



Pfarrei Gut Hirt
Katholische Kirche
Stadt Zug

God's Healing Love

The Sacrament of Reconciliation



Forgiving & Reconciling

It is a gift to be able to get in touch with your inner self. Receiving and accepting the reconciling love of God is divine. The Sacrament of Reconciliation calls us, as free and responsible individuals to reconnect not only with our selves, but with each other, with God and all of creation. It invites us to stand before God in a relationship that is without guilt and shame.

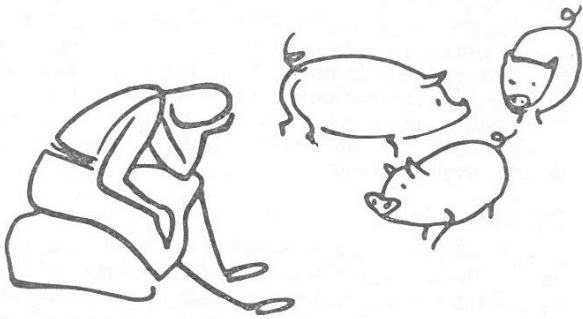
The Lord God called out to Adam and said, “Where are you?” (Genesis 3:7-15). In this tender question of God to Adam, we find a piece of the original relationship between man and God as found in paradise. It is a relationship based on trust, devotion and unconditional love and we all have a part of it. Adam distanced himself from God’s divine instructions. As a result, he became a prisoner of his own fearfulness and he lost all trust in his creator. He said, “I heard you in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid.” In what follows, we see that God does not give up on his beloved creation. God goes on to reveal himself in the innocent child in the manger and in the man suffering and dying on the cross. He takes everything upon himself so that he can fully share in our human existence.

God invites us to open ourselves up to him, to cast aside our own fear and receive his forgiving and healing nature of his love. This is what we can experience in the Sacrament of Reconciliation! In confession, we can receive the gift of God’s saving grace.

The Good Shepherd looks forward to every experience of forgiveness, healing and reconciliation.

The Forgiving Father

There was a rich man who had two sons. One day the younger son said, "Father, give me my share of our money now so that I can go and enjoy life." The father gave the son his share of the money. The son left his father's house and went to live far away.



The son soon wasted all his money. He didn't even leave himself enough to buy food. He had a very hard time and was very lonely. Then he thought to himself, "I must be stupid. I don't need

to live like this. The men that work for my father are better off than I am. I will go home to my father and tell him how sorry I am. He might not want me for a son anymore, but he would give me a job." The son started his long journey home.

Ever since his son had left, the father watched and waited for him to return. One day the father looked out across the fields as usual, and what should he see but his younger son walking towards him. He was so excited that he ran across the field to meet him. As he did so, he shouted to the servants, "My son has come home! My son has come home! Go and bring the best clothes, and then prepare a feast! My son has come home!" The younger son told his father how sorry he was and asked to be forgiven, the father was very happy to have his son back and he forgave him.



My Father is Waiting for Me

Our Heavenly Father waits for us in the same way.

Following the example of The Lost Son, examine your conscience and reflect on your actions. Let the following questions be a guide for you.

Jesus said: You will love the Lord your God with all your heart...

- Is my heart set on God and do I really love him above all things?
- Do I open myself up to feel God's presence?
- Do I listen to the words of the Gospel? To the teachings of Jesus' Church?
- Do I take time to pray?
- Is going to Mass and celebrating the Eucharist important in my life?
- Do I go to Mass regularly?
- Do I allow the Lord to be the Lord, or do I try to be the Lord myself?
- Does it always have to be "my way" and "what I want"?
- Have I love and respect for the name of God?
- Am I embarrassed to share my faith with others?
- Do I turn to God only when I need something?

Jesus said: Love your neighbour as yourself...

- Do I really love my neighbour, my friends and classmates?
- Am I able to forgive when someone offends me?
- Do I judge others?
- Do I talk badly about others? Do I steal?
- Am I intolerant, envious, and hot-tempered?
- Do I try to help the poor, the sick, and the defenceless people?
- Am I sincere and honest with others?

- Have I ever encouraged someone else to do something wrong or unkind?
- Do I care for and respect the environment?
- Do I look for and think of what is best for others?
- Do I think enough about those who are less fortunate?
- What do I do when someone has a problem? Do I just watch or try to help?
- Am I respectful of other people's property?
- Have I abused someone's property or stolen?
- Do I forgive those who sin against me?

Jesus said: Be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect...

