

How to Make a Good Confession

Before celebrating the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation, be sure to prepare with an examination of conscience.

The Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation includes the following steps:

1. The priest greets us, and we pray the Sign of the Cross. We say, “Bless me father, for I have sinned, it has been (... how long) since my last confession. The priest invites us to trust in God. He may read God's Word with us.
2. We confess our sins. The priest may help and counsel us.
3. The priest gives us a penance to perform. Penance is an act of kindness or prayers to pray, or both.
4. The priest asks us to express our sorrow, usually by reciting the Act of Contrition. (This prayer will be located within the confessional if it is not already memorized) .

O my God, I am sorry and repent with all my heart for all the wrong I have done and for the good I have failed to do, because by sinning I have offended you, who are all good and worthy to be loved above all things. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid the occasions of sin. Through the merits of the Passion of our Savior Jesus Christ, Lord, have mercy. Amen.

Or

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 because they offend you, my God, who are all good and deserving of my love.
I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin.
Amen.

5. We receive absolution. The priest says, “I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.” We respond, “Amen.”
6. The priest dismisses us by saying, “Go in peace.” We go forth to perform the act of penance he has given us. We thank Father for hearing our Confession.