

Guide for Confession

Below is a simple Guide for Confession. Please click on the link on the right for a printable PDF version of the same Guide.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE: Before entering the Reconciliation Room, you should make an examination of conscience, doing your best to call to mind the sins since your last confession for which you will ask the Lord's mercy.

We are always obliged to make an integral (or "complete") confession, not deliberately withholding anything from the account of ourselves that we give to the Lord.

UPON ENTERING the Reconciliation Room, you may either kneel to speak with the priest anonymously through the screen, or sit in the empty chair to speak with the priest face-to-face.

When you enter, the priest will give you a blessing, asking that the Lord help you to know your sins and trust His mercy. As you receive this blessing, you may make the Sign of the Cross.

CONFESSON: You begin by mentioning how long it has been since your last confession, and then confess the sins that are on your conscience.

The priest may ask you a few questions to be sure that he understands what you are saying, or to determine the seriousness of the things you confess. He may give you some words of advice or encouragement.

PENANCE: The priest will assign you a penance – some good action, often the saying of prayers -- that you are asked to do as a sign of sincerity and means of reparation. He will ask if you accept this penance so that he is sure that you understand what he is asking, and that you are able to do it. If there is any difficulty you should mention it, so that the priest can modify the penance.

ACT OF CONTRITION: You say a prayer expressing regret for your sins, and the intention to love and serve God more faithfully in the future. One of the following forms may be used.

O my God, I am heartily sorry
for having offended You.
And I detest all my sins
because of Your just punishments;
but most of all because they have offended 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 occasion of sin. Amen

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.**

ABSOLUTION: The priest will say the prayer of Absolution, through which the Lord forgives our sins. At the end of the prayer, as the priest says "I absolve you from your sins, in the name of the Father . . .", you may make the Sign of the Cross.

AFTER LEAVING the confessional, you should do your penance as soon as possible.