

Easy steps for a Good Confession



Receiving The Sacrament of Reconciliation

By Sister Mary Rose Reddy, DMML

Daughters of Mary

MOTHER OF HEALING LOVE

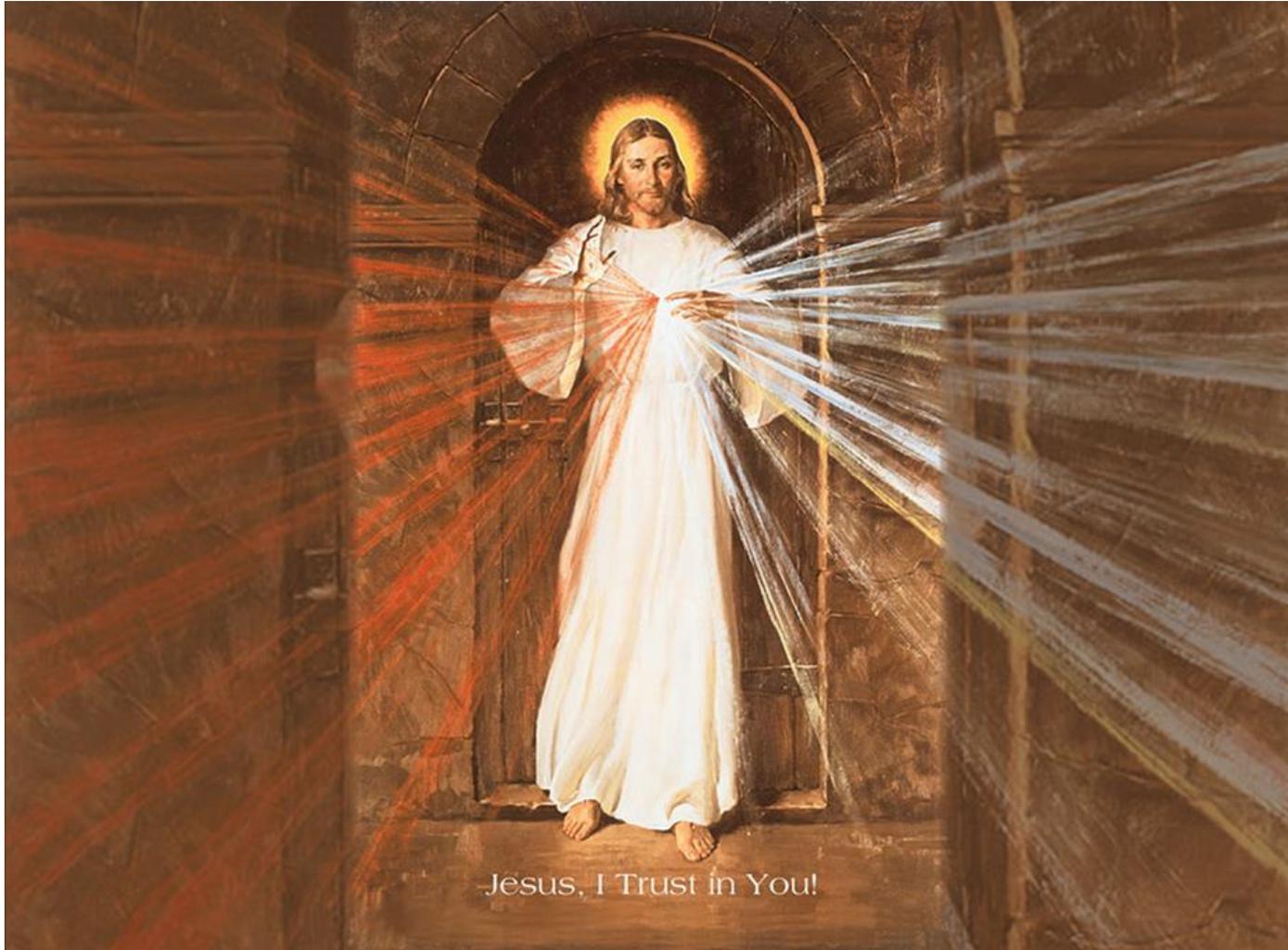


Jesus gave us the Sacrament of Reconciliation on Easter Sunday night.



“On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being shut where the disciples were, for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, ‘Peace be with you.’ When he had said this, he showed them his hands and his side.”

