



## **Frequently Asked Questions About Reconciliation**

### **How often and why should I go to confession?**

First of all, anyone in the state of mortal sin should receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation as soon as possible. That said, the forgiveness of mortal sin is not the only reason to receive this Sacrament. As Confession is a Sacrament, it is a means of receiving God's grace. This alone should be reason enough to receive the Sacrament often. For some of the greatest saints, Confession was a means of spiritual growth and direction. Specifically, Catholics are asked to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation at least twice a year, but might go as often as once a week.

### **What if I forget to confess something?**

If you legitimately forget to confess a sin to the priest, it is still forgiven, provided you are sorry for it and do your penance. Don't let your conscience be tricked into "forgetting" on purpose though, so you can avoid confessing something.

### **How about the "unforgivable sin"?**

The unforgivable sin, referred to as blaspheming against the Holy Spirit in Matthew's Gospel (see chapter 12), is not accepting God's forgiveness. In order for God to forgive our sins, we must accept His power to do so.

### **What's this about the Eucharist wiping away my venial sins?**

The Church teaches that our venial sins are forgiven when we receive the Eucharist. Hence, St. Ambrose said that he received communion "as a remedy against daily infirmity." Go to Mass and receive the Eucharist often to strengthen your resolve in your daily walk with Christ.

### **Where and when can I get to Confession?**

Most churches hold the Rite of Reconciliation of Individual Penitents on a weekly basis. This means that you approach the confessional on your own. At Our Lady of Consolation, Reconciliation is scheduled each Saturday from 3:30PM- 4:30PM and Tuesdays from 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM. The Reconciliation Room is accessed from inside the Chapel (enter from south side of building). Other times during the year, often during Advent and Lent, parishes may host a Rite of Reconciliation of Several Penitents with individual confession and absolution. Often referred to as a "Reconciliation Service," this is where the community gathers to reflect on Scripture, hear a sermon, and listen to questions that might aid in an examination of conscience. This is followed by individual confession and absolution. Coming to a Reconciliation Service is especially helpful in making a good examination of conscience. General Absolution is not offered in the Diocese of Grand Rapids.