



Reconciliation

The Catholic sacrament of reconciliation (also known as penance) has three elements: conversion, confession and celebration. By undertaking this sacrament, Catholic Christians find God's forgiveness. In turn, Catholic Christians are called to forgive others.

The sacrament of reconciliation is a sacrament of healing. The word reconciliation means 'to be at peace again'.

- Catholic Christians believe in four stages of forgiveness:
 - **Contrition** - the state of feeling remorseful.
 - **Confession** - the priest helps Catholic Christians to confess. They must say sorry and promise to change their lifestyle.
 - **Satisfaction** - the priest sets a task or suggests prayers to be said in order to achieve forgiveness. This is sometimes called 'penance'.
 - **Absolution** - release from the feeling of guilt.

Catholics believe that they must seek to obtain forgiveness in the hope that they can restore their relationship with God.

You will cast out all our sins into the depths of the sea.

Micah 7:19

When satisfaction is given, the priest gives the confessor a task that should, in some way, make up for the sin they have committed and to which they have confessed.

Penance requires ... the sinner to endure all things willingly, be contrite of heart, confess with the lips, and practice complete humility and fruitful satisfaction.
(Catechism of the Catholic Church 1450)

The priest then speaks the words of absolution in the name of Jesus and the bond between the confessor and God is rebuilt.

Jesus told the Parable of the Prodigal Son to help Christians understand that they can receive the gift of forgiveness from God. In the Catholic Church, the sacrament of reconciliation gives confessors the gift of forgiveness and lets them know that

God will help them to change.

Forgiveness of sins brings reconciliation with God, but also with the Church.**Catechism of the Catholic Church 1462**