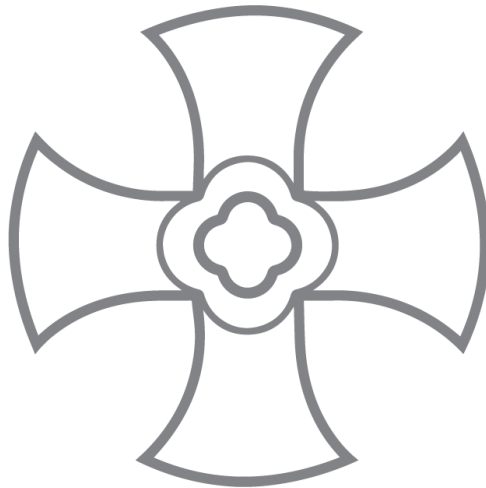


THE RECONCILIATION OF A PENITENT



Resources and Liturgies
for Confession at Church of the Resurrection

WELCOME!

Church of the Resurrection views the act of confession as a sacred endeavor, wherein healing in Christ can be found through the embodied act of confessing sin to another person. There is freedom to share the sins that act as stumbling blocks in our relationship with Christ and with others to someone who is there not to judge or give advice, but to embody Christ's forgiveness.

In this space, confessional confidentiality is always our goal. However, in the case of confessions of an extreme nature, please know that while our laypersons and deacons will receive what you are sharing with them with great care, they are not bound to the same complete confidentiality as our ordained priests. Thus, confessions of an extreme nature may be more appropriate to confess to a priest.

If you are moved by your experience today, please know that you can reach out to confess to a pastor year-round. To do so, email office@churchrez.org and a pastor will contact you.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve +".

Fr. Steve Williamson
Cathedral Dean

As the cathedral church, Resurrection is the headquarters for our regional family of churches, the Diocese of the Upper Midwest, as well as the home of the bishop.



A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Stewart +".

Bishop Stewart E. Ruch III

PREPARING FOR CONFESSION

By Metropolitan Jonah, Archbishop of Washington and Metropolitan of All America and Canada for the Orthodox Church in America. Excerpted from Metropolitan Jonah's address, "Do Not Resent, Do Not React, Keep Inner Stillness".

Repentance, conversion, the transformation of our mind and our life, is the core of the Christian life. Repentance does not mean to beat ourselves up for our sins, or to dwell in a state of guilt and morose self condemnation. Rather, it means to confront our sins, and reject and renounce them, and confess them, trying not to do them again.

The process of purifying our self is hard and painful, at first; but becomes the source of great joy. The more we confess, honestly and nakedly, the more we open ourselves to God's grace, and the lighter we feel. Truly the angels in heaven (and the priest standing before you bearing witness to the confession) rejoice immensely when a person truly repents and confesses their sins, no matter how dark and heinous. There is no sin so grievous that it cannot be forgiven. NOTHING!

Preparing for confession is an important process. It means to take stock of our life, and to recognize where we have fallen, and that we need to repent. The following list on pages 4-5 should help to prepare for confession, but it is not a laundry list. Rather, it should help to spur our memory, so that we can bring things to consciousness that we have forgotten. It is more of an examination of conscience.

The Passions

- Gluttony
- Lust
- Avarice
- Anger
- Envy
- Despondency
- Vainglory
- Pride

The Commandments

Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul and with all your mind; and love your neighbor as yourself.

Loving God

- Do I love God?
- Do I really believe in God, or just go through the motions?
- Do I pray, and when I do, do I connect, or is it just mechanical?
- Do I rush through prayers, Scripture readings, and spiritual literature?
- Do I seek the will of God in all things?
- Do I rebel against what I know to be God's will, and the Christian life?
- Do I try to be obedient, and constantly surrender my life to God?
- Do I go to church, go to confession and communion regularly, keep the fasts?
- Do I try to be conscious of God's Presence, or not?
- Do I try to sanctify my life? Or do I give in to temptation easily? Thoughtlessly?

Loving Our Neighbor

- How do I treat the people around me?
- Do I allow myself to judge, criticize, gossip about or condemn my neighbor?
- Do I put people down? Do I look for their faults?
- Do I condescend and talk down to others?
- Do I treat others with kindness, gentleness, patience? Or am I mean, rough and nasty?
- Do I try to control others, manipulate others?
- Do I regard others with love and compassion?
- Do I bear anger or resentments against others? Hatred, bitterness, scorn?
- Do I use and objectify others for my own pleasure or advantage? For sex, for profit, or for anything else which depersonalizes him/her?
- Do I envy and bear jealousy towards my neighbor? Do I take pleasure in his misfortunes?
- Do I act thoughtlessly, oblivious to the feelings or conscience of the other?
- Do I lead my neighbor into temptation intentionally?
- Do I mock him or make fun of him? Do I honor the commitments I have made? Marriage vows? Monastic vows?
- Do I honor my parents? Am I faithful in my relationships?

