

Going to Confession

Remember the basic sequence:

- Contrition
- Confession
- Absolution
- Penance

Follow these basic steps:

- When you enter the confessional, choose to kneel behind the screen or sit in the chair.
- Make the Sign of the Cross, while saying it aloud.
- Start with ***Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been _____ (how long) _____ since my last confession. These are my sins....***
- After you have told the priest all your sins, finish with ***For these, and all the sins of my past life, I am truly sorry.***

Using an Examination of Conscience

Sin is not always a question of "breaking a rule," but of our attitudes and patterns of behavior.

At the same time, reflecting on our actions in light of the Commandments and the teachings of the church can be helpful in calling us to change our lives and to live more fully as disciples of the Lord.

The following list can be used as a guide. Ideally, we should examine our conscience every day. As you begin to reflect on this list, say a short prayer to the Holy Spirit to help you to remember what you have done and to help you to see it clearly.

An Examination of Conscience

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| 1. Do I honor God above everything else?
Do I ask God's help in my decisions? Do I pray to God regularly? | 7. Have I been loyal and faithful to my family and friends? |
| 2. Have I used the name of God or of Jesus in a disrespectful way? | 8. Have I taken what is not mine? |
| 3. Do I come to celebrate the Eucharist every week on Sunday? | 9. Have I told the truth? |
| 4. Do I obey the adults who care for me? | 10. Have I been jealous of other people or of other things? |
| 5. Do I take care of my own body with good food, rest and exercise? | 11. Have I done what I can to help the poor? |
| 6. Have I physically hurt anyone, or have I hurt someone's feelings, or have I been so angry that I might have hurt someone? | 12. Have I done what I can to make the earth a good place to live? |
| | 13. Have I done what I can to be part of my church and school communities? |
| | 14. Have I shared my possessions and my talents with others? |

Act of Contrition

My God,
I am sorry for my sins with my whole 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.

After your confession

- Perform your penance.
- Say a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the gifts of grace and mercy. An example, by St. Alphonsus:

O my God, why have you loved me so much? What good do you find in me? Have you forgotten my sins and offenses? Since you have treat me with so much love, and given me graces without number, I will love you from now on, my God and my All, with all my heart. You alone are and always will be the God of my heart, my only Good, my Heaven, my Hope, my All.

St. Alphonus Ligouri