

Confession Guide

for Elementary School-Age Children



How to go to Confession

Begin with the Sign of the Cross saying,

“In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

Then say,

“Bless me Father, for I have sinned. It has been _____ (number of weeks/months/years) since my last confession. These are my sins...”

Tell your sins to the priest.

When finished say,

“For these and all the sins of my past life, I am sorry.”

The priest gives you a penance.

The priest invites you to say an Act of Contrition:

An Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, 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 Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

The priest says the prayer of absolution (forgiveness).

(If the priest says, “Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.” You respond, “His mercy endures forever.”)

The priest concludes, “...Go in peace.” You respond,

“Thanks be to God.”

Examination of Conscience for Children

Ask yourself these questions to prepare for confession.

Have I put anything ahead of God in my life?

Do I pray every day?

Have I used God's name in a disrespectful way?

Have I said bad words?

Do I go to church every Sunday?

Have I made it hard for my parents to take me to church?

Have I disobeyed my parents?

Have I talked back to my parents or yelled at them?

Have I been respectful to my teachers?

Have I tried to hurt anyone?

Have I fought with anyone?

Have I made fun of anyone?

Have I not treated my body or the body of another with respect?

Have I stolen?

Have I broken something on purpose?

Have I told lies?

Have I told secrets just for fun?

Have I blamed someone else for something I have done?

Have I cheated in games or on tests?

Have I been jealous of others?

Have I spent too much time playing video games, watching TV, or using other electronics?

Prayers Commonly Given as Penance

Our Father

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.

Hail Mary

Hail Mary, full of grace,
the Lord is with thee.
Blessed art thou among women,
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus.
Holy Mary, Mother of God,
pray for us sinners,
now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

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.

Steps for Making a Good Confession

1. Say a prayer

- Ask God to help you know your sins and be sorry for them.

2. Examine your conscience

-Take a few minutes to think about the ways you have sinned since your last confession. Ask yourself, “What have I done that was wrong when I knew better?”

3. Be sorry

-We can't expect to be forgiven if we aren't sorry. Part of being sorry means doing what we can to avoid the same sins in the future.

4. Confess your sins

-Say your sins honestly to the priest.

5. Do your penance

-The priest will give you a penance to do after confession. It will be a prayer, a sacrifice, or a good deed of some kind. Do your penance as soon as you reasonably can.



Nihil Obstat:

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+ Bernard A. Hebda, Archbishop of St. Paul and Minneapolis, September 2020

This guide with an alternative act of contrition is available at freethewordarchives.org

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