

How to Go to Confession

Prepare to go to confession by thinking about your sins and make a firm commitment, asking God's help, not to sin again.

Prayer Before Confession

Come Holy Spirit into my soul. Enlighten my mind that I may know the sins I ought to confess, and grant me your grace to confess them fully, humbly, and with a contrite heart. Help me to firmly resolve not to commit them again. O Blessed Virgin, Mother of my Redeemer, intercede for me through the Passion of Your Son, that I may obtain the grace to make a good confession. All you blessed Angels and Saints of God, pray for me, a sinner, that I may repent from my sins, and that my heart may be forever united with yours in eternal love. Amen.

Rite of Reconciliation

Priest: In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Penitent: Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been (how long?) since my last confession, and these are my sins: (confess your sins).

Priest: (gives you a penance)

Penitent: (Pray the Act of Contrition):

O MY GOD, I AM HEARTILY SORRY FOR HAVING OFFENDED YOU, AND I DETEST ALL MY SINS, BECAUSE OF YOUR JUST PUNISHMENTS, BUT MOST OF ALL BECAUSE THEY OFFEND YOU, MY GOD, WHO ARE ALL GOOD AND DESERVING OF ALL MY LOVE. I FIRMLY RESOLVE, WITH THE HELP OF YOUR GRACE, TO SIN NO MORE AND TO AVOID THE NEAR OCCASIONS OF SIN. AMEN.

Priest: (gives you absolution)

Priest: Give thanks to the Lord for He is good.

Penitent: For His mercy endures forever.

Penitent: (recite or do your penance as soon as possible).

Examination of Conscience for a Good Confession

- 1. I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD: YOU SHALL NOT HAVE STRANGE GODS BEFORE ME.** Did I fail to love God, to make God first in my life, to thank Him, trust Him, love Him as He deserves? Did I fail to pray? Have I doubted or denied my faith? Was I careless in saying my prayers? Do I give God time every day in prayer? Have I been involved in magic, Ouija boards, Tarot cards, the occult?
- 2. YOU SHALL NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD IN VAIN.** Did I curse or swear? Did I use God's Name in vain, lightly, carelessly, by blasphemy? Have I used foul language or jokes?
- 3. REMEMBER TO KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH.** Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation? Did I leave Mass early without a good reason? Have I been to Communion at least once a year? Did I receive Holy Communion in the state of serious sin? Have I been to confession recently? In any of my previous confessions, did I lie to or deliberately conceal something from the priest? Did I do unnecessary work on Sunday?
- 4. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER.** Did I honor and obey my parents? Respect my brothers and sisters? Respect others with lawful authority, especially teachers? Have I talked back? Did I fail to help at home or to spend time with my family?
- 5. YOU SHALL NOT KILL.** Did I give in to feelings of anger or jealousy? Did I keep hatred in my heart? Did I fight, give a bad example or cause scandal? Have I abused alcohol or drugs? Have I had or in any way permitted or encouraged abortion? Have I thought about suicide?
- 6. YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.** Did I consent to impure glances? Passionate kisses? Sinful touches? Was I immodest in dress or behavior? Did I look at pornography, impure books, magazines or videos? Am I guilty of masturbation (impurity with self)? Fornication (premarital sex), adultery (sex with a married person) or contraception (by pills, devices, etc.)? Do I live chastely according to my state in life (married, single, ordained)? Do I avoid laziness, gluttony, idleness and the occasions of impurity?
- 7. YOU SHALL NOT STEAL.** Have I stolen what is not mine? What or how much? Did I return it or make up for what I have stolen? Have I cheated on tests or homework? Did I waste time at work? Have I written graffiti (this steals nature's beauty)?
- 8. YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR.** Have I lied, gossiped? Talked about another behind his back? Do I always tell the truth? Am I sincere? Did I reveal secrets that should have been kept confidential? Am I critical, negative or uncharitable in my talk?
- 9. YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S WIFE.** Have I consented to impure thoughts? Have I encouraged them by stares, curiosity or impure conversations? Did I neglect to control my imagination or desire other people?
- 10. YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S GOODS.** Is my heart greedy? Am I jealous of what another has? Am I envious of others because I don't have what they have? Am I moody or gloomy? Do I work, study and keep busy to counter idle thoughts? Am I critical, negative, or uncharitable in my thoughts of others? Is my heart set on earthly possessions or on the treasures in Heaven?