

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):

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against You, whom I should love above all things. I firmly plan, with Your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In His name, my God, have mercy. 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?