

## What Is Reconciliation?

Reconciliation (also known as confession or Penance) is a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ in his love and mercy to offer sinners forgiveness for offenses committed against God. At the same time, sinners reconcile with the Church, because it is also wounded by our sins.

Every time we sin, we hurt ourselves, other people, and God. In Reconciliation, we acknowledge our sins before God and His Church. We express our sorrow in a meaningful way, receive the forgiveness of Christ and his Church, make reparation for what we have done, and resolve to do better in the future.

The forgiveness of sins involves four parts:

**Contrition:** a sincere sorrow for having offended God, and the most important act of the penitent. There can be no forgiveness of sin if we do not have sorrow and a firm resolve not to repeat our sin.

**Confession:** confronting our sins in a profound way to God by speaking about them—aloud—to the priest.

**Penance:** an important part of our healing is the “penance” the priest imposes in reparation for our sins.

**Absolution:** the priest speaks the words by which “God, the Father of Mercies” reconciles a sinner to himself through the merits of the Cross.

## The Seven Deadly Sins at a Glance

Sins → Virtue → Commandments

Pride → Humility → (1, 4)

Greed → Generosity → (7, 10)

Lust → Chastity → (6, 9)

Envy → Charity / Gratitude → (8, 10)

Gluttony → Temperance → (7)

Wrath → Patience / Mercy → (2, 5, 4)

Sloth → Diligence / Zeal → (3)

## Ways to Strengthen Faith Life

Simple daily practices to help set faith based goals.

**A prayer goal: 10–15 minutes of intentional prayer daily. Whether it's morning, noon, evening, or night. Gradually build the life of prayer.**

- ◆ Night examination of conscience: where was God in your day?
- ◆ Pray the Rosary.
- ◆ Daily short reading of scripture.
- ◆ Make a habit of Adoration.
- ◆ Sunday Mass is key for remaining in full communion with the Church. This reminds us that we are part of a community together, listening, responding, praying, and singing.
- ◆ Speak to God honestly, not perfectly.
- ◆ Stay connected to the Sacraments.
- ◆ Seek Confession when needed.
- ◆ Ask about the annulment process - it is about truth and healing, not blame.
- ◆ Ask about the anointing of the Sick.
- ◆ Ask about the blessing of your marriage if married outside of the Church.

## Do Not Dwell on Past Sins

Once absolved, the sins are forgiven. Reject discouragement; trust God's mercy fully.

Confession is not just forgiveness, it is **restoration**. Each good confession strengthens humility, trust, and love of God.

Living in grace is not about perfection - it is about **remaining close to Christ through the Church, the sacraments, prayer, and trust in God's mercy.**

For mass and confession times, please see our website:

[liverpoolincatholic.org](http://liverpoolincatholic.org)

# A Guide on How to Go to Confession

*“Blessed are the pure of heart... for they shall see God.” (Mt 5:8)*

## Prepare Your Heart

- ◆ Pray for the grace to be honest, humble, and trust in God's mercy
- ◆ Make an Examination of Conscience (inside the pamphlet)
- ◆ Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where you need healing and to be truly sorry for your sins

I place myself before You with an honest and humble heart.

Send Your Holy Spirit to help me see my sins clearly,

to recognize the habits and virtues I need for healing, and to trust completely in Your mercy. Help me to be truly

sorry, to turn away from sin so that I can grow in grace and holiness. Have mercy on me, O

Lord, a sinner, and Mary, Mother of Sorrows, Mother of the Church, pray for us. Amen.

## During Confession

Greet the priest then make the Sign of the Cross

*"Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been \_\_\_ since my last confession. These are my sins."*

### Confess your sins

(examination is to the right)

Confess your sins briefly and clearly. It might be helpful to start with the most difficult one first. If you do not know what to say, feel uneasy or ashamed, simply ask the priest to assist you.

### Conclude

*"I am sorry for these and all my sins."*

### Penance

The priest will give you some words of advice and/or encouragement to help you become a better person and more faithful disciple of Christ.

Receive and accept the penance given.

### Say the Act of Contrition

(Modern)

*My God, I am sorry for my sins with my whole heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against You whom I should love above all things. With Your help, I firmly intend to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Jesus suffered and died for us. In His name, have mercy on me. Amen.*

(Traditional)

*Oh my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishment; but most of all because I have offended Thee, My God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.*

### Prayer of Absolution

After giving you absolution, the priest will say,

*"Give thanks to the Lord for He is good,"* at which you respond, **"His mercy endures forever."** The priest then concludes by saying, "Your sins are forgiven. Go in peace," and you respond, **"Thanks be to God."**

# Examination of Conscience: Beatitudes, Commandments, & Healing Virtues

## 1. I am the Lord your God

Beatitude: Poor in spirit (Mt 5:3)

Scripture: Dt 6:5

Deadly Sin: Pride

Healing Virtue: Humility

Ask: Do I put myself, success, or security before God?

## 2. You shall not take the Lord's name in vain

Beatitude: Meek (Mt 5:5)

Scripture: Col 4:6

Deadly Sin: Wrath

Healing Virtue: Patience / Meekness

Ask: Do my words dishonor God or others?

## 3. Keep holy the Lord's Day

Beatitude: Hunger for righteousness (Mt 5:6)

Scripture: Mt 11:28

Deadly Sin: Sloth

Healing Virtue: Diligence / Zeal

Ask: Do I neglect Mass, prayer, or true rest in God?

## 4. Honor your father and mother

Beatitude: Peacemakers (Mt 5:9)

Scripture: Col 3:12

Deadly Sin: Wrath / Pride

Healing Virtue: Patience / Charity

Ask: Do I foster peace and respect in family life?

## 5. You shall not kill

Beatitude: Merciful (Mt 5:7)

Scripture: 1 Jn 4:7

Deadly Sin: Wrath

Healing Virtue: Mercy

Ask: Have I harmed others through anger, hatred, or neglect of life?

## 6. You shall not commit adultery

Beatitude: Pure of heart (Mt 5:8)

Scripture: 1 Cor 6:19

Deadly Sin: Lust

Healing Virtue: Chastity

Ask: Do I honor my body and the dignity of others?

## 7. You shall not steal

Beatitude: Hunger for justice (Mt 5:6)

Scripture: Lk 3:11

Deadly Sin: Greed

Healing Virtue: Generosity

Ask: Have I taken, wasted, or withheld what belongs to others?

## 8. You shall not bear false witness

Beatitude: Clean of heart (Mt 5:8)

Scripture: Eph 4:15

Deadly Sin: Envy

Healing Virtue: Charity / Truthfulness

Ask: Do I gossip, lie, or damage reputations?

## 9. You shall not covet your neighbor's spouse

Beatitude: Pure of heart (Mt 5:8)

Scripture: Ps 51:10

Deadly Sin: Lust

Healing Virtue: Chastity

Ask: Do I guard my thoughts and imagination?

## 10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods

Beatitude: Poor in spirit (Mt 5:3)

Scripture: Heb 13:5

Deadly Sin: Envy / Greed

Healing Virtue: Gratitude / Contentment

Ask: Am I thankful, or driven by comparison and desire?