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If we understand that confession is not merely a conversation with a priest but one's turning to God, then it should be treated by a penitent not as an opportunity to receive advice and consolation from a wise and kind priest, but as the way to turn to Christ through one's own spiritual labours. As the Holy Fathers say: «God saves us, but not without our participation». The Sacrament of Penance can be performed in various ways subject to the circumstances of one's life. A penitent can repent in front of a priest, who is using a stole and prayerbook, or the penitent can repent outside the church without any of the mentioned attributes, as it was the case over the period of religious persecution. The only thing necessary for the sacrament to take effect is the repentance itself. The sacrament may not have effect even if all conditions of the procedure are met with, that is, the repentance has been received by the priest with the stole, prayerbook, cross and Gospel, all the prayers have been said, the sinner's head has been covered with the stole and the remission of sins has been granted. How does this sacrament work then? As we have already mentioned, this is one of the most mysterious sacraments. Everything in it can be characterised as ineffable, indescribable or inexplicable. Only by performing the outer part of the rite can we consciously participate in the

sacrament. As much as it is beyond our understanding to describe how God created the world with the Word, so much it is impossible to describe how God re-creates man. ([περισσότερα...](#))