“Then the disciples were glad when they saw the Lord. Jesus said to them again, ‘Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, even so I send you.’ And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said to them, ‘Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.’” (*John 20:19-23*)



How to go to Confession

1. Pray to God
the Holy Spirit
for the gift to
know your
sins and to
confess them
honestly.

2. Examine your conscience.

This means to review your life since your last confession to see how you have sinned either by what you have done or by what you have failed to do.



3. When it is your turn for Confession, go into the confessional and either kneel by the screen or sit in the chair facing the priest.





4. Say, “Bless me, Father. I have sinned. *(Say about how long it has been since your last confession).*”

5. Confess your sins to the priest.

It is necessary to confess every mortal sin and not to hide anything out of shame. You should also try to confess your venial sins.





6. After saying your sins say, “For these and all the sins of my past life, I am sorry.”

7. When the priest asks you to pray an *Act of Contrition* you may pray one you know, read one off a card, or make up one from your heart. Here is a commonly used one:

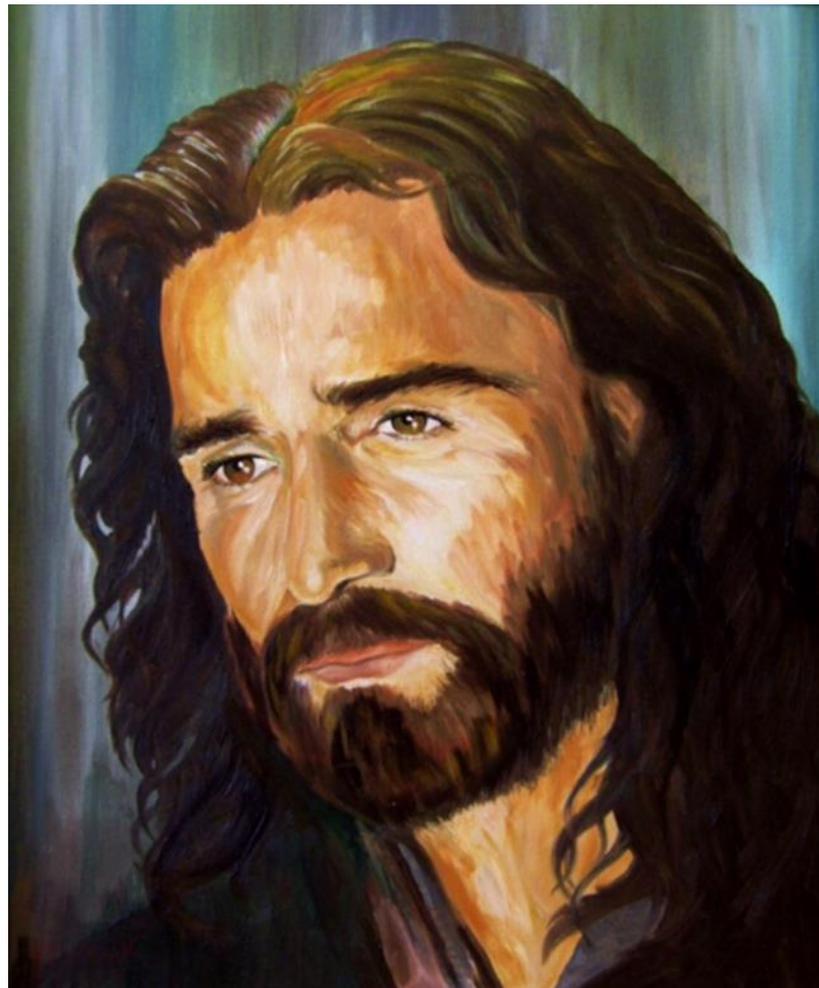


Oh my God I am heartily sorry for having offended You and I detest all my sins because of your just punishments but most of all because they offend You, my God, Who are all Good and deserving of all of my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Your grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen.

The priest will then speak to you briefly and will assign a penance to you. He will pray the prayer of absolution.

8. When the priest says, “I absolve you from your sins in the Name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,” you make the Sign of the Cross.

The priest may then bless you and you leave the confessional.



Painting of Jesus
By Nicole DeClerck



9. If your penance was to pray certain prayers, it is good to pray them right after your confession.

It is good to take time to thank God for the gift of His Infinite Mercy and loving kindness.

Jesus forgives our sins through the Sacrament of Reconciliation.



