

## A Guide for Confession

**Remember:** If you need help simply ask the priest and he will help you by “walking” you through the steps to make a good Confession.

**Before Confession:** Be truly sorry for your sins.

**Examination of Conscience:** Before going to Confession you should make a review of mortal and venial sins since your last confession.

**During Confession:** Go into the confessional. You may kneel at the screen or sit to talk face-to-face with the priest.

The priest will welcome you. Together, you and the priest will make the Sign of the Cross: “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

The priest invites you to have trust in God, in these or similar words: “May God, who has shone his light in our hearts, grant that you may truly know your sins and his mercy.” You answer: “Amen.”

The priest may read or say from memory a passage from Holy Scripture.

You may then begin your confession with these or similar words: “**It has been** (give days, months, or years) **since my last Confession. These are my sins.**” If you do not say how long ago you went to confession, the priest may ask you about it.

Say the sins you remember. Start with the one that is the most difficult to say.

After confessing all the sins you remember since your last good Confession, you may conclude by saying, “**I am sorry for these and all the sins of my past life.**”

Listen to the words of the priest. He might counsel you on how to better live a Christian life. He will assign you some penance (a prayer, a work of mercy, or an act of charity).

The priest then invites you to pray an Act of Contrition. For example: “**O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins because of your just punishment, 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.**” If you do not know it, ask the priest and he will help you.

**At the End of Confession:** The priest will extend his hand over your head and pronounce the words of Absolution. Listen to these words, which are the sacramental forgiveness of the Church through the ordained priest. As you listen to the words of forgiveness you may make the sign of the cross with the priest.

If he closes by saying, “**Give thanks to the Lord for he is good,**” answer, “**For His mercy endures forever.**”

The priest will conclude the sacrament often saying, “**The Lord has forgiven your sins. Go in peace.**”

**After Confession:** Give thanks to God for forgiving you again. If you recall some serious sin you forgot to tell, rest assured that it has been forgiven with the others, but be sure to confess it in your next Confession.

**Do your assigned Penance.**