

Receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Say a prayer before the confession and create a list of the mortal and venial sins you have committed. Write these down if you need to, and then ask God to accept your sadness and ask for grace.

Enter confessional and have a seat.

The priest will give the sign of the cross, allowing you to ask for a blessing and tell him how long it has been since your last confession. You will then say, "Bless me Father for I have sinned, it has been (insert the time -- weeks, months, years) since my last confession."

Then you will confess all of your mortal and venial sins and how many times for each of those sins. It is okay to be nervous and you may not have your thoughts in a very organized manner. You are listing your sins so you can free your heart of the burden. If you need to, take a second and proceed when you are ready to go again.

As you end listing your sins, say you are sorry for your sins in a sorrowful way with a small prayer or sentence. A common response is "For these and all the sins of my life I am sorry."

Now carefully listen to the priest's counsel and his penance for you. The priest might console you and offer you suggestions on how to deal with your struggles. Receive this advice and accept the unconditional love you receive through these words. The priest will give you a penance, which might be something like saying three hail Mary's and the Apostle's Creed. (You will then complete this penance after the confession.)

Act of Contrition will be done next. Let the Father know that you are truly sorry for your sins and that you will sin no more. If do you sin again, understand that the Lord will forgive you, as long as you are sorry for your sin and that you sincerely try not to sin again.

Next, the priest will give you absolution, forgiving you in the name of the Father. The priest will say, "Amen," which you can repeat after him, or say it with him. Leave the confessional and complete your penance as soon as possible.