

3

How to Go to Confession

1. Begin with the Sign of the Cross.
2. Begin by saying, "**Bless me, Father, for I have sinned, it has been (number of days, weeks, months, etc.) since my last confession. These are my sins.**"
3. Confess your sins: you must confess all mortal sins since your last confession, and you should confess venial sins too, especially ones that occur frequently
4. At the end of your confession, say these or similar words: "**For these and all the sins of my life I am sorry.**"
5. The priest may ask for clarification or provide counsel.
6. The priest will give you a penance.
7. Make an Act of Contrition in these or similar words: "**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.**"
8. You will then receive absolution.
9. Thank the priest, leave the confessional, and say or do the penance as soon as possible.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

Church of St. Therese

Grades 9 – 12

1

Preparing for Confession

Choose a quiet place to pray, asking the Holy Spirit to guide you to remember your sins and to give you the courage to confess them.

2

Perform an Examination of Conscience

- Reflect on how well you have kept the Ten Commandments since the time of your last confession. (You can use the questions below to help guide you.)
- As you prepare, remember that *you must confess all **mortal sins*** that you may have committed since your last confession.
 - A mortal sin is a **serious sin**
 - that you committed **knowing it was a sin**
 - and that you **freely chose to do**.
- You need to confess each mortal sin **in kind** (what specific sin it was) and **in number** (how many times you did it, as best you can remember).
 - If you aren't sure whether a sin is mortal, just ask the priest.
- You do not *have* to confess venial sins (that is, less serious sins that do not count as "mortal"). However, you are strongly encouraged to do so, to give you forgiveness and the grace to overcome them.

1. I am the Lord your God; you shall have no other gods before me.

- Have I prayed every day?
- Have I put other things besides God at the center of my life (for example, sports, school, people, entertainment, etc.)?
- Have I denied or downplayed my Catholic faith in front of others?
- Have I neglected to try to learn more about my faith, or allowed myself to fall into doubt without trying to learn why it might be true?
- Have I put trust in occult or superstitious practices that attribute power to forces other than God (for example, ouiji boards, tarot cards, horoscopes, fortune telling, etc.)?

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

- Have I used God's name or other holy words carelessly or disrespectfully?
- Have I used foul language?
- Have I mocked or insulted God, the Church, the saints, or other holy things?

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

- Have I missed Mass on Sunday or a Holy Day of Obligation, or made it difficult for my family to attend Mass?
- Have I kept Sunday as a day for rest & family, or have I done unnecessary work?
- Have I received Communion after committing a serious (mortal) sin without going to Confession first?
- Have I received Communion without fasting from food and drinks (except water and medicine) for one hour?
- In a previous Confession, did I fail to confess a serious sin that I knew I should have included? (That sin should also be confessed now, if it hasn't already.)
- Did I fail to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday & Fridays during Lent (if 14 or older)? Did I fail to fast on Ash Wednesday & Good Friday (if 18 or older)?

4. Honor your father and mother.

- Have I been disrespectful to or disobeyed my parents and grandparents or those with legitimate authority over me (such as teachers, police officers, etc.)?
- Have I failed to do my homework and household duties, or procrastinated or done them carelessly?
- Have I been unkind to my siblings or failed to help them?

5. You shall not kill.

- Have I harmed or fought with someone, either with words or physically?
- Have I fostered anger and hatred toward someone else in my heart?
- Have I been disrespectful or cruel towards others?
- Have I been impatient with or critical of other people? Have I wished evil upon others or delighted in bad things happening to them?
- Have I refused to forgive those who have hurt me?
- Have I refused to apologize when I have hurt someone or done wrong?
- Have I been cruel to pets & animals or needlessly damaged the natural world?
- Have I taken care of my body through exercise, thoughtful eating habits, etc.?
- Have I smoked or tried alcohol or other drugs?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

- Have I engaged in long/passionate kissing or touching for sexual pleasure?

- Have I had sexual intercourse with someone else?
- Have I masturbated, or touched myself in sexual ways for pleasure?
- Have I engaged in romantic or sexual activity with someone of the same sex?
- Have I encouraged or congratulated others for committing these sins?

7. You shall not steal.

- Have I taken things that belonged to others?
- Have I damaged other people's property or public property?
- Have I violated copyright by streaming or downloading pirated media or media that I should have paid for?
- Have I wasted time at my job or accepted payment for shoddy work?

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

- Have I told lies or been misleading or deceitful?
- Have I exaggerated the truth to make myself or someone else look better?
- Have I cheated on schoolwork, sports, competitions, etc.?
- Have I gossiped or encouraged others to gossip?
- Have I told lies about other people, especially to hurt their reputation?
- Have I shared faults or bad information about other people—even if the information was true—without good reason?
- Have I broken someone's confidence by unnecessarily telling a secret?

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

- Have I allowed my mind to dwell on impure thoughts, without trying to stop?
- Have I watched or listen to media that was sexually explicit, attacked God/the Church, or glorified violence and sin?
- Have I used pornography?
- Have I allowed others to look at my body in an inappropriate way, or sent them pictures of me with not enough clothes on?
- Have I looked at other people for sexual pleasure?
- Have I dressed immodestly?
- Have I told or listened to impure stories or jokes?

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

- Am I jealous of other people's gifts, talents, or possessions?
- Have I allowed myself to become bitter or resentful about what I don't have?
- Have I refused to share with others or volunteer my time?
- Have I failed to pray for the poor or those in difficult circumstances?