304 Reconciliation Of Several Penitents With General Confession And General Absolution (Third Form)

304 RECONCILIATION OF SEVERAL PENITENTS WITH GENERAL CONFESSION AND GENERAL ABSOLUTION (THIRD FORM)

304.1 *Opportunity and Time for Celebration of the Sacrament in this Form:*

In the Archdiocese of Baltimore at the present time, there are no generally accepted cases in which the conditions warranting the imparting of general absolution would be foreseen to exist. Should a confessor believe that such conditions exist in individual cases, he is required to obtain prior permission of the diocesan bishop.

304.2 *Conditions for Celebration of the Sacrament in this Form:*

The revised Code of Canon Law specifies the conditions under which general absolution may be imparted. Canon 961, §1, 1º, 2º states:

§1 Absolution cannot be imparted in a general manner to a number of penitents at once without previous individual confession unless:

1º the danger of death is imminent and there is not time for the priest or priests to hear the confessions of the individual penitents;

2º a serious necessity exists, that is, when in light of the number of penitents a supply of confessors is not readily available rightly to hear the confessions of individuals within a suitable time so that the penitents are forced to be deprived of sacramental grace or holy communion for a long time [1] *through no fault of their own; it is not considered a sufficient necessity if confessors cannot be readily available only because of the great number of penitents as can occur on the occasion of some great feast or pilgrimage.*

(See also Rite of Penance #60).

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[1]The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops has determined that the word diu ("for a long time") in Canon 961, §1,2º should be understood as "a month."