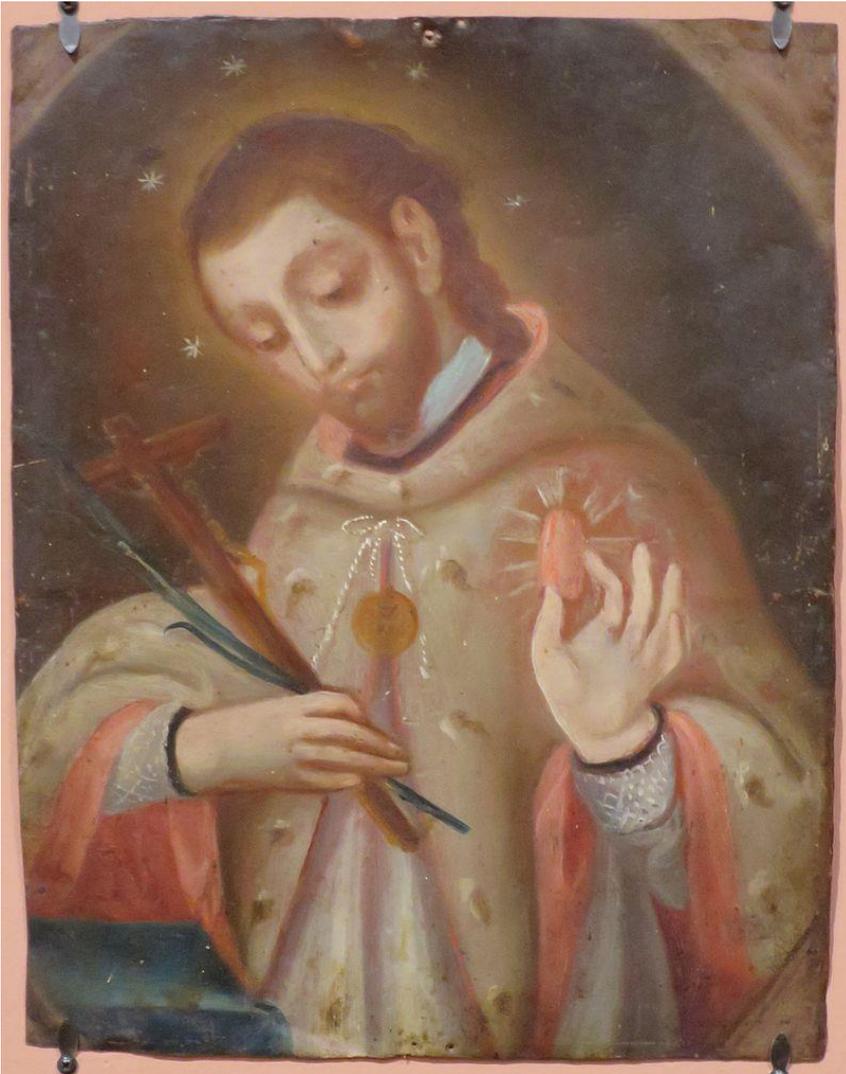
God's Mercy is Infinite.

- There is no sin that is too great for God to forgive and He desires that every person will decide to receive His Mercy and be saved.
- No matter what you have done you are always His beloved son or daughter.



