

Tridentine Community News

December 7, 2008

Extraordinary Form Confessions Now Available

Confessions are now being heard according to the Classic Form of the Sacrament beginning at 1:30 PM every Sunday at Windsor's Assumption Church. Penance now joins Baptism, Requiem, Matrimony, and of course the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass as Sacraments available in the Tridentine forms in metropolitan Detroit. Fr. Peter Hrytsyk will assist first-time penitents in becoming accustomed to the Traditional formula.

St. Josaphat Church continues to offer Confession at 9:15 AM each Sunday according to the Ordinary Form. If you are interested in having Confession according to the Traditional Form at St. Josaphat, please inform Fr. Borkowski of your interest, so that he may consider familiarizing himself with the Extraordinary Form. If you write or e-mail, please provide your name and contact information, as anonymous requests will not be considered.

Below we reprint (an updated version of) our column of August 12, 2007, to reacquaint our readers with the Tridentine formula for Confession.

From the perspective of the penitent, the Extraordinary Form of Penance is not all that different from what one would experience in a more traditional Novus Ordo setting.

The penitent enters the confessional and says, "*Bless me Father, for I have sinned.*"

The penitent makes the Sign of the Cross while the priest says, "*The Lord be in Thy heart and on thy lips, that thou mayest rightly confess thy sins. In the name of the Father †, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.*"

The penitent tells the priest how long it has been since his last Confession, then recites the number and kind of his sins. The penitent concludes with a statement to the effect of, "*For these and all my other sins, which I cannot presently remember, I am heartily sorry.*"

The priest may ask some questions and give some advice. The priest will assign a penance.

The priest then says: "*Misereatur tui omnipotens Deus, et dimissis peccatis tuis, perducat te ad vitam æternam. Amen.*"

(In English: "May almighty God have mercy on thee, and forgive thee all thy sins, and bring thee to life everlasting. Amen.")

Holding his right hand over the penitent, the priest says: "*Indulgentiam, absolutiõnem, et remissionem peccatorum tuorum tribuat tibi omnipotens et misericors Dõminus. Amen.*"

(In English: "May the almighty and merciful God grant thee indulgence, absolution, and remission of all thy sins. Amen.")

Still holding his right hand over the penitent, the priest removes any impediments to the validity of the absolution he is about to give: "*Dõminus noster Jesus Christus te absolvat; et ego auctoritate ipsius te absolvo ab omni vinculo excommunicatiõnis, (suspensiõnis,) et interdicti, in quantum possum et tu indiges.*" If the penitent is a layman, the word "*suspensiõnis*" is omitted.

(The English translation: "May our Lord Jesus Christ absolve thee; and by His authority I absolve thee from every bond of excommunication, (suspension,) and interdict, in proportion to my power and thy need.")

The priest recites the words of absolution while both the priest and the penitent make the Sign of the Cross. A bishop makes the Sign of the Cross three times: "*Deinde ego te absolvo a peccatis tuis, in nõmine Patris †, et Filii, et Spõritus Sancti. Amen.*"

(In English: "Thereupon, I absolve thee from thy sins, in the name of the Father †, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.")

Finally, the priest says a prayer for the remission of temporal punishment due for sins: "*Passio Dõmini nostri Jesu Christi, m´erita Beate Mariæ Virginis, et omnium Sanctõrum, quidquid boni feceris, et mali sustineris, sint tibi in remissionem peccatorum, augmētum gratiæ et præmium vitæ æternæ. Amen.*"

(In English: "May the passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the merits of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of all the saints, whatever good you shall have done, and evil you shall have endured, be to you unto remission of sins, increase of grace, and reward of eternal life. Amen.")

Note that the Extraordinary Form of the Sacrament does not require the penitent to make an Act of Contrition. The priest does retain the option to request this, a sensible and laudable custom, prior to giving absolution.

Also note that canonically, a priest does not have the right to remove every kind of bond of excommunication. That is reserved to the diocesan Ordinary (bishop). Therefore, the prayer is careful to say, "in proportion to my power". A priest must refrain from absolving difficult cases and refer the matter to a bishop.

The concluding prayer for remission of temporal punishment is a beautiful and appropriate follow-up to absolution, and is unique to the Extraordinary Form. The wording of the whole Sacrament helps to remind us that absolution is a serious matter, and emphasizes that the priest is acting *in persõna Christi*.

