

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

First examine your conscience well, then tell the priest the specific kind of sins you have committed and, to the best of your ability, how many times you have committed them since your last good confession. You are obliged to confess only mortal sins, since you can obtain forgiveness for your venial sins by sacrifices, acts of charity and receiving Holy Communion. Remember also, confession of venial sins is very helpful for avoiding sin and advancing toward Heaven.

If you are in doubt about whether a sin is mortal or venial, mention your doubt to the confessor. For a sin to be *mortal*, three conditions must together be met: “Mortal sin is sin whose object is grave matter and which is also committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent.” (CCC 1857)

Avoid generalizations and tell the priest the circumstances in which the sin was committed.

Always tell the priest your state of life: married or single, priest or religious, under religious vows or promises. Tell the priest the last time you went to confession.

GUIDE TO HOW TO GO TO CONFESSION

“Bless me Father for I have sinned, it has been ___ since my last confession and here are my sins.”

Confess your sins (*regarding mortal sins we must confess the type of sin and how often committed*).

Father will be given some advice and a penance.

Pray the Act of Contrition

[One version of 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 thee, 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.”

Receive absolution (Father will say):

“God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of His Son has reconciled the world to Himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church, may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins, in the name of † the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” (*Bless yourself*)

“Amen.”

(Father may say)

“May the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of all the saints, whatever good you do and suffering you endure heal your sins, help you to grow in holiness, and reward you with eternal life. Go in peace.”

“Thanks be to God.”

Go carry out your penance.