

How to Go to Confession

Prepare – Before going to confession, you should prayerfully compare your life with the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes and the example of Christ. Using an Examination of Conscience, such as the one provided on the reverse side can be helpful.

Go to Confession – After the priest welcomes you, both of you make the Sign of the Cross. Then you may want to talk about yourself, your situation and difficulties you face living a Christian life and tell him the last time you went to confession.

The Word of God – (optional) You or the priest may read one of the suggested scriptural passages.

Confession of Sins and the Act of Penance – Confess your sins. The priest then offers suitable advice and gives you an act of penance, which may include prayer, self-denial or works of mercy.

Prayer of the Penitent – Pray a prayer expressing sorrow for your sins and a desire not to sin again.

Absolution – The priest extends his hands over your head and pronounces a formula of absolution, making the sign of the cross over your head during the final words. You answer, "Amen".

Dismissal – The priest sends you forth to go in peace. Continue to express your conversion through a life renewed according to the Gospel and the love of God.

Examination of Conscience

To what extent have I spent time in prayer and have I included God in my daily life?

Have I treated people, events, or things as more important than God?

Am I actively living my Catholic faith and, if I have them, raising my children in the faith?

Have I been ashamed to speak about my faith?

Have my words, actively or passively, put down God, the Church, or people?

Do I go to Mass every Sunday (or Saturday Vigil) and on Holy Days of Obligation?

Do I look for ways to spend time with family or in service on Sunday?

Do I use my gifts and talents to serve God?

Do I care for those around me or do I use them to get what I want?

Do I show respect to both those in positions of legitimate authority and those who are under my authority (including my children if I have them)?

Have I taken or wasted time or resources that belonged to another?

Am I lazy?

Have I harmed others through physical, verbal, or emotional means?

Do I look down on those who are different from me?

Have I gossiped, told lies, or embellished stories at the expense of others?

Have I respected the physical and sexual dignity of others and of myself?

Have I honored my spouse (if married) with my full affection and exclusive love?

Am I content with my own means and needs, or do I compare myself to others unnecessarily?

Do I seek to fill what is lacking in my life with material possessions?

Am I moving toward addiction to drugs, alcohol, gambling or pornography?

Am I sincerely sorry for the things I have done wrong?