

Confession

The priest will then invite you to confess your sins.

Do not worry if, having prepared, you find you forget things or your mind goes blank. The priest will be ready to help you.

The priest will also reflect with you on the things you speak of, helping you to understand where you might be able to do things differently, where you need to ask God for help.

He will also offer you an act of penance, a way of showing how you wish to live a better life. This act of penance might be a prayer, doing without some good thing for a little while, or might be doing something special to help someone else.

Prayer of Sorrow

The priest will then invite you to make your prayer of sorrow. You may already know such a prayer. Otherwise this is one of the prayers the Church recommends.

**Lord Jesus, Son of God,
have mercy on me, a sinner.**

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Absolution

The priest will then extend his hands over your head and say the words of Absolution. In this way you receive God's forgiveness of your sins. The priest also prays for you that you will receive God's gifts of pardon and peace.

At the end of the priest's prayer you should say:

Amen.

After the Absolution the priest will speak bringing the celebration to an end in words such as:

Go in peace
and proclaim to the world
the wonderful works of God,
who shares with you his life.

You can respond by saying:

Amen or Thanks be to God.

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**Liturgy
Office**
ENGLAND
& WALES

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Celebrating the Sacrament of God's love and mercy



in the Season of Advent

Celebrating the Sacrament of God's love and mercy



in the Season of Advent

During the season of Advent we get ourselves ready to celebrate the birth of Jesus. But as we prepare, it is good to ask ourselves about whether we are trying to live as Jesus taught us to.

If we have not, then there are probably things we need to ask God's forgiveness for. And we will also need to ask God for help to try to live more faithfully, more lovingly.

The sacrament of Reconciliation provides us with the opportunity for both of these things, and the promise that God will hear us saying sorry, and will come to help us.

Jesus said: You shall love the Lord your God
with your whole heart.

Jesus said: Love your neighbour as yourself.

Jesus said: Be perfect as your heavenly Father
is perfect.

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2

Beginnings

The priest will welcome you to the celebration of the sacrament.

You will make the Sign of the Cross together:

**In the name of the Father, of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit.**

The priest will invite you to place your trust in God in words such as:

May the Lord be in your heart
and help you to know true sorrow for your sins
and ask forgiveness of God our Father.

Amen.

Tell the priest how long it is since you last came to Reconciliation. If this is your first or second time of making confession, be sure to let him know. That way you will be a great help to him.

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The Word of God

When we celebrate this sacrament of reconciliation it is helpful to listen to the Scriptures, and be reminded of the love that God has for us — especially when we most need it.

You might have some favourite Bible stories that will remind you of this — perhaps the story of the Prodigal Son, or the story of the woman who washed Jesus' feet with her tears. If not, you might like to read and think about the following story that Jesus told to help people know about the Father's love.

Jesus said: Who among you, if they had a hundred sheep, but then lost one, would not leave the ninety nine in the wilderness and go after the missing one till he found it.

And when he found it would he not joyfully carry it home on his shoulders, and then call together his friends and neighbours? 'Rejoice with me,' he would say. 'I have found my sheep that was lost. In the same way, I tell you, there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who says sorry and wants to do better than over ninety-nine good people who have no need to say sorry. (Luke 15.4-7)

If you read your passage before coming to Reconciliation, be ready to tell the priest something about what you liked in what you read.

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