

Guide for the Sacrament of Reconciliation

(Also called Confession or Penance)

Before Confession

Examine your conscience—this means thinking through the ways that you have sinned. Pray for the Holy Spirit’s help. Here is an example:

Come, Holy Spirit, give me your light to see my sins, and give me Your help to be sorry for them. Show me why I sinned. Help me never again to sin.

You may meet with the priest face-to-face or you may kneel behind the screen.

Inside Confession

1. Father will open with the sign of the cross. You do the gesture of the sign of the cross over yourself, as he says the words.
2. Say to the priest,
 - a. **“Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It’s been** (amount of time) **since my last confession.”**
 - b. **Confess all your sins.** You don’t need to give details or stories, just the idea. For mortal sins you should also say how many times you committed that sin.
 - c. **“For these and all my past sins, I am truly sorry.”**
3. Father may give you advice or talk with you.
4. Father will give you a penance to perform when you leave, usually prayer(s).
5. Father will ask you to pray out loud the *Act of Contrition*:
My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong or in 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.
6. **Absolution:** Father will say the following prayer of absolution:
“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 grant 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.”
7. Your sins have been forgiven, you are free to go. You may thank the priest as you leave.

After Confession

Perform your penance.

Prayer after Confession (Optional)

My Jesus, I thank You for washing away my sins in Your Precious Blood. Help me to accept my cross each day and not to hurt You. I love you with my whole heart and soul. Amen.