308 The Sacrament Of Penance And Christian Initiation

308 THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE AND CHRISTIAN INITIATION

Although not a sacrament of initiation, there are often questions about celebrating the Sacrament of Penance in conjunction with the process of initiation. These policies are provided here for the sake of completeness.

308.1 *Candidates' Celebration of the Sacrament of Penance*:

Candidates are to receive a thorough catechesis on the Sacrament of Penance and to be encouraged in the frequent celebration of the sacrament. (National Statutes #27 & 36) They shall be invited to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance prior to their reception into full communion, but not at the same liturgy. Candidates are required to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance prior to their reception into the full communion of the Roman Catholic Church if they are guilty of serious sin. All candidates should be encouraged to do so in any case. (RCIA #482)

308.2 *Catechumens' Celebration of the Sacrament of Penance*:

Catechumens preparing for baptism (both children and adults) do not celebrate the Sacrament of Penance prior to baptism. They are to be invited to participate in non-sacramental penitential rites as found in the RCIA #141, 291, so that they may come to understand the reality of sin and appreciate the comforting message of God's pardon.

308.3 *Children's Celebration of the Sacrament of Penance*:

Non-Catholic children who are baptized in infancy but preparing for reception into the full communion of the Roman Catholic Church should be adequately prepared and encouraged to celebrate the Sacrament of Penance some time prior to their formal reception into the Catholic Church. (RCIA #482, National Statutes #27)

RESOURCES

Penance

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