

Celebration of Reconciliation



**CONCEPTION ABBEY
LANGUAGE, CULTURE AND CHURCH FOR
INTERNATIONAL PRIESTS & RELIGIOUS
2015**

Names



- Reconciliation
 - Still a popular title in the US
 - Implies more than a sad confession of sin, but a happy result
 - Sets an ideal for human relationships
- Confession
 - Also still commonly used title
 - Especially appropriate when people feel sense of sorrow
- Penance - the title of the entire rite

Trends in the US



- **Reduced numbers**
 - **But still high in hispanic community**
- **Quality still very good**
- **Popularity of second form**
 - **especially during Advent and Lent**
- **Face to face option in first and second form**

Changing sense of sin



- People are less likely to obsess over small sins
 - Increased awareness of God's mercy
 - Confession seen unnecessary for small sins
 - Busy with other things in their lives
 - More comfortable confessing to God than to a priest

Changing sense of sin



- People don't consider themselves sinners
 - Advertising encourages people to pamper themselves
 - Job market encourages self-confidence
 - Feeling of victimization
 - *Humanæ vitæ*

Strategies for improving participation



- Encourage people to come
- Speak of your own experience
- Stress the value of dialogue and hearing words of forgiveness (e.g. Prodigal Son conclusion)
- Stress the assurance of forgiveness
- Try different days and time slots
- Use the seasonal gatherings
- Be a good confessor
- Explain how you like to hear confessions
- Stay positive