

HOW TO GO TO CONFESSION



Before receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation it is important to examine one's conscience. You will find an Act of Contrition on the back of this page.

GREETING:

Greet the Priest. He may begin with the Sign of the Cross and a short prayer.

CONFESSION OF SINS:

"Bless me Father for I have sinned."

"This is my first Confession." or "It has been (however long) since my last Confession. These are my sins..."

Tell the priest your sins in your own words. Name all serious sins that you have committed (all that you can remember) and how many times you committed the sin. It is also good to confess venial sins. When you are finished, indicate this to the priest. One way to do this is to finish by saying the following or similar:

"For these sins, and any sins I do not remember, I ask forgiveness."

COUNCIL, ASSIGNMENT OF PENANCE, CONTRITION:

The Priest may give you spiritual advice at this time. He will then assign a penance for you to do and ask you to pray an Act of Contrition (unless you are at a Penance Service where the congregation prayed the Act of Contrition together).

An 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.

ABSOLUTION:

Now the priest absolves you, saying:

"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."

+ Make the sign of the cross and say, "Amen."

Be sure to thank the priest. Go and do your penance.

An Examination of Conscience for Children

Using the Beatitudes (Matthew 5: 3–11)



Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Am I thankful for all that I have?

- Do I thank God for all that I have been given?
- Do I have more than I need?
- Do I share my abundance?

Blessed are they who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

- Do I reach out to those who are sad or do I ignore them?

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

- Am I gentle or am I sometimes pushy or bossy?
- Am I a bully?

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be satisfied.

- Do I stand up for those who are being bullied or do I look the other way?
- Do I follow the teachings of Jesus and the Church?
- Do I practice the works of mercy?

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.

- Do I freely share with others?
- Do I befriend those who are left out or lonely?
- Am I forgiving or do I hold a grudge?

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.

- Do I put God at the center of my decisions and life?
- Do I think anyone or anything is more important than God?
- Do I ever cheat? Am I honest?

Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons and daughters of God.

- Do I value each person as a child of God?
- Do I try to get along with everyone, especially family, neighbors and classmates?

Blessed are they who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

- Do I follow the teachings of Jesus and the Church, even if my friends disagree?
- Do I remember that Jesus suffered and died for my sake and the sake of others?

Adapted from Seven Frequently Asked Questions About Children and the Sacrament of Reconciliation, written for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee by Kathleen D. Beuscher, 2010