

Order of Confession

Greeting:

The priest welcomes the penitent warmly and greets him or her with kindness.

Sign of the Cross:

The penitent makes the Sign of the Cross and states when he or she made their last confession:

"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. My last confession was _____ weeks (months, years) ago."

Invitation to Trust in God:

The priest invites the penitent to have trust in God using one of the formulas in the ritual or similar words.

Reading of the Word of God:

Confession of Sins and Acceptance of Satisfaction:

The penitent confesses his or her sins and accepts the prayers or deeds that the priest proposes as a penance.

Prayer of the Penitent and Absolution:

The priest asks the penitent to express sorrow by praying one of the prayers found in the ritual or in his or her own words.

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell; but most of all 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 confess my sins, to do penance and to amend my life. Amen.

The priest then prays the Prayer of Absolution, to which the penitent responds: "Amen."

Proclamation of Praise and Dismissal:

The priest continues: "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good." The penitent responds: "His mercy endures for ever." The priest then dismisses the penitent, using one of the formulas found in the ritual.

(Taken from <http://ewtn.com/library/BISHOPS/GUIDEPEN.HTM>)

Know that not all experiences of going to Confession are exactly the same.

Examination of Conscience

1. I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods besides me.

Did I fail to love God, to make God first in my life, to thank Him, trust Him, love Him as He deserves? Did I fail to pray? Have I doubted or denied my faith? Was I careless in saying my prayers? Do I give God time everyday in prayer? Do I make a god out of my work, my possessions, or my image in the eyes of others so that these rule my life instead of God? Am I angry toward God because of illness or misfortune? Have I been involved with magic, horoscopes, Ouija boards, or fortune telling?

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Did I curse or swear? Did I use God's name in vain, lightly, carelessly, by blasphemy? Have I used foul language or jokes? In conversation, have I passively listened to slander and to jokes demeaning to the Church or to God's authority?

3. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation? Did I leave Mass early without a good reason? Have I been to communion at least once a year? Did I receive Holy Communion in the state of serious sin? Have I been to confession recently? Have I allowed myself to become so dominated by my work and chores that I have not set aside Sunday for spiritual and family activities?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

Did I honor and obey my parents? Did I respect my brothers and sisters? Did I respect others with lawful authority, especially teachers? Have I talked back? Did I fail to help at home or to spend time with my family? Do I blame my parents for my own shortcomings?

5. You shall not kill.

Did I give in to feelings of anger or jealousy? Did I keep hatred in my heart? Have I ever struck anyone in anger, intending to injure the person? Did I fight; give a bad example or cause scandal? Have I abused alcohol or drugs? Have I had or in any way permitted or encouraged abortion? Have I thought about suicide? Have I killed someone? Have I killed someone with gossip or what I said?

Examination of Conscience

(continued)

6. You shall not commit adultery.

Did I consent to impure glances? Passionate kisses? Sinful touches? Did I give my mind over to lustful thoughts or fantasies? Was I immodest in dress or behavior? Did I look at pornography, impure books, magazines or videos? Am I guilty of impurity with myself or with others? Do I avoid laziness, gluttony, idleness and the occasions of impurity?

7. You shall not steal.

Have I stolen what is not mine? What or how much? Did I return it or make up for what I have stolen? Have I cheated on tests or homework? Did I waste time at work? Have I been extravagant in my manner of life, to the neglect of the poor at home and abroad?

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Have I lied or gossiped? Talked about another person behind their back? Do I always tell the truth? Am I sincere? Did I reveal secrets that should have been kept confidential? In any of my previous confessions, did I lie to or deliberately conceal something from the priest? Am I critical, negative or uncharitable in my talk? Have I injured the reputation of others by speaking about their failures and sins with little desire or intention to help them? Have I condoned prejudice and hatred toward people of other nationalities, races or religions?

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

Have I consented to impure thoughts? Have I encouraged them by stares, curiosity or impure conversations? Did I neglect to control my imagination or desire of other people? Have I rejected my family in my heart, wishing to distance myself emotionally and personally from them?

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

Is my heart greedy? Am I jealous of what other people have? Am I envious of others because I don't have what they have? Do I habitually compare myself with others? Am I moody or gloomy? Do I work, study and keep busy to counter idle thoughts? Am I critical, negative or uncharitable in my thoughts of others? Is my heart set on earthly possessions or on the treasures in heaven?

(Taken from <http://lifeteen.com>)

A Guide to the Sacrament of Reconciliation



Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell; but most of all 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 confess my sins, to do penance and to amend my life.

Amen.