

Theology

- Sin is an offense against God and the community. It wounds our relationship with God, other persons and our human dignity. (Catechism of the Catholic Church # 1849, 1850)

- There are two types of personal sin: mortal and venial. For a sin to be mortal, it must be a grave offense that one freely chooses, with full knowledge of its gravity or seriousness. A venial sin is any offense that is not a mortal sin.

- Mortal sin removes us from a state of grace.

- Jesus instituted the Sacrament of Reconciliation in His actions of constantly forgiving others and calling all His followers to the same willingness to forgive and accept those who may fail in their efforts to love.

(Catechism of the Catholic Church # 1446)

- Sins committed after Baptism are forgiven in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, also called the Sacrament of Forgiveness, Confession and Conversion.

- Catholics who have reached the age of reason and are conscious of serious sin have an obligation to confess their sins before making their Easter Duty.

- God can forgive all sins.

- The path back to God after sin is a process of conversion initiated by His grace. This return to God includes sorrow for sin and the resolve to sin no more. The grace we receive from this Sacrament helps us in reforming our lives in preventing us from turning away from God.

- There are two ordinary forms for the Rite of Penance: individual celebration of the sacrament and the communal rite with individual confession and absolution.

- Frequent Confession is recommended.

Prayers of the Penitent

Acts of Contrition

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.

(from the Rite of Penance)

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O 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 they offend thee, my God, who are all good and worthy 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. (a traditional prayer)

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Lord Jesus, Son of God have mercy on me, a sinner. *(from the Rite of Penance)*



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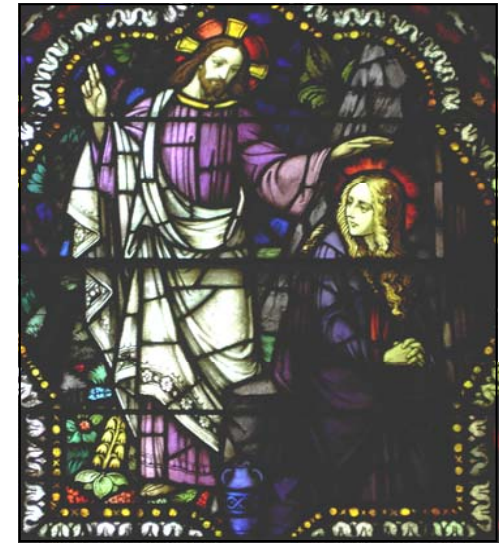
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Embracing God's Mercy and Love



“A clean heart create for me, O God.”
(Ps 51:12)

The Gift of Reconciliation

Prepared by the
Roman Catholic
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Office of Faith Formation

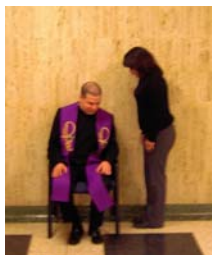
Reception of Reconciliation

6 STEPS FOR A GOOD CONFESSION

1. Examine your conscience - This is a review of one's past thoughts, words and actions. Directly, this examination is concerned with the good or bad intentions that inspires one's thoughts, words, and actions in the light of the Word of God.
2. We ask ourselves calmly and honestly what we did with full knowledge and consent against God and the Church's commandments.
3. Confess your sins to the priest.
4. Make certain that you confess all your mortal sins and the number of them. Venial sins should be confessed as well.
5. Pray an Act of Contrition - Be sincerely sorry for your sins.
6. After your confession, complete the penance the priest gives to you.
7. Pray daily for the strength to avoid the occasion of sin, especially for those sins you were just absolved from.

The Order of Prayer of the Rite of Penance of individual penitents:

- ◆ A greeting and blessing from the priest using the sign of the cross
- ◆ A reading from the Scripture (optional) which proclaims God's mercy and calls a person to conversion
- ◆ The confession of sins
- ◆ The giving and accepting of a penance
- ◆ An act of contrition
- ◆ The priest's absolution
the penitent answer:
Amen
- ◆ A proclamation of praise of God and dismissal



(The Rites: Penance §41-47; Catechism of the Catholic Church, #1480)

Examination of Conscience

Possible questions you can ask:

- ◇ Do I love God above everything else?
- ◇ Am I humble? Do I depend on God as I should?
- ◇ Am I prideful? Do I try to make the world revolve around me?
- ◇ Am I presumptuous? Do I think I can do whatever I want and that it will not matter to God?
- ◇ Do I pray everyday? Do I go to Mass every Sunday and Holy Day?
- ◇ Do I devote myself to growing in the faith?
- ◇ Am I thankful? Do I express my gratitude sincerely and outwardly?
- ◇ Am I self-righteous? Do I make excuses for my faults, blame others or rationalize?
- ◇ Am I forgiving? Do I hold grudges, resentments? Do I take delight in the misfortunes of others?
- ◇ Do I judge others, label others, exclude others, and condemn others?
- ◇ Is my life in any way ruled by anger, jealousy, envy, or impatience?
- ◇ Do I make idols of money, power, prestige, accomplishment, materialism, sensuality, vanity, pleasure, comfort, leisure, complacency, apathy, or anything else?
- ◇ Do I put myself first through self-centeredness, conceit, selfishness, or vanity?
- ◇ Do I engage in extra-marital sex? Do I use sex recreationally?
- ◇ Do I dedicate myself to knowing, loving, and living the Truth as it is taught by the Catholic Church?
- ◇ Do I live in the Truth and do I tell the truth, always and without compromise?
- ◇ Do I misuse speech through cheating, gossiping, backbiting, profanity, blasphemy, complaining, or being silent when I should speak?
- ◇ Am I true to my vows, my commitments, my contracts, and my word?
- ◇ Is my mind filled with thoughts that are lustful, mean-spirited, or prejudicial?

- ◇ Do I waste time? Am I generous with my time? Am I lazy?
- ◇ Do the priorities in my life reflect the precious gift of faith God has given me?
- ◇ Do I live by faith or by emotions, by worldly philosophy, by current fads, by popular ideologies, by the pressures and deceptions of media and culture?
- ◇ Do I recognize how God is present and active in every moment of my life? Do I live by any standard other than the way of love revealed by Jesus Christ?



Preparing your child for the reception of the sacrament

Parents “have the unique responsibility for the education of their children; they are the first educators, or catechists.”

(National Directory for Catechesis, p.234)

Values and attitudes learned at home are the foundation of Christian understanding and growth.

Parents should:

- Set an example through words and actions and show forgiveness, this is a great sign of love
- Encourage children to apologize for wrongdoings and to forgive people who hurt them
- Actively participate in the life of the church. Attend Sunday Liturgy, receive the Eucharist, and actively participate in the Sacrament of Penance