

Vatican Issues Document On Rites of Penance

By United States Catholic Conference

Washington — The Congregation for Divine Worship at the Vatican has issued a revised liturgy for the Sacrament of Penance to more clearly express both the nature and effect of the sacrament.

Dated Dec. 2, 1973, the full Latin text, *Ordo Paenitentiae* (The Order of Penance), was made public on Thursday, Feb. 7. An English translation of the document is now under way.

The introduction to the 121-page Latin text offers theological and pastoral background for the celebration of the "sacrament of reconciliation."

Revised liturgical rites for the sacrament are outlined in four chapters: The Reconciliation of Individual Penitents, The Reconciliation of Many Penitents with Individual Confession and Absolution; Confession and Absolution; Reconciliation of Many Penitents with General Confession and Absolution; and

Various Texts for Use in the Celebration of Reconciliation.

"The new Order of Penance will cause no unexpected changes in the communal celebration of the sacrament in the United States," commented Father Thomas Krosnicki, associate director of the Bishops' Committee on the Liturgy. "What is significant about these rites is a new attempt at enriching the celebration of reconciliation."

"Individual confession outside of communal celebrations," Father Krosnicki continued, "will be enhanced by a fuller use of the Word of God and by a more open exchange between the confessor and the individual penitent."

Traditional Catholic theological teaching about the sacrament of Penance is maintained in the new document, but new emphasis is given to the ecclesial aspects of the sacrament. And while the text in no way suggests that sins be confessed publicly, it does stress the communal nature of the sacrament, which will be

especially evident in the revised liturgical rites.

The proposed structure for the celebration of the sacrament includes several elements: initial greeting, Scripture reading, confession and absolution, praise to God, and dismissal. In group celebrations of the sacrament, in which individual confession and absolution will normally take place, these structural elements will be elaborated.

The chapter on reconciliation of many penitents with general confession and absolution continues to reflect the rules outlined in the June 16, 1972, Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith document, "Pastoral Norms Concerning Administration of General Sacramental Absolution." That document noted only a few instances (e.g., imminent danger of death) in which individual confession during a communal penance service could be forgone.

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Exuberance Marks North Region Meeting

By SHARON DARNIEDER

Building up. Reaching out. Trusting in Him. These words displayed on a prominent red felt banner set the tone for the North Region's first General Assembly meeting Thursday evening, Feb. 7 at Annunciation Church.

Father Paul Schnacky, North Region coordinator, pointed out that additional signs on the banner were symbolic of the

committees and different aspects of the region.

He added that those who attended had a three-fold purpose, "to inspire, conspire and perspire."

Bishop Joseph L. Hogan, who addressed the audience of about 150, made up of parish leaders, clergy and others, called the gathering a "splendid representation from a region in

the diocese that's tremendously alive."

He noted that the region was "blessed with having so many institutions that can contribute to the diocese."

The North Region is composed of Annunciation, Christ the King, Holy Redeemer, Our Lady of Perpetual Help, St. Andrew, St. Cecilia, St. George, St. Margaret Mary, St. Stanislaus, St. Salome, St. Teresa, St. Thomas the Apostle, Epiphany, St. Joseph, St. Nicholas, Bishop Kearney High School, St. Ann's Home, Heritage and Rochester General Hospital.

The Bishop reaffirmed his belief in regionalism calling it "a valid concept that has been repeated in many dioceses throughout the country" and the most "effective method of spreading the people of God throughout the diocese."

Quoting from his weekly Column Pastoral Perspective, that appears in the Courier-Journal, he defined a regional conference as a "representative gathering of all God's people from all the parishes and institutions of the region . . . sharing the personnel, resources and ideas of everyone in the region."

He emphasized that those in the diocese "could make no gift to the Church of Rochester unless you share it with others. Forget the saying 'my parish.' Make it ours," he urged.

The Bishop used a recent visit to an optometrist as an analogy.

"I went even though some people think I see everything now," he joked. "Now I won't miss anything in the future."

At the end of the examination, he said the doctor recommended bifocals.

"I see the region as bifocals," he noted, "to overcome the myopia of parochialism. Regionalism begins the extension of our vision beyond our own backyard."

"Regionalism is bifocalism," he continued, "a correction of our vision beyond the narrow boundaries of our parish to the entire church."

He said regionalism is the beginning of what is his "fondest

hope," a Pastoral Council.

"We must have strong regions to have a Pastoral Council," the Bishop said.

He emphasized patience however and noted that

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Photo by Pat Petraske

Just like home: Sharon Brownley receives a watchful glance from her great grandmother, Marria Bidwell, as they enjoy lunch during Corpus Christi's Grandparent Day. The day of visiting and sharing was one of many events held in the diocese for National Catholic Schools Week. [See centerfold]



Photo by Susan McKinney

Father Michael Conboy, left, Bishop Joseph L. Hogan and Father Douglas Hoffman listen reflectively to committee reports at the first General Assembly for the North Region Feb. 7 at Annunciation Church. About 150 attended.

Mother Frances Beatification Set in April

Mother Frances, founder of a German religious order that helped tend the wounded in the American Civil War, will be proclaimed blessed by Pope Paul, on April 28. Some of her relatives live in this diocese.

Dr. John Dessauer, retired Xerox vice president and author of the book, *My Years with Xerox — the Billions Nobody Wanted*, said last week that Mother Frances was his mother's great aunt. The Dessauer family, whose home parish is St. Louis in Pittsford, is making arrangements to attend the ceremonies in Rome.

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MOTHER FRANCES