

# THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

The sacrament that allows our sins to be forgiven is called 'The Sacrament of Reconciliation', or The Sacrament of Forgiveness or simply Confession. During this document, to keep things easy, we'll use **CONFESSION**.

Before we look at Confession, we need to remember the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. When we look at the end of our arms, we see a thumb, fingers and a palm, making up a HAND. Each of these three parts has its own separate functions, but together they make up a whole extremely useful hand.

God the Father, God the Son and the Holy Spirit, each have their own separate functions, but together they are the One True merciful and compassionate God. We should never forget this, especially when looking at sacraments such as Confession which is all about the forgiveness of sins.

When we talk about forgiveness, what exactly does it mean? If someone in a room slapped you across the face and someone else in another part of the room said "I forgive you for slapping that man." What would you, who'd been offended do or say. Probably "Wait just one minute. I'm the one who's been slapped and if there's any forgiving to do I'll do it".

No one has the right to forgive someone if they are not the offended person. It's the same when we offend God by sinning. Only God can forgive us; so what's Confession all about?

It's a magnificent gift from God, given to us by Our Lord Jesus Christ (John 20:19.23), who being one with God has every right to do what he did. It shows that our ever-merciful God wanted every man and woman to know if their sins had been forgiven.

We can pray earnestly and ask God to forgive our sins; go to mass and take part eagerly and earnestly during which we ask for our sins to be forgiven. When we do these things, our ever-merciful God will probably have done so, but we can never be absolutely sure.

**ONLY BY GOING TO CONFESSION HONESTLY CAN WE BE SURE.**

When Jesus instituted this sacrament, he breathed on his Disciples and said “Receive the Holy Spirit, whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven....”. The thing to remember here is Jesus saying “Receive the Holy Spirit”. We must always remember that for the successors of these Disciples to be able to give absolution, they can only do so by the power of the Holy Spirit, that is God himself.

This sacrament is truly a unique magnificent gift that we should grasp with both hands. When we take part in a sincere manner, **we know that if the priest gives absolution, then God will forgive us our sins.**

We know that our existence here on earth is to prove to God that he should accept our mortal souls to live with him for eternity in heaven when we die. How many of us actually think about this with our busy lives and social media doing everything they can to make us forget. Our so-called busy lives are finite, so small when compared with eternity that we should never forget what waits for our souls when we die.

Confession is a true and remarkable gift from God that most Catholics either ignore, or can't be bothered to go to, yet it is such an easy sacrament to take part in and takes up so little time.

When people haven't been to confession for some time, it's usually because it's such a long time ago since they attended, that they've forgotten what to say and do, or they're embarrassed to tell their priest some of the things they are ashamed of doing.

If you've not been for a long time and have forgotten what to do, it's all explained in a simple manner in the document entitled.

### **GOING TO CONFESSION**

If you're ashamed of what you've done and are afraid of what the priest may think of you, then go to one who doesn't know you, but go.

Priests and bishops know all the sins that man can commit and you can never surprise them. You may shock them if it's something like murder, but you'll never surprise them. All they're interested in is the forgiveness of sins they can extend to you if you are earnest and sincere. They know that cleansing your soul of sins is a great gift from God.

**“THE JOY IN HEAVEN OVER ONE REPENTANT SINNER”.**