

How to Make a Good Confession

1. Begin with a good Examination of Conscience

Before entering the confessional, we should prepare ourselves for a good confession by taking the time not only to examine our conscience, but to excite in our hearts a sincere sorrow for our sins and a firm purpose not to sin again. Think about what you have learned about the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, the Spiritual and Corporal Works of Mercy, the laws of the Church, etc. Think of the ways you may have broken God's rules or done anything to offend Him. Know what sins you are going to say before you go to Confession.

2. Be sorry for your sins.

Contrition is sincere sorrow for having offended God, hatred for the sins we have committed, and a firm purpose of sinning no more. Our sins hurt us because they rob our soul of God's grace. If we are not truly sorry for the sins that we have committed, we cannot be forgiven. When our sins are forgiven, we receive God's grace to help give us the strength to choose not to sin again.

3. Resolve not to sin again.

We should sincerely resolve not only to avoid sin, but to avoid as far as possible the near occasions of sin. This can be very difficult, but we must remember to ask God for help. We should choose our actions carefully, our words wisely, and be mindful of the shows we watch and the music we listen to. We must choose our friends wisely and strive to be an image of God.

4. Confess your sins to the priest.

Never be afraid to tell your sins to the priest. He is there in the place of Jesus and he wants to listen to you and to help you. The priest is there to forgive your sins in the way that Jesus has asked him to. **Everything that you tell the priest is ALWAYS kept secret.** The only ones who know what is said in the confessional are you, the priest and God. Nobody else will ever know.

5. Be willing to do the penance the priest gives you.

It is always best to do your penance as soon as you leave the confessional. If we are asked to pray, we should go back to our pew and quietly say those prayers. If the priest has asked us to do something else, we should make a promise to God that we will try to do whatever the priest has asked. Whatever the priest asks of you, remember how small it is compared to the suffering and death of Jesus on the cross when He died for our sins. We should be happy to have the opportunity to have our sins forgiven and the chance to make up for what we have done.