

Informational Article on the Sacrament of Reconciliation

The Sacrament of Reconciliation (also known as Confession) has its origins in the ministry of Jesus Christ. The gospels identify Jesus as the one sent from God to proclaim the message of the kingdom and to urge people to repent from sin and believe in the Gospel message.

In fact, the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) establishes the origin of reconciliation to Jesus' first appearance to His disciples after the resurrection. Jesus greeted His disciples with the gift of peace and then commissioned them with the power to forgive sins. Because sin is both personal and communal, there really is no such thing as a "*private sin*". All sin has some social and/or communal dimension, effect, and consequence. Sin offends God and ruptures our relationship with God *and* the community of faith. In retrospect, Jesus healed and forgave and, in turn, entrusted to His Church, the task of being a healing and forgiving community of believers.

In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we seek to restore our ruptured relationship with both God and our neighbor (through the Church).

Within the Catholic Church, the Sacrament of Reconciliation occurs when a penitent, after a thoughtful and deliberate examination of conscience, presents themselves to a duly ordained priest (normally in a small room known as a Confessional), honestly and openly confesses their sins against God and others, and receives a penance (akin to a penalty or duty) for their sin(s), followed by an absolution. In this sacrament, the priest is acting in the name and person of Christ. Therefore, when the priest verbally advises you of the formula of absolution (e.g., "... I absolute you of your sins ...), he is speaking for and in the name of Jesus Christ.

At the Ave Maria Parish, the Sacrament of Reconciliation generally occurs on Saturday, from 4:00 – 4:45 p.m., before the 5:00 p.m. Mass. Individual confessions outside of this time frame are to be arranged with the individual priest(s).

For more information on the Sacrament of Reconciliation, please refer to Diocese of Colorado Springs website (www.diocs.org) and/or the Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC) 976-987 and 1440-1498.