

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

How to Go to Confession--Adults

Confession (or "Reconciliation") is the Sacrament where you meet the Risen Jesus, who gave the Apostles—the first priests—the power to forgive sins in his name (Jn.20:23). First, ask the Holy Spirit to come into your heart to give you knowledge of your sins and the courage to bring them to Our Lord. He loves you, and deeply desires for you to come to him in humility so that he can free you of the burden of sin in your life—that which is weighing you down. Reconciliation gives you the joy and consolation of God's love; it strengthens your relationship with Jesus Christ and his Church.

1. Examine your conscience using the guide below and call upon the Holy Spirit, be truly sorry for your sins, and resolve to change your life.
2. Go to the priest, make the Sign of the Cross saying, "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." It is then customary to tell the priest how long it has been since your last confession. The priest may respond by welcoming you. (It is helpful to then tell the priest your "state in life"—e.g., single, married, teenager, etc.)
3. Tell the priest about your sins. Tell him how you have sinned, and how often it happened. If you are not sure whether something is a sin, ask the priest. Tell him about your serious sins. Also confess any of your less serious (venial) sins.
4. Listen to the priest. He may offer you a verse from Scripture. If you have any questions about the Faith, how to grow in holiness, or whether something is a sin, feel free to ask him. The priest will then give you a penance, which is the first act of your "new life" after the Sacrament of Reconciliation.
5. Pray an Act of Contrition. Try to tell God "from your heart" that you are sorry and that you intend to sin no more. See other page for the Act of Contrition.
6. Listen as the priest absolves you of your sins and enjoy the fact that God has truly freed you from your sins.
7. Do the penance the priest gives you. God's mercy does endure forever! Thank Him for what he has done for you!

If you are not sure what to do, tell the priest and he will make it easier for you.

Act of Contrition

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 art 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.