

Preparing for Confession

A Guide for Parents and Children



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THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

God is always calling us back to the right path. He loves us and wants to give us everything we need to do the right thing. Before Jesus went back to heaven, He gave His Church seven special gifts to give grace and help us get to heaven. The seven special gifts from Jesus that give grace are the sacraments.

Reconciliation is the sacrament Jesus gave us to forgive our sins. Reconciliation is also called "Confession" or "Penance."

In Reconciliation we admit that we are sinners and need God's forgiveness. Before Jesus went to heaven, He gave His apostles the power to absolve, or wash away sins. Today the priest absolves our sins in the sacrament of reconciliation. So after confession, if we have been truly sorry and confessed well, our souls are renewed like a sparkling clean window.

BEFORE GOING TO CONFESSION

There are three things you should do before you going to confession:

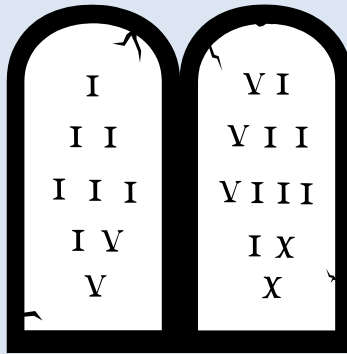
1. **Examine your conscience.**
2. **Be truly sorry for your sins.**
3. **Make up your mind not to sin again.**

A conscience is the part of us that tells us before we do something whether it is right or wrong. The conscience is really the Holy Spirit speaking to us in our souls.

Before going to confession we should examine our conscience. This means that we think about what we have done wrong. Then we try to remember these sins so we can tell the priest and be forgiven.

We must also be truly sorry for our sins. If we hurt someone and we are not sorry, we haven't changed. It's the same with God. We can't be forgiven if we are not sorry.

Part of being sorry is deciding not to do the wrong again. How can we be sorry if we aren't going to change? We need to try to do better. We can be better with God's help and grace.



EXAMINING YOUR CONSCIENCE

We don't have to wait to go confession to examine our conscience. We can do this each night before bed.

How do we examine our conscience? It's very simple. Be still and quiet. Then think about your day. Try to remember the people you were with and the things you did.

What did you do good? Thank God for helping you to choose right.

What did you do wrong? If you're not sure, think about the 10 commandments. Ask God to forgive you for the sins you committed. Then end with the act of contrition.

You can start the day fresh when you wake up the next morning!

THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

1. **I am the Lord Your God. You shall have no other gods beside Me.**

Do I love God? Do I pray to Him? Do I obey Him?

2. **You shall not take the Name of God in vain.**

Do I respect God's Name? Do I say bad words? Do I respect holy things?

3. **Keep holy the Lord's Day.**

Do I go to church on Sunday? Do I behave in church and pay attention?

4. **Honor your father and mother.**

*Do I obey my parents? Do I respect and love them? Do I talk back?
Do I obey my teachers and other adults? Am I polite?*

5. **You shall not kill.**

*Do I treat other people kindly? Have I argued with someone?
Have I hurt their feelings? Have I hit another person?*

6. **You shall not commit adultery.**

*Do I respect other people's bodies? Do I look at bad things on tv,
on the computer or in magazines? Do I tell dirty jokes?*

7. **You shall not steal.**

Have I taken something that did not belong to me? Did I return it?

8. **You shall not lie.**

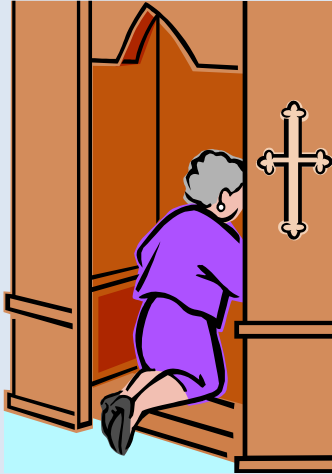
*Do I say things that are not true? Have I lied to my parents, my teacher or
my friends? Do I admit when I am wrong?*

9. **You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.**

*Covet means to be jealous and want something someone else has.
Even though I don't have a wife or husband, I do have friends.
Am I jealous of other people's friends? Do I love everyone?*

10. **You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.**

*Am I jealous of other things people have?
Do I share what I have with others?*



STEPS FOR GOING TO CONFESSION

These are the steps for going to confession:

1. Make the sign of the Cross.
2. Tell the priest when your last confession was.
3. Confess your sins.
4. Listen to the priest.
5. Make the act of contrition.
6. Receive absolution.
7. Thank the priest when you leave.

Make the sign of the cross:

**In the name of the Father
and of the Son of the Holy Spirit.**

Tell the priest when your last confession was:

**Bless me Father for I have sinned.
It has been since my last confession.**

Or if its your first confession say:

**Bless me Father for I have sinned.
This is my first confession.**

Confess your sins:

This means to tell the priest all the sins you can remember. It is a sin to hide serious sins from a priest. Remember the priest is there to help you. Also, when you confess to a priest, you are really speaking to Jesus. And Jesus loves you more than anyone else.

Listen to the priest:

He may give you some advice to help you.

Make the act of contrition:

This is a special prayer that tells God you are sorry for our sins.

Receive absolution:

The priest will then absolve, or wash away your sins. He will make a cross over you. You must make the sign of the cross when he does this.

Thank the priest when you leave:

You are now forgiven!

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS

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

THE ACT OF CONTRITION

O 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 intend, 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.

THE OUR FATHER

Our Father, Who art in heaven, hallowed be
Thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be
done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us
this day our daily bread and forgive us our
trespasses as we forgive those who trespass
against us. And lead us not into temptation,
but deliver us from evil. Amen.

THE HAIL MARY

Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with
Thee. Blessed art thou among women
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us
sinners, now and at the hour of our death.
Amen.

THE GLORY BE

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the
Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now
and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.