

The Order of Reconciling Individual Penitents

Step 1: Reception of the Penitent

When you arrive, greet the priest in these or similar words:

“Good Morning Father,” “Good Afternoon Father,” “Good Evening Father,” etc.

The priest will welcome you to the sacrament and greet you in return. You then bless yourself, making the sign of the cross saying,

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

You then tell the priest how long it has been since your last confession.

“Father, it has been (state how long) since my last confession.”
If this is your first confession: “Father, this is my first confession.”

The priest will invite you to have trust in God using a simple prayer. You respond, *“Amen.”*

Optional Step: Reading the Word of God

The priest has the option of reading to you a text of sacred Scripture in which God’s mercy is announced and people are called to conversion, before proceeding with Step 2. If he elects to read from Scripture, wait until he is finished and he’ll then invite you to confession your sins. Otherwise, proceed right to Step 2.

Step 2: The Confession of Sins & The Acceptance of Satisfaction (An Act of Penance)

Begin your confession with the words, *“I confess to Almighty God.”* Then proceed to confess all of your sins to the priest.

The priest may speak with you and offer advice on how to do better. He will then impose satisfaction (an act of penance) for you to complete. This act of penance may be prayers, an act of mercy, or some other good work, which should be completed immediately after confession or as soon as feasibly possible in the case of an act of mercy or other good work.

Step 3: Prayer of the Penitent & Absolution by the Priest

The priest will ask you to express your contrition by praying an 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.
Our Savior, Jesus Christ, suffered and died for us.
In His name, my God, have mercy. Amen.*

Then the priest will extend his hand(s) over your head and pray the **Prayer of Absolution**. The prayer concludes with the words: "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 makes the sign of the cross over you, you bless yourself and respond - "Amen."

Step 4: The Proclamation of Praise & the Dismissal of the Penitent

PRIEST: "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good."

YOU: "*For his mercy endures forever.*"

PRIEST: "The Lord has forgiven your sins. Go in Peace."

YOU: "*Thank you, Father,*" "*Good bye Father,*" "*Good night Father,*" etc.

You return to your pew and if you were given prayers for your penance, you kneel down and pray those prayers.

PRAYERS TO KNOW FOR PENANCE

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.
Our Savior, Jesus Christ,
suffered and died for us.
In His name, my God, have mercy.
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.

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 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.

Simple Examination of Conscience for Children

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

Have I given time every day to God in prayer?

Have I made other things like sports, video games, or TV more important than my time with God?

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

Have I used the words "God" or "Jesus" in anger or disrespectfully?

Have I used bad or ugly language?

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

Have I missed Mass on Sunday or any holy day of obligation?

Have I participated at Mass by following the prayers, singing, and listening to the readings?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

Have I disrespected or disobeyed my parents?

Am I willing to help around the house or must I be nagged a hundred times?

Have I been a good example, especially to younger siblings and my classmates?

Have I been respectful to those who are in charge of me or who care for me?

5. You shall not kill.

Have I fought with, hit, or hurt others?

Have I said mean things, or made fun of others?

Have my actions hurt someone's feelings?

Have I said mean things about others behind their backs?

Have I encouraged others to do bad things?

Have I teased or bullied anyone?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

Have I treated my body and other people's bodies with respect?

Have I looked at television shows, movies, or pictures that are bad for me?

7. You shall not steal.

Have I taken things that were not mine from a store or another person?

Have I destroyed or misused another person's property for fun?

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

Am I honest in my school work?

Have I lied to make myself look good?

Have I lied to protect myself from punishment?

Have I lied to make another person look bad or get them in trouble?

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

Have I allowed my parents to spend time with one another, or do I get jealous and want them to pay attention only to me?

Have I gotten mad when I have to share my friends?

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

Have I ever been envious of the things or abilities that others have?

Have I been thankful to God and my parents for what they have given me?

Have I shared the things I have with my family, friends and poor people?

