

the Sacrament of Penance (Confession) is also called the Sacrament of Conversion because it is the 1st step in returning to God from whom one has strayed by sin. In imparting to His Apostles His own power to forgive sins, Jesus also gives them the authority to reconcile sinners. Christ's solemn words to Simon Peter "I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven and whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven" Since ancient times the bishop, visible head of a particular Church, has rightfully been considered the one who principally has the power and ministry of reconciliation, he is the moderator of the penitential discipline. The Priests, exercise it to the extent that they have received the commission either from their bishop or the Pope, according to the law of the Church. The church declares that every priest who hears confession is bound to absolute secrecy. He can make no use of knowledge given him. There are no exceptions. This secret is called the 'Sacramental Seal'. The 1st sermon of Peter was on Repentance, the 1st sermon of Paul was on Repentance. The last sermon of Christ was the theme of His 1st - Repentance. Repentance is linked up with the fulfillment of the ancient prophecies but above all with the fulfillment on Calvary. 'All the prophets bear Him this testimony- that everyone who has faith in Him is to find remission of sins through His name' (Acts 10 V43) On the mount of the Beatitudes Jesus reaffirmed that there is no doctrine apart from His Person. The Church hierarchy can no more choose to remove the Seal of Confession than they can choose amongst all He said, what they will believe. Priests know they are bound to the point of death to keep the Confessional seal and many thousands have gone to their death rather than break it.