

Guide To Confession

Let's take a closer look at the word "reconciliation," which is another word for the sacrament of confession. The Latin word for eyelid is *cilia*. If you were so close to someone as to be with them eyelash to eyelash (the word "with" is *cūm* in Latin), you'd be *cum-cilia*. And if you were once that close, but had drifted apart and then returned again ("again" is *re* in Latin), you would be *re-cum-cilia*—you would be reconciled. Going to confession reconciles us "eyelash to eyelash" with Jesus, who is Mercy.

New Translation of Prayer of Absolution

The new translation is only slightly different from the old one and does not affect the primary words of absolution, "I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." The new translation will be fully implemented by Divine Mercy Sunday here at the Cathedral of the Holy Spirit.

NEW TRANSLATION: God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and **poured out the Holy Spirit** for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God **grant** you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father ... Son, and ... Holy Spirit.

PREVIOUS TRANSLATION: God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and **sent the Holy Spirit among us** for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God **give** you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father ... Son, and ... Holy Spirit.

While priests are required to use the new translation, if the priest slips into the old translation, it will still be a valid confession.

Tips for a Good Confession

- † **Preparation** – Before confession, reflect on your life and examine your conscience. Focus on *your* sins, not those of another.
- † **If you're nervous or it's been a while since your last confession**, ask God for courage. In meeting your merciful Savior, there is nothing to fear. Just ask the priest for help.
- † **Confessional Charity** – Be patient. If there is a long line, simplify your confession for the sake of others, while ensuring that all serious (grave) sin is confessed in kind and number (i.e., what happened and with what frequency). For venial sins, just focus on a few that you need the most help with. Confession is not a full self-evaluation; it's a personal encounter with Jesus.
- † **Mention your state in life** (i.e., approximate age, in high school or college, single or married, etc.)
- † **Keep it simple and specific.** Don't be too general ("I'm not always _____ ... or ... I could be more _____"), but a lot of detail isn't necessary (you don't need to tell the whole story of how a sin came about.)
- † **If you forgot a sin**, don't worry. Just don't intentionally hold back anything serious.
- † **If you want advice**, please ask for it; otherwise, the priest will keep any counsel very brief.
- † **Act of Contrition:** Keep it simple. Say "Jesus, have mercy on me a sinner."
- † **If you forget your penance**, don't worry. Just say an Our Father, Hail Mary, and Glory Be.

A Simple Examination of Conscience

"You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength You shall love your neighbor as yourself." (Mk 12:30-31)

- Have I placed anything or anyone above God?
- Do I pray daily?
- Have I intentionally missed Mass on a Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation?
- Do I respect those who have authority over me?
- Do I abuse my authority over others?
- Have I done intentional harm to myself or others?
- Have I been drunk or misused drugs?
- Have I misused God's gift of sexuality, through lust, pornography, etc., alone or with someone else?
- Have I stolen?
- Do I share what I have with the poor and the Church according to my means?
- Have I gossiped or told lies?
- Have I been envious or ungrateful?
- Have I lacked patience or withheld forgiveness?

Three Requirements for Confession:

1. Contrition/sorrow for my sins
2. Confession to a priest/bishop
3. Willingness to do penance/satisfaction