



How to Make a Good Confession

Preparation: Before going to confession, take some time to examine your conscience. This might be done by reviewing your life in comparison to the Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, the example of Christ's life. Pray to God for forgiveness.

Going to Confession:

1. The priest will welcome you, and you both make the sign of the cross:
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.
2. You continue with these traditional words:
Bless me Father, for I have sinned. It has been (how long) since my last confession.
You might also add any other background that will allow the priest to be most helpful to you in the circumstances of your everyday life.
3. The priest will encourage you to have trust in God, and invite you to **confess your sins**.
Speak freely and honestly – nothing you say in confession will ever be repeated by the priest. The priest may talk with you about how to make up for the sins you confess. He will then **assign an act of penance** corresponding to the nature of the sins – this may take the form of prayer, self-denial, and especially service to one's neighbor.
4. Act of Contrition – you offer a prayer expressing sorrow for your sins and resolving not to sin again. You may say this in your own words, or use this traditional prayer:
*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. Our Saviour Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.*
5. Following this prayer, the priest extends his hands over your head and says the words of absolution: *God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son, has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins. Through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.* As the priest concludes this prayer, he will make the sign of the cross over your head – you bless yourself and respond, *Amen.*
6. The priest will invite you to **go in peace**.

After Confession: When you leave the confession room, take a **few minutes of private prayer and thanksgiving**. **Plan how you will complete the assigned act of penance**. Make a firm resolve to continue your conversion by a life renewed according to the Gospel and the love of God.