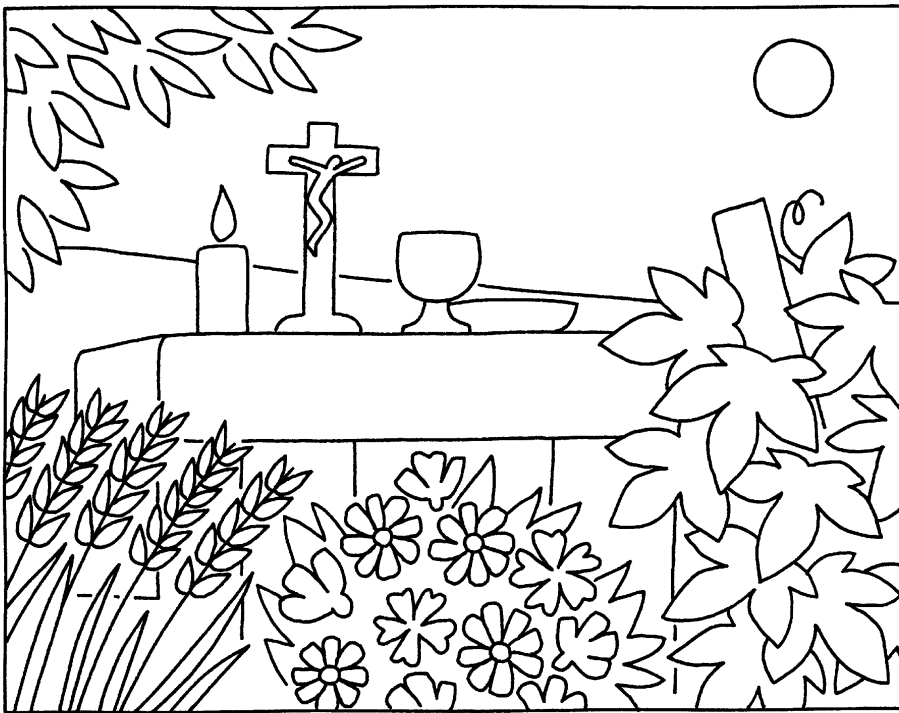
- Do I try to live as a Christian? Do I set a good example? Can I be a role model for others?
- Have I gone against my conscience because I was afraid of being laughed at?
- Have I participated in things which are offending?
- Do I sometimes think only of myself and my own needs? I am sometimes selfish?
- Do I eat too much? Drink too much?
- Do I abuse my body?
- Do I bear grudges; do I try to get revenge?
- Do I share my possessions with the less fortunate?
- Am I impatient with others? Can I admit when I have done something wrong?
- Do I use the gift of time well?
- Am I able to forgive myself?
- Do I try to make peace?

Forgiveness...

Sometimes we might find it difficult to forgive those who have hurt us. But we can find healing if we choose to forgive. Likewise, we will be happier if we ask Jesus to forgive us our own sins.

How does it feel to forgive?

How does it feel to be forgiven?



In the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we meet Jesus through the priest and ask him to forgive our sins. We trust in God's mercy and in the forgiveness of others who belong to the community of faith. The priest represents Jesus and the forgiving community. From him we receive

absolution, our sins are forgiven and the Church grows stronger and closer together. The divisions caused by our selfishness are healed, and the bonds of the community are strengthened. The priest is bound by the seal of confession never to reveal what anyone confesses.

How to Make a Good Confession

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is another term we use to call Confession. It is a good way to take a closer look at your life and make a fresh start, at least once a year. Before you go to confession, ask God for help in remembering your sins, specific actions and your behaviour.

Following is an outline of what you can expect. Remember, the priest wants to help you. If you are having trouble remembering or you don't know what to say, just tell him and he will guide you.

When you meet the priest: He will welcome you and you will sit across from each other. You will both make the sign of the cross. The priest might read a script from the Bible or he will pray for you.



Confess your sins: The priest will discuss with you the things you have done wrong and give you spiritual advice. It is normal to be shy or nervous.

Receive a penance: The priest will talk to you about doing something as a sign of your desire to change. It may be saying some prayers or doing something kind for another person.

Tell God you are sorry: You can use your own words or recite the act of contrition.

Receive absolution: The priest proclaims the words of absolution and God forgives your sins.

Conclude: The priest might say a prayer with you or give you a blessing. You cross yourself and answer with "Amen."

ACT OF CONTRITION

My God,

I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.

In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,

I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things.

I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.

Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.

In his name, my God, have mercy.

Confessions are heard Saturdays at 16:45 in the Good Shepherd Church
or by appointment.

You can reach Fr. Kurt Schaller by E-Mail: kurt.schaller@kath-zug.ch or by
telephone at 041 728 80 28