

Chapter 9

Answer Key for Double-Check Questions

1. *Explain how the authority to forgive sins and reconcile sinners was given by Jesus to Peter and the Apostles and extends to the Church today.*

As the Son of God, Jesus has the authority to forgive sins. He passed on this authority to Peter and the Apostles, the first leaders of the Church. They handed this authority down to the next generation of Church leaders, and so on, reaching the bishops and priests who administer the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation today.

2. *Give three other names for the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, and explain how each describes an essential element of the sacrament.*

(The students may describe any three of the following five names given in article 34.)

- Sacrament of Conversion—Conversion means “turning around.” The sacrament helps us to realize when we have been going in the wrong direction and to choose another path that will lead us back to God.
- Sacrament of Confession—Confession of sins is an integral part of the sacrament. We name our sins, take responsibility for them, and acknowledge God’s holiness and mercy.
- Sacrament of Forgiveness—Through the priest’s absolution in this sacrament, we are pardoned for our sins and receive God’s peace.
- Sacrament of Penance—The penitent, as the recipient of God’s forgiveness, must perform penance to complete the sacrament.
- Sacrament of Reconciliation—Through God’s love, this sacrament reconciles us to him and to our brothers and sisters in Christ.

3. *Name and explain the three actions of the penitent in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.*

The penitent must perform three actions in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation: repent, confess, and intend to make amends for sin. When we *repent*, we express contrition or sorrow for our sin and show our intention to avoid future sin. Then we *confess* our sins, taking responsibility for our actions. By confessing our sins to a priest, we actually confess our sins to God. Confession helps us reconcile with God, strengthen our conscience, identify evil tendencies, open to Christ’s healing, and progress in the life of the Spirit. Finally, we demonstrate our intention to *make amends for sin* through penance. Penance helps us both to repair the wrong we have done to others and to consider what disorder in ourselves led us to sin.

4. *Name and explain the action of the priest in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.*

The priest offers absolution in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. In this action, which is essential to the sacrament, the priest pardons the sins of the person confessing, in the name of God and the Church. This gift of pardon and peace is made possible because of the power Christ gave to the Church.



5. *Explain the three conditions that must exist for a sin to be mortal, and the consequences of mortal sin.*

Three conditions characterize a mortal sin: (1) it must concern a serious and grave matter, (2) it must be committed with full knowledge that the action is sinful and is against God's Law, and (3) it must be committed freely and deliberately. Mortal sin is called mortal, or deadly, because it destroys love (or charity) within us and thereby closes Heaven to us. An unrepented mortal sin leads to eternal separation from God.

6. *Describe two Scripture accounts in which Jesus forgives sinners, and explain how these foretell the mercy God extends to us in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation.*

(The students may identify and explain Scripture accounts not covered in the student book, as long as they are relevant and foretell God's mercy in the sacrament.) The Scriptures offer several accounts in which Jesus shares a meal with a sinner. Sharing a meal was a sign of reconciliation; likewise, the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation reconciles us with God and one another.

One Scripture account describes Jesus' forgiveness of the man who was paralyzed. Jesus told him his sins were forgiven, but Jewish leaders who were present criticized him for assuming authority that only God has. Jesus demonstrated his authority to forgive by healing the paralytic and inviting the man to get up and go home. Likewise, when the priest forgives our sins in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, we know that it is Jesus saying to us, through the priest, that our sins are forgiven.

7. *Name the six effects of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. Choose two and explain their meaning.*

(The students may choose any two of the following effects to explain in greater detail, per article 37.)

The six effects of the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation are as follows:

- a. The forgiveness of all sin
- b. Reconciliation with God
- c. Reconciliation with the Church
- d. Remission of punishment for sin
- e. Peace and serenity of conscience, and spiritual consolation
- f. An increase of spiritual strength for the Christian battle

