

# Why Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation? (Why not go *directly* to God?) Ten Good Reasons

1. Of course, go to God directly in prayer. We should do so each day, reflecting upon our lives and actions. The Sacrament of Reconciliation calls for personal reflection and private prayer, too.
2. There is Scriptural support for the Church possessing, on behalf of Jesus, the ministry of forgiveness, including:
  - Matthew 16:19
  - 2 Corinthians 5:18-20
3. Writings and practices from the first generations of Christianity show a clear understanding of the Church as having the key role in conveying penance and reconciling the sinner with the community of faith.
4. Reconciliation to *whom?* To God, self *and* the community. Sin is not just about me and God. The priest represents the community (that has been fractured by one's sin) in his role as confessor.
5. Being alone in the examination of our sinfulness, we may be apt to rationalize sin away...as well as to sometimes judge ourselves too harshly.
6. The penance given in the Sacrament of Reconciliation serves as a reminder that sorrow and forgiveness needs to connect with actions that orient us to a new way of living.
7. The Sacrament of Reconciliation offers a *decisive* moment of forgiveness in the sacramental process.
8. Experiencing understanding and forgiveness through the priest is often powerfully healing and freeing. The priest may offer insights which can result in a more hopeful perspective going forward.
9. In the case of serious (mortal) sin, the Sacrament of Reconciliation is necessary to restore us to spiritual well-being (state of grace).
10. The Sacrament of Reconciliation conveys a grace that strengthens us for living our baptismal identity more faithfully.

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