

How to go to Confession

1. *The priest will greet you.*
2. *The penitent (you) say: "Bless me, Father, for I have sinned."*

You then say

- *how long it has been since your last Confession*
- *Your state in life (married, single, student, parent, widow)*

3. *The penitent tells the priest his sins and briefly answers any relevant questions.*

4. *The priest will give you some advice and will assign you a penance.*

5. *The penitent will next pray the Act of Contrition (see prayer below).*

6. *The priest then gives the penitent absolution.*

7. *The penitent responds: "Amen." The priest will then dismiss you.*

If your penance was to say some prayers do so immediately.

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of Heaven and the pains of hell. 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 confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

Prayer Before Confession

O most merciful God! Prostrate at your feet, I implore your forgiveness. I sincerely desire to leave all my evil ways and to confess my sins with all sincerity to you and to your priest. I am a sinner, have mercy on me, O Lord. Give me a lively faith and a firm hope in the Passion of my Redeemer. Give me, for your mercy's sake a sorrow for having offended so good a God. Mary, my mother, refuge of sinners, pray for me that I may make a good confession. Amen.

Prayer After Confession

Almighty and Merciful God, Whose mercy is boundless and everlasting and of Whose goodness the riches are infinite, I thank You because You have so graciously pardoned all my sins and restored Your Heavenly favor. I am awed by Your divine compassion and the incomprehensible love of Your Son, which has led Him to institute so gentle and powerful a remedy for sins. In union with all the gratitude that has ever ascended to You from truly penitent hearts, I proclaim Your merciful praises on behalf of all in Heaven, on earth and in purgatory, for ever and ever. Amen.



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ST. PAUL CATHOLIC CHURCH

Examination of Conscience



Preparation for the Sacrament of Penance

The Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord Thy God. Thou shall not have strange gods before Me.

Have I ...

- been ashamed of or denied my faith in front of others?
- ridiculed the teachings or practices of the Church?
- neglected my prayers?
- used witchcraft, Wicca, Yoga, or other Occult practices?
- practiced various forms of superstition such as fortune tellers, horoscopes, ouija boards, or tarot cards?

2. Thou shall not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain.

Have I ...

- used God's name carelessly, in anger, or in surprise?
- been angry with God?
- wished evil upon any other person?

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

Have I ...

- through my own fault, failed to come to Mass each Sunday and Holy Days of Obligations?
- arrived to Mass late or leave early without good reason?
- allow myself to be distracted at Mass?

4. Honor thy father and thy mother.

Have I ...

- disobeyed my parents or treated them with disrespect?
- disrespectful, impolite, or discourteous toward my family?
- been disobedient to the civil law or to those in authority such as the police?

The Ten Commandments

5. Thou shall not kill.

Have I ...

- had abortion or help another to have an abortion?
- attempted suicide or seriously consider thoughts of suicide?
- acted violently by fighting or hitting others?
- had thoughts of hatred toward another?
- taken illegal drugs or abused prescription drugs?
- allowed myself to become intoxicated?
- harbor unkind and revengeful thoughts about others?
- used abusive language toward another?
- acted rudely or ridicule others?
- been guilty of the sin of racism?
- been cruel to animals?

6. Thou shall not commit adultery.

Have I ...

- been faithful to my marriage vows in thought and action?
- engaged in any sexual activity outside of marriage?
- used any method of contraception or artificial birth control in my marriage?
- been guilty of masturbation?
- respected all members of the opposite sex, or have I thought of other people as mere objects?
- been guilty of homosexual activity?
- seek to be chaste in my thoughts, words, actions?
- been careful to dress modestly?

The Ten Commandments

7. Thou shall not steal.

Have I ...

- stolen what is not mine?
- returned or made restitution for what I have stolen?
- wasted time at work, school, and home?
- payed my debts promptly?
- shared what I have with the poor?

8. Thou shall not bear false witness.

Have I ...

- lied?
- gossiped?
- been critical or uncharitable in my thoughts of others?
- injured the reputation of others by slanders?

9. Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's wife.

Have I ...

- consented to impure thoughts?
- behaved in an inappropriate way with members of the opposite sex: flirting, being superficial, etc.?

10. Thou shall not covet thy neighbor's goods.

Have I ...

- been jealous of what other people have?
- been greedy or selfish?
- let material possessions be a main purpose of my life?