

How to Go to Confession...

With Examination of Conscience based on the 10 Commandments

First, take a little time to pray quietly and read through the examination of conscience below. Take as much time as necessary.

Individual Examination of Conscience

First Commandment: “I am the Lord your God, you shall have no strange gods before Me.”

Have I denied God? Am I ashamed of or denied my faith in front of others? Have I ridiculed the teachings or practices of the Church? Have I neglected my prayers? Have I used witchcraft, Wicca, or other Occult practices? Have I practiced various forms of superstition such as fortune tellers, mediums, ouija boards, tarot cards?

Second Commandment: “Do not take the name of the Lord in vain.”

Do I use God's name carelessly, in anger, or in surprise? Have I called down evil upon anyone or anything? Do I get angry with God?

Third Commandment: “Keep holy the Sabbath Day.”

Have I, through my own fault, failed to come to Mass each Sunday and every Holy Day of Obligation? Do I arrive at Mass late or leave early without good reason? Do I allow myself to be distracted at Mass?

Fourth Commandment: “Honor your father and mother.”

Have I disobeyed my parents or treated them with disrespect? Am I disrespectful, impolite, or discourteous toward my family? Have I neglected my work or my studies? Have I been helpful in my home? Have I missed an exam at school because of laziness or work or house work? Am I disrespectful toward the elderly? Am I disobedient to the civil law or to those in authority such as the police?

Fifth Commandment: “You shall not kill.”

Did I have an abortion or help another to have an abortion? Have I mutilated my body or another's body? Did I attempt suicide or seriously consider thoughts of suicide? Do I act violently by fighting or hitting others? Have I had thoughts of hatred toward another? Have I taken illegal drugs or abused prescription drugs? Have I sold or distributed illegal drugs? Do I neglect to take proper care of my body? Do I eat too much, or sleep too much? Do I drink beer or other alcoholic beverages in excess? Have I allowed myself to become intoxicated? Am I too concerned about my health or appearance? Do I deliberately harbor unkind and revengeful thoughts about others? Have I taken revenge? Have I used harsh or abusive language toward another? Do I act rudely, impolite, or ridicule others? Have I been guilty of the sin of Racism? Am I cruel to animals?

Sixth & Ninth Commandments: “Do not commit adultery. Do not covet your neighbors wife.”

Have I desired or done impure things? Have I taken pleasure in entertaining impure thoughts or desires? Have I read impure material, listened to music with impure lyrics, or looked at impure images, whether in photos or on television or in movies or on the Internet? Have I aroused sexual desire in myself or another by impure kissing, embracing, or touching? Have I committed impure actions alone, i.e. masturbation? Have I committed homosexual acts or other unnatural acts? Do I use artificial contraception or other birth-prevention methods? Do I dress immodestly or been too concerned with the way I look? Do I use vulgar language or tell or listen to impure jokes or stories? Have I given into desires of adultery even in my imagination?

Seventh and tenth Commandments: “You shall not steal. Do not covet your neighbor’s goods.”

Have I taken anything that was not my own? Have I damaged private or public property or defaced it by vandalism? Have I been guilty of shop-lifting? Have I accepted or bought stolen property or helped someone to steal? Have I bribed someone? Do I gamble excessively? Have I borrowed something without the owner's permission? Have I failed to return something I borrowed? Do I waste money or spend it extravagantly? Have I harbored a greed for money or worldly possessions? Have I made of money, or any possession, a false god? Do I waste goods or food? Have I cheated on tests or schoolwork? Have I cheated in games or sports?

Eighth Commandment: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

Have I lied deliberately? Have I sworn to do something sinful or illegal? Have I slandered others by attributing to them sins they did not commit or of which I had no evidence? Do I gossip about others or listen to gossip? Have I told a secret I was asked to keep? Have I betrayed someone's trust? Have I criticized anyone uncharitably? Do I make rash judgments and harbor false suspicions about others? Have I deliberately misled or deceived anyone? Have I refused to forgive someone or held a grudge against him or her? Have I failed to apologize or make amends to someone I offended?

Other considerations:

Am I greedy or selfish or indulge in self-pity? Am I proud or vain or do I show-off? Am I superficial and worldly? Do I desire to be praised by exaggerating my success? Am I touchy and hypersensitive? Do I magnify the least oversight or thoughtlessness into an insult or deliberate slight? Have I been boastful? Have I been arrogant with others? Have I obstinately defended actions which are sinful, either my own or others? Am I rebellious? Have I spent useless time planted before the TV when I could be doing more constructive things? Am I envious of someone's possessions and inordinately desired them to be my own? Do I take delight in the misfortunes of others?

Once you have had time to reflect on your sins, simply go to the confessional and celebrate the sacrament of Reconciliation in the following way:

Go into the confessional and say, *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen. Forgive me, father, for I have sinned. It has been* (how long?) *since my last confession and these are my sins...* (confess all your sins...be not afraid ☺).

Father will give you a penance and then ask you to pray the Act of Contrition. Feel free to use this one:

ACT OF CONTRITION

O 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 of because they offend You, my God, who are all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

The priest will then say the prayer of forgiveness (absolution).

If your penance was to say some prayers please immediately go back to your seat and say your prayers.

That’s it! You’re forgiven!

Examination of Conscience

Based on the Beatitudes

1. Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Do I live a spirit of detachment and generosity?

Do I sacrifice for others?

2. Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Do I console and help those who mourn and suffer?

Do I show compassion?

3. Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Am I authentically humble and self-giving?

Have I been egotistical or boastful?

4. Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for holiness, for they will be satisfied.

Am I passionate for the things of God?

Do I work for the triumph of love, peace and justice?

5. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Am I forgiving and merciful?

Do I give others the benefit of the doubt?

Am I harsh or judgmental?

6. Blessed are the pure of heart, for they will see God.

Am I single-minded in the practice of my faith?

Have I allowed a particular sin or vice to distract me from God?

7. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God.

Am I a person of reconciliation, peace and mercy?

Do I hold grudges or seek revenge?

8. Blessed are they who are persecuted, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Do I suffer well?

Am I willing to sacrifice anything for my faith?

Do I allow human respect to keep me from being a Christian witness?