- Do I have stability in my commitments?
- Am I conscious of how my words and actions affect others?
- Have I stolen anything, abused or hurt anyone?
- Have I committed adultery?
- Have I injured or killed someone?
- Do I covet other people's things?
- Do I lust after possessions or money?
- Does my life revolve around making money and buying things?

Loving Ourselves

- How am I self-centered, egotistical, self-referenced?
- Do I take care of myself, physically, emotionally, mentally, spiritually?
- Am I obsessed about my self, my image, my appearance, my desires and agenda?
- Do I indulge in laziness? Do I get despondent, depressed, despairing?
- Do I beat myself up, indulge in self-hatred or self-pity?
- Do I injure myself? Do I have low self-esteem, or think myself worthless?
- Do I blame other people for my reactions? Do I feel myself a victim?
- Do I take responsibility for my own reactions and behaviors?
- Do I engage in addictive behaviors, abusing alcohol, food, drugs, sex, pornography, masturbation? How do I try to console myself when I'm feeling down?

- Do I have anger and resentment, rage, and other strong emotions and passions suppressed within me? Do I act out on them? How do they affect my behavior?
- Can I control them or do I abuse other people?
- Am I conscious of how my words affect people?
- How am I a hypocrite? Can I face my own hypocrisy? Am I lying to and deluding myself?
- Do I have a realistic idea of myself? Am I honest with myself and others? What kind of façade do I put up?
- Have I done things that I don't want to or am too ashamed to admit? Abuse of others or animals, incest, homosexual acts, perverse actions?
- Have I abused drugs, sex or other things that I don't want to acknowledge? Am I afraid that I am those things—an alcoholic, drug addict, gay, child abuser? Am I afraid to confess them?
- Can I forgive myself for these things?
- What do I feel guilty about? Does guilt control my life?
- Am I being faithful to myself, to God, to others? Does my life have integrity?

An excerpt from "Do Not Resent, Do Not React, Keep Inner Stillness," posted at <http://www.facebook.com/notes/st-maria-of-paris-orthodox-church/do-not-resent-do-not-react-keep-inner-stillness/226638570696822>

THE LITURGY

The Reconciliation of a Penitent

The Officiant may be a Priest, Deacon, or Lay Pastor or Person.

PENITENT: Bless me, for I have sinned.

OFFICIANT: *The Lord be in your heart and upon your lips that you may truly and humbly confess your sins: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

PENITENT: I confess to Almighty God, to his Church, and to you, that I have sinned by my own fault in thought, word, and deed, in things done and left undone; especially _____. For these and all other sins which I cannot now remember, I am truly sorry. I pray God to have mercy on me. I firmly intend amendment of life, and I humbly beg forgiveness of God and his Church, and ask you for counsel, direction, and absolution.

Here the Officiant may offer counsel, direction, and comfort.

The Priest then pronounces this absolution:

PRIEST: *Our Lord Jesus Christ, who has left power to his Church to absolve all sinners who truly repent and believe in him, of his great mercy forgive you all your offenses; and by his authority committed to me, I absolve you from all your sins: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

or this:

Our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered himself to be sacrificed for us to the Father, and who conferred power on his Church to forgive sins, absolve you through my ministry by the grace of the Holy Spirit, and restore you in the perfect peace of the Church. Amen.

Declaration of Forgiveness to be used by a Deacon or Lay Person:

PASTOR: *Our Lord Jesus Christ, who offered himself to be sacrificed for us to the Father, forgives your sins by the grace of the Holy Spirit Amen.*

The officiant adds:

OFFICIANT: *The Lord has put away all your sins.*

PENITENT: **Thanks be to God.**

OFFICIANT: *Go in peace, and pray for me, a sinner.*

The Reconciliation of a Penitent For Children

The Officiant may be a Priest, Deacon, or Lay Pastor or Person.

PENITENT: **Bless me, for I have sinned.**

OFFICIANT: *The Lord be in your heart and upon your lips that you may truly and humbly confess your sins: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.*

PENITENT: **I confess to Almighty God, to his Church, and to you, that I have sinned by _____ . I am truly sorry. I pray God to have mercy on me. My desire isto follow Jesus.**

Confessor places Holy Water on the forehead.

OFFICIANT: *I will sprinkle you with clean water and you will be clean. (Ez 36:25) Our Lord Jesus Christ forgives your sins by the grace of the Holy Spirit.*

Confessor could add,

"See Jesus pouring this water over you like a waterfall. His love and grace wash over you. Your sin is washed away."

Ask the Lord to bring forward a desire that you can bless. Ask the child to speak her desire to the Lord and then ask the Lord to bless this and to be present to the child.

OFFICIANT: *The Lord has put away your sins.*

PENITENT: **Thanks be to God.**



CHURCH OF THE
RESURRECTION

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