

Praying for Forgiveness

In normal circumstances, we ask for forgiveness of our sins in the Sacrament of Penance and Reconciliation. However, at times, it is impossible to confess to a priest. The emergency we are experiencing now is one of those times.

Pope Francis reminds us that we can approach God as a loving Father and pray to be forgiven.

When it is possible to celebrate the Sacrament in the future, we should do so.

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

1. Do I honor God above everything else?
Do I ask God's help in my decisions? Do I pray to God regularly?
2. Have I used the name of God or of Jesus in a disrespectful way?
3. Do I come to celebrate the Eucharist every week on Sunday?
4. Do I obey the adults who care for me?
5. Do I take care of my own body with good food, rest and exercise?
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?
7. Have I been loyal and faithful to my family and friends?
8. Have I taken what is not mine?
9. Have I told the truth?
10. Have I been jealous of other people or of other things?
11. Have I done what I can to help the poor?
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 Act of Contrition

- Say a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the gifts of grace and mercy. An example:

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 treated 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. Alphonsus Ligouri