



Preparing for the Sacrament of Reconciliation

First, find a quiet place to prayerfully examine your conscience. For help, use Matthew chapters 5, 6, and 7, or the Ten Commandments, or 1 Corinthians 13.

During Confession, there's room for personal adaptation in the words you choose to say, but the procedure goes something like this:

1. Sit or kneel and say: "Bless me Father, for I have sinned," as you make the *Sign of the Cross* (now the Sacrament has begun).
2. Say: "It has been (how long) since my last confession."
3. Confess your sins to the priest (any wrong choices you made that you regret).
4. The priest will give you encouragement and counsel; then he will give you a penance (an act of kindness to do and/or prayers to say).
5. Say the *Act of Contrition* (below) or something similar in your own words.
6. The priest will say a prayer that ends with absolution: "*I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.*"
7. Make the sign of the cross and reply: "Amen."
8. The priest will bid you goodbye or "Go in Peace." Thank him and leave.
9. As soon as possible, do your penance to complete the Sacrament.

THE ACT 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. Amen.

The priest might assign you one or more of the following prayers as penance:

The LORD'S PRAYER: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread and forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. Amen.

The HAIL MARY: Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with you. Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now, and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The GLORY BE: Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be; world without end. Amen.