
- Examinations of conscience
- Outline of the Rite/Act of Contrition, etc.