

# Preparing for the Sacrament



Before receiving the sacrament, one should perform an examination of conscience in order to make a more complete confession of sins. An examination of conscience is the means by which one prepares for the sacrament of

Reconciliation by reflecting on times he or she has sinned against God or others. To aid this process, one can use the Ten Commandments, the Sermon on the Mount, Catholic moral or social teaching, or some other means to guide reflection. Outside of the sacrament of Reconciliation, an examination of conscience can be used daily as a means of keeping track of our spiritual lives and highlighting those areas where we need to improve. When we find that certain sins or often repeated, we should attempt to find ways to cultivate positive behaviors and habits that will counter those sins.

Several examinations of conscience, both brief and in-depth, can be found at: [the USCCB website.](#)

## Scheduling for your Sacrament

- Saturdays 3:30 - 4:30 P.M.
- Sundays before the 7:30 & 9:00 A.M. Masses
- Monday, 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.

If anyone desires to go to confession at any other time, please call the rectory.

## Proceeding to the Sacrament

Enter the confessional. Remember, this is a sacrament of God's mercy and love, not of judgment. The priest is bound by the Seal of the Confessional and cannot reveal anything that is said during a Confession to anyone. You can choose to either kneel behind the screen or sit face to face with the priest. In either case, start off by making the Sign of the Cross and saying, ***Bless me Father for I have sinned. My last confession was*** [the

amount of time in weeks, months, or years] ***ago and these are my sins:***

Confess your sins, starting with the most serious. For serious sins (i.e. mortal sins), state the number of times each was committed. All mortal sins should be confessed. When you have finished, you may want to say something like, ***I'm sorry for these sins and any that I may have forgotten.***

After you have confessed your sins, the priest may say a few words. He will then give you a penance and ask you to make an Act of Contrition. Two versions you can use are:

***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 you, my God, who are all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen.***

*or*

***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.***

After making an Act of Contrition, the priest will absolve you of your sins. He will make the Sign of the Cross and say **I absolve of your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.** You can also make the Sign of the Cross at this time if you would like. When you leave the confessional, make sure you perform the penance the priest gave you as a sign of your desire to turn away from sin and toward Christ.