

3. The Sacrament of Penance

This Sacrament allows us to do acts of penance for our sins as a way of deepening our conversion and turning away from the sins we confess.



The Sacrament of Penance is a work of God's infinite mercy, which He desires to lavish upon all of us, but won't force upon any of us – we have the choice to accept or reject it and we do this through concrete acts. The concrete acts are an expression of our desire to follow Jesus who is the example of God's mercy. God has given us the gift of free will.

The interior penance of the Christian can be expressed in many and various ways. ...there are three forms, fasting, prayer, and almsgiving, which express conversion in relation to oneself, to God, and to others. ...other means of obtaining forgiveness of sins are effort at reconciliation with one's neighbour, tears of repentance, concern for the salvation of one's neighbour, the intercession of the saints, and the practice of charity "which covers a multitude of sins."

Catechism of the Catholic Church 1434

A penance may be:

- + To do something nice for your enemy every day for a week.
- + Visit a nursing home or hospital one day a week for a month.
- + Donate time to a soup kitchen or clothing bank.
- + Spend quality time with someone you know is sick or housebound.
- + Assist those who are full-time carers for family members.
- + Pray for those who are suffering in any way.

The "sacrament of Penance consists in restoring us to God's grace and joining us with him in an intimate friendship" CCC 1468.

Personal Reflection

*My penance – do I accept and understand the place of a concrete action as penance?
Can I immerse myself faithfully into the action of the penance I have been given?*