

## **Abstract**

The study is going to analyse Ambrose's treatise *De paenitentia* and evaluate its importance for the theology of penance. After presenting the evolution of the practice of penance in early Church till 4<sup>th</sup> century, especially in West and with focus on the Novatian crisis as a milestone, the study is further dealing with Ambrose of Milan's personality and works, namely with his treatise *De paenitentia*; not only in the context of the contemporary polemics with Novatian heresy, but mainly as a first formalized and structured theology which will be later developed into the understanding of penance as one of the Church's sacraments.

## **Keywords**

Ambrose of Milan, Church Fathers, 4th century, Novatian, sin, penance, repentance