

A GUIDE TO CONFESSION FOR YOUTH

Five Steps for a Good Confession

1. Examine your conscience.
2. Be sincerely sorry for your sins.
3. Confess your sins.
4. Resolve to amend your life.
5. After your confession, do the penance the priest assigns.

Examination of Conscience

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.

- Do I give God time every day in prayer?
Do I seek to love Him with my whole heart?
Have I been involved with superstitious practices (horoscopes or ouija boards) or have I been involved with the occult?
Do I seek to surrender myself to God's Word as taught by the Church?
Have I ever received Communion in the state of mortal sin?
Have I ever deliberately told a lie in Confession or have I withheld a mortal sin from the priest in Confession?

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

- Have I used God's name in vain: lightly or carelessly, used bad words or swears?
Have I been angry with God?
Have I wished evil upon any other person?
Have I insulted a sacred person or abused a sacred object?

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

- Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation?
Do I make it difficult for my family to go to Mass?
Have I tried to observe Sunday as a family day and a day of rest?
Do I pay attention at Mass?
Do I do needless work on Sunday?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

- Do I honor and obey my parents and obey them?
Have I neglected my duties to my spouse and children?
Have I given my family good religious example?
Do I try to bring peace into my home life?
Do I care for my older and sick relatives?
Do I help at home by doing what I am asked to do quickly and without complaining?

5. You shall not kill.

- Have I had an abortion or encouraged anyone to have an abortion? Have I physically harmed anyone? Have I abused alcohol or drugs? Did I give scandal to anyone, thereby leading them into sin?
Have I been angry or resentful?
Have I harbored hatred in my heart?
Have I been sterilized for reasons of birth control?
Have I encouraged or condoned sterilization?
Do I hit anyone, or do I fight with anyone?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

- Have I engaged in any sexual activity before or outside of marriage?
Have I used any method of contraception or artificial birth control?
Have I respected all members of the opposite sex, or have I thought of other people as objects?
Have I been guilty of any homosexual activity?
Do I seek to be pure in my thoughts, words and actions?
Am I careful to dress modestly, so as not to tempt others?
Have I been guilty of masturbation?

7. You shall not steal.

- Have I stolen or taken what is not mine?
Have I returned or made restitution for what I have stolen?
Do I waste time at work, school or at home?
Do I pay what I owe or borrowed quickly?
Do I seek to share what I have with the poor?
If I find money or some other things, do I try to find out to whom it belongs?

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

- Have I lied?
Have I gossiped? Harmed someone's reputation?
Have I said mean things about another person?
Have I spoken behind someone else's back?
Do I hurt others' feelings by name-calling or making fun of them?
Am I critical, negative, or unkind in my thoughts of others?
Do I keep secret what should be kept confidential?

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

- Have I consented to impure thoughts? Have I caused them by impure television, movies, books, magazines or internet? Do I pray at once to banish impure thoughts and temptations? Do I listen to, or engage in, impure conversations or jokes?
Do I want to have my friend's parents because they let my friend do things my parents won't let me do?
Am I happy with the family God has given me?

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

- Am I happy with the things I have or am I jealous of what other people have? Do I envy other people's families or possessions?
Am I greedy or selfish?
Are material possessions the purpose of my life?
Do I trust that God will care for all of my material and spiritual needs?
Am I happy for others when something good happens to them or do I wish they never got it because I didn't get it myself?

Procedure in the Confessional:

What to do when you're in there

You say:

"Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been - (state the length of time) - since my last confession. These are my sins."

Then tell your mortal sins (killing, having sex outside of marriage, stealing, etc.) and the number of times committed.

If you have no mortal sin to confess, then confess the venial sins (lying, cursing, cheating, etc) you have committed since your last confession. When you have finished telling your sins, you should say:

"For these and all the sins of my past life I am truly sorry."

The priest now gives the necessary advice, assigns your penance and asks you to say the Act of Contrition (in some form). Then wait and listen as the priest gives the absolution

Then say **Thank you, Father**, leave the confessional and perform the penance assigned by the priest.

An Act of Contrition

"O my God, I am truly sorry for having offended You, and I hate all my sins, because most of all 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 occasions of sin. Amen."

Basic Prayers

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 are thou amongst 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.

GLORIA

Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit, as it was in the beginning, is now and will be forever.
Amen