Prodigal Son Returns by Rembrandt

The Seal of Confession



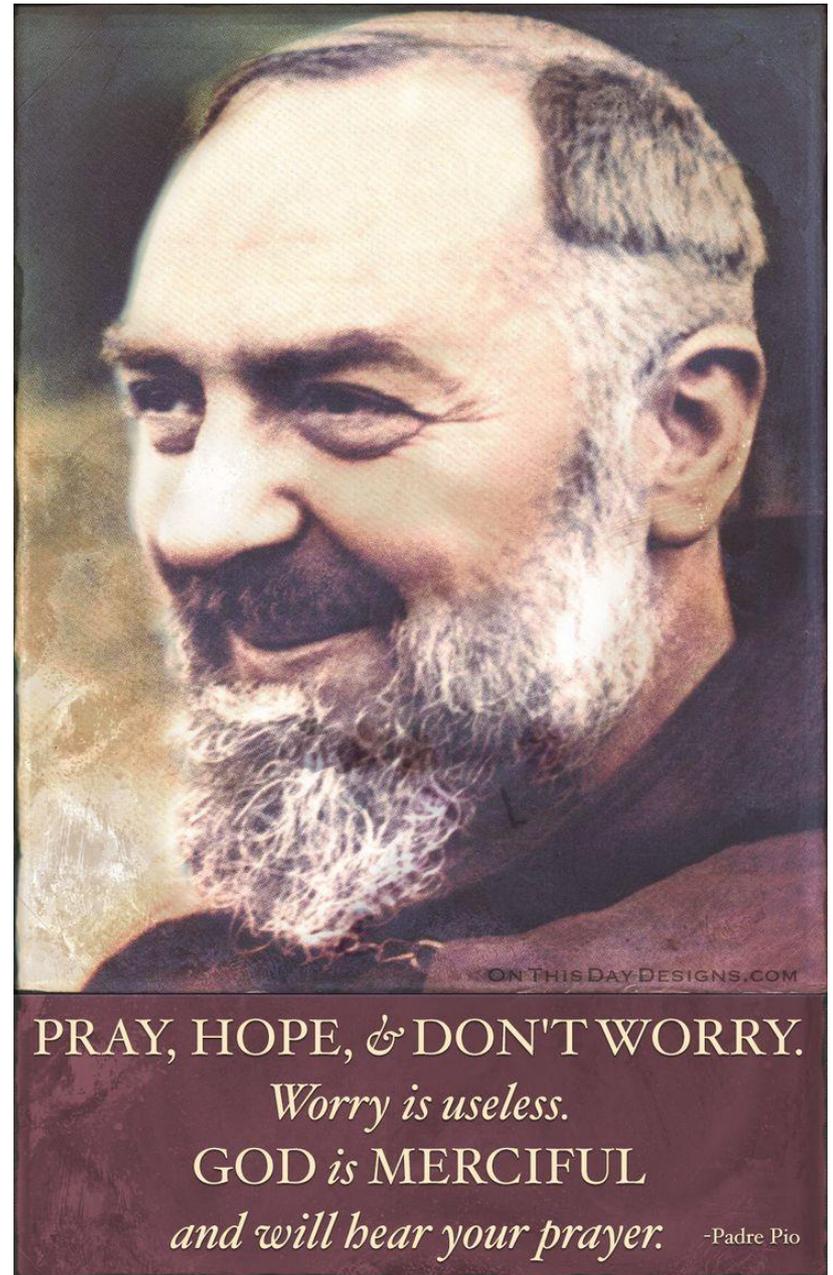
A priest is never permitted to tell, use, or refer to what a person has told him in Confession, even with a fellow priest. This is referred to as the Seal of Confession.

Throughout history, priests, such as St. John Nepomucene, have died rather than break the seal of confession.

Reconciliation is a Sacrament of healing.

This Sacrament is also
sometimes called
Confession or Penance.

St. Padre Pio was an Italian
priest who died in 1968. He
had the stigmata and he was
a great confessor. If you ask
him to be your spiritual father
he will be.





Thinking about each of the Ten Commandments is one way to examine your conscience.

God gave the Commandments to Moses about 1300 BC.

First Commandment: ***I am the Lord your God, you shall not have strange gods before me.***

- ▶ **Have I loved God with my whole heart, soul, mind, and strength and tried to lead others to do so also?**
- ▶ **Do I read Sacred Scripture and try to learn more about God?**
- ▶ **Do I pray every day? Do I ask God to help me?**
- ▶ **Do I have false gods in my life that I give greater attention to than God – such as myself, work, fame, money, pleasure, sports?**
- ▶ **Do I deny my belief in God as a result of family or peer pressure?**
- ▶ **Do I believe in any superstitions – fortune tellers, tarot cards, reincarnation, ouija boards, horoscopes?**

Second Commandment:

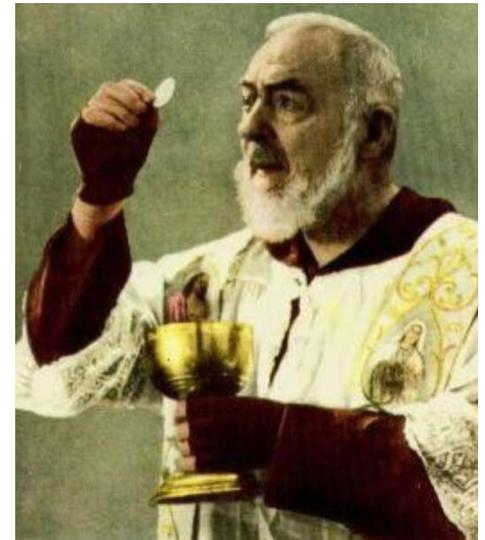
*You shall not take the name of the Lord
your God in vain.*

- ▶ Have I prayed with my family and spoken respectfully about the Lord?
- ▶ Do I say the Name of God or the Name of Jesus carelessly or uselessly?
- ▶ Do I curse or blaspheme or insult God or holy things?
- ▶ Have I shown contempt for sacred religious places and people?
- ▶ Have I received Holy Communion while in mortal sin?

