

Steps for making a good Confession:

1. *Pray* that the Holy Spirit will help you to know your sins.
2. *Examine* your conscience.
3. Express in prayer your *sorrow* for having committed these sins, or pray for the help to be truly sorry.
4. *Resolve* not to commit these sins again, and to *avoid* the situations that lead to sin.
5. *Confess* your sins to the priest.
6. Pray or perform the *penance* the priest gives you as soon as possible.

Prayer Before Confession

Come Holy Spirit into my soul. Enlighten my mind that I may know the sins I ought to confess, and grant me your grace to confess them fully, humbly and with contrite heart. Help me to firmly resolve not to commit them again. O Blessed Virgin, Mother of my Redeemer, mirror of innocence and sanctity, and refuge of penitent sinners, intercede for me through the Passion of Your Son, that I may obtain the grace to make a good confession. All you blessed Angels and Saints of God, pray for me, a most miserable sinner, that I may repent from my evil ways, that my heart may henceforth be forever untied with yours in eternal love. Amen.

Act of Contrition

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.

Guide for making an Individual Confession:

- Begin by making the sign of the cross and saying:
“Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been (how long?) since my last confession.”
- The priest may give you a blessing at this time. If he has already done so, continue by confessing your sins, in kind and number, to the best of your ability:
“These are my sins...”
- You may conclude by saying:
“For these and all my sins, I am sorry.”

If you do not know how to confess, feel uneasy, or forget your sins, ask the priest to help you.

- The priest may offer some advice and will assign you your penance. He may then ask you to pray an **Act of Contrition**
- The priest will then grant you *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 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.”

Respond: “Amen.”

- The priest may say:
“Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.”
Respond: “His mercy endures forever!”
Priest: “Go in peace.”

- After Confession, pray or perform your penance as soon as possible. It is a good practice to pray and extra prayer for your priest-confessor.

The Catholic Diocese of Peoria Children’s Guide to Confession



Let the children come to me, and do not prevent them; for the kingdom of heaven belongs to such as these. (Matthew 19:14)

Examination of Conscience

The Ten Commandments:

I. I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.

- Do I tell God that I love Him?
- Do I thank God every day for all He has given me?
- Do I pray to God every day?

II. You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain.

- Have I said God's name in a disrespectful way?
- Have I said bad words?
- Have I made fun of holy things?

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

- Have I missed Mass on Sunday (or Saturday evening)?
- Do I pay attention and pray at Mass?
- Have I fasted an hour before receiving Communion?
- Have I misbehaved in Church, talked, played, or distracted others?

IV. Honor your father and mother.

- Do I obey my parents, teachers, and those who care for me quickly and cheerfully or do I have to be reminded?
- Have I talked back to my parents?
- Do I help my parents and do my share of the work at home without complaining?
- Have I treated any adult disrespectfully?
- Do I tell my parents that I love them?
- Have I broken any of the rules of my home or school?

V. You shall not kill.

- Have I treated anyone unkindly or disrespectfully?
- Have I hit, kicked, or fought with my brothers and sisters, or anyone else?
- Have I hurt someone's feelings by calling them names or making fun of them?
- Have I hurt someone's feelings by not playing with them or leaving them out of activities?
- Have I been angry and wanted to hurt someone?
- Do I forgive people when they apologize or do I stay mad at them?
- Do I take care of my body by eating the right food and going to bed on time?

VI. You shall not commit adultery.

- Have I watched bad things on TV?
- Do I respect other people's privacy, especially members of my family?
- Do I knock at a closed door before entering?
- Do I close the door when I am in the bathroom or getting dressed?

VII. You shall not steal.

- Did I take something that didn't belong to me?
- Did I break or lose something that was not mine and not fix or replace it?
- Do I ask first if I would like to borrow something that does not belong to me?
- Do I return on time everything that I borrow?
- If I find money or something that does not belong to me do I try to find out who lost it?
- Have I been selfish and not shared my things with others?
- Have I wasted food or other things?

VIII. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

- Have I lied?
- Have I said bad things about someone behind their back?
- Have I cheated on a test or in a game?
- Do I play fair?
- Have I talked about something that I should have kept to myself?
- Do I keep my promises?

IX. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

- Am I jealous of someone because their parents let them do things that my parents don't let me do?
- Do I wish that I had different parents, brothers, or sisters?

X. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

- Am I envious because others have things that I want?
- Am I greedy?
- Have I been upset or unhappy when someone got something I wanted?
- Have I been envious when something good happened to someone?
- Have I been too critical of others?
- Am I grateful for the things I have?

