

MAKING A GOOD CONFESSION

1. Before you go to confession, make a thorough examination of your conscience so you know what sins to confess (see next page).
2. When it's your turn, enter the confessional. You can either sit and face the priest, or you can kneel behind the screen.
3. The priest will start with the sign of the cross. Inform the priest of the approximate length of time since your last confession.
 - Say to the priest: ***"Father forgive me for I have sinned. It has been _____ years (or days/months) since my last confession."***
4. Confess your serious sins (mortal sins) as completely as possible, naming them and with some indication of their frequency. Less serious sins (venial) should also be mentioned specifically, but can be mentioned more generally.
5. In order to receive the effects of forgiveness from your sins, there needs to be a sincere desire to reject the sinful behavior confessed and a willingness to respond to God's grace by attempting to avoid all future situations where you know you would be tempted to sin again.

ACT OF CONTRITION

The Act of Contrition (see below) is said after you have confessed your sins to the priest and after he has given you a penance (a holy task to complete).

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.

Remember: It is completely fine to ask the priest to help you if you don't know what to say.



EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE FOR TEENS

Before receiving the Sacrament of Confession

Below is a suggested way of examining your conscience in preparation for a fruitful confession of sin. It is based on the Ten Commandments and gives examples of the kinds of sins that tend to be committed against each of these divine precepts.

- 1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have any other gods before me. (PRIDE)**
 - Have I put money, popularity, material things or any other good above my relationship with God?
 - Have I rejected any of God's revelation to me of who He is or what He wants me to do?
 - Have I tried to turn away from a vocation to which I think God might be calling me?
 - Have I despaired of God's help or provision for me in my times of need?
 - Have I presumed that God would forgive me before deciding to do something sinful?
 - Have I used things that are superstitious, occult, or related to witchcraft?
- 2. You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain. (PRIDE/WRATH)**
 - Have I used the name of the Lord in vain (Jesus, God, Lord), or in any other way used it improperly?
 - Have I made false oaths or failed to keep a promise made in God's sight?
 - Have I disrespected the holiness of God and/or of persons or things that are especially associated with God (like priests, sacred objects, the parish building, etc.)?
- 3. You shall remember to keep holy the Lord's Day. (PRIDE/SLOTH)**
 - Have I failed through my own faults to not worship God on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation by attending Mass?
 - Have I made an effort to keep Sunday holy by spending time with family, spending extra time in prayer or in charitable activities, resting from the work of the week?
 - Do I make an effort to pray regularly and attentively throughout the week?
- 4. You shall honor your father and mother. (PRIDE/ANGER/SLOTH)**
 - Have I been respectful to my parents (and step-parents or other family members)?
 - Have I been respectful to my teachers and others in authority over me?
- 5. You shall not kill. (ANGER/PRIDE/ENVY)**
 - Have I done damage to someone's reputation or well being in any way?
 - Have I done damage to myself through drugs, alcohol or other self-destructive behavior?
 - Have I hoped that bad things would happen to someone else?
 - Have I been a bad example to anyone else (especially younger siblings) that might have made them fall into sin themselves?
- 6. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not covet your neighbor's spouse. (LUST)**
 - Have I been sexually impure with myself and/or with something else?
 - Have I pursued or sought out lustful thoughts on my own or through reading/watching sexually impure material?
 - Am I careful to guard against impure entertainment in social media, tv, internet, reading material etc.?
- 7. You shall not steal. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods. (GREED/ENVY)**
 - Have I respected the property of others, both in my family and outside of it?
 - Have I been unhappy with the blessing that God has given me and/or been jealous of another?
 - Have I tried to get things, clothes, etc. that I see others having/wearing just because they have them?
 - Am I sinfully jealous (envy) of what others have?
- 8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. (PRIDE)**
 - Have I told lies?
 - Have I gossiped?
 - Have I told others someone's faults without serious reason to do so?