Third Commandment: *Remember to Keep Holy the Sabbath Day.*

- ▶ Have I appreciated the gift of the Mass and participated with my heart?
- ▶ Did I miss Mass on Sunday (or the Saturday Vigil) or on a Holy Day of Obligation through my own fault?
- ▶ Do I come to Mass late or leave Mass early through my own negligence?
- ▶ Do I do unnecessary shopping and work on Sunday?

**"Every Holy Mass, heard with devotion, produces in our souls marvelous effects, abundant spiritual and material graces which we, ourselves, do not know...It is easier for the earth to exist without the sun than without the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass!"
St. Padre Pio**



Fourth Commandment: ***Honor Your Father and Mother.***

- ▶ **Do I obey and respect my parents? If they are old or sick, do I take care of them and show love for them?**
- ▶ **Do I respect the authority of the Catholic Church and observe her teachings?**
- ▶ **Do I respect lawful police and government authority?**
- ▶ **Do I respect my boss and supervisors at work or do I criticize them behind their backs?**





Fifth Commandment: *You Shall Not Kill.*

- ▶ Have I been thankful for the gift of life and appreciated the lives of others? Did I think hateful thoughts about myself or attempt to hurt myself? Have I not taken care of my body?
- ▶ Did I get unjustifiably angry, or was I envious, impatient, revengeful, jealous or hateful toward another person?
- ▶ Have I killed or physically injured anyone on purpose? Have I participated in abortion or euthanasia or helped elect people who support these actions?
- ▶ Have I forgiven those who have hurt me?
- ▶ Did I say hateful, vulgar, or mean things to another person? Have I hurt other peoples' hearts by the things that I have said to them or about them? Have I injured someone's spirit by mockery, gossip, or cyber bullying?

Sixth Commandment:

You Shall Not Commit Adultery.



- ▶ Have I respected my body and the bodies of others as Temples of the Holy Spirit?
- ▶ Have I made fun of or disregarded God's revelation that marriage is only between one man and one woman?
- ▶ Have I participated in sexual activity with a person to whom I was not married?
- ▶ Have I used contraceptives, been sterilized, or deliberately separated the unitive and procreative aspects of the sexual act?
- ▶ Did I look at pornography or masturbate?
- ▶ Did I tell jokes or listen to music that disrespects the holiness of sexuality?
- ▶ Have I thanked God for the gift of marriage and treated my spouse with respect?
- ▶ Has my marriage been sacramentally blessed?

Seventh Commandment: *You Shall Not Steal.*

- Did I steal, cheat, copy someone else's work, or keep stolen goods? Have I made restitution for stolen goods?
- Do I waste time at work, school or at home?
- Have I prayed to the Holy Spirit to ask Him how He wants me to spend my time?



Eighth Commandment:

You Shall Not Bear False Witness Against Your Neighbor.



- ▶ Do I tell the truth even when it is difficult?
- ▶ Do I deliberately deceive others by lies?
- ▶ Do I gossip about other people's faults and sins?
- ▶ Have I failed to keep secret what should be confidential?
- ▶ Have I testified falsely about my own or another's actions?

Ninth Commandment:

You Shall Not Covet Your Neighbor's Wife.



- ▶ Am I grateful for the gift each family member is to me?
- ▶ If married have I prayed for my spouse or instead mentally wished for a different spouse?
- ▶ Have I purposely thought impure thoughts about others and kept them in my mind?
- ▶ Do I thank God for other people or do I try to use them for my own benefit?
- ▶ Do I think of people as subjects created uniquely in God's image or as objects for my enjoyment?



Tenth Commandment:
You Shall Not Covet Your Neighbor's Goods.

- ▶ Am I jealous of other things people have that I don't have, or jealous of abilities they have that I don't have?
- ▶ Am I resentful of what others have in their lives?
- ▶ Do I thank God every day for my blessings?
- ▶ Am I grateful or do I complain or whine?
- ▶ Am I thankful for each of my children and family members and do I tell them so often?



God's Mercy endures forever and
He always wants to forgive us and
take us back into his Love!

Hurry while the offer lasts!
Benefits are out of this world!

REFERENCES

TEXT BY:

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PICTURES BY:

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