

HOW TO GO TO CONFESSION

Simple instructions to take with you into the confessional.



Examine your conscience - Before you go to confession **you MUST examine your conscience**; it's vitally important to make time for this. Also, write your sins down in some detail, while you pray for enlightenment and full contrition (sorrow for your sins).

Introduction - After you enter the confessional, either kneel down or have a seat. As you make the sign of the cross, **pray out loud**: "In the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, Amen." Then say, "Bless me, Father for I have sinned. It has been (mention how long) since my last confession."

Confess your sins - You then **tell the priest your sins**, reading them from the list you prepared ahead of time.

Guidance - The priest may or may not ask you questions and give advice on how you can avoid committing your sins again. **You can also ask questions at this time** too; however, this isn't the time for counseling—just guidance. If it is evident after confessing your sins that you are not sorry for any of them then the priest would be unable to forgive your sins until you were truly sorry with the firm intention of no longer committing those sins while advising you of remedies you can take to develop actual sorrow.

Penance – The priest will ask you to do something to help you avoid your sins in the future, or to make your wrongs right or to pray certain prayers. *Pay attention to what the priest says, you will need to remember this.*

Contrition - At this point the priest will ask you to **pray an "act of contrition"** or to express sorrow for your sins. Some priests might insist you pray the act of contrition in accordance with one of the two following examples, but if you prefer you can express your sorrow and desire to sin no more in your own words.

"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. Amen"

"O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell; 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 confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen"

Absolution - Then the priest will absolve you (forgive you) of your sins which is when God sends the Holy Spirit among us, into our soul, through the power God gave to his priests, for the forgiveness of your sins. After the priest prays the prayer of absolution, then **you respond, "Amen"**.

Conclusion – The priest might say "You have been forgiven from your sins; go in peace." **You can reply, "Amen"**.

Don't forget to do your penance. If you were asked to pray, make sure to do it before leaving the church. If you were asked to do some form of work, **MAKE SURE YOU DO IT WELL**, and before you leave the church plan and schedule a specific time in which to do that work. **Then praise God** for forgiving you of your sins.

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