

# PREPARATION FOR CONFESSION

“Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain, they are retained.” (John 20:23)

## WHAT IS THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE / RECONCILIATION?

Penance/Reconciliation is a Sacrament in which the sins committed after Baptism are forgiven.

## WHAT IS CONFESSION?

Confession is the telling of our sins to a duly authorized Priest for the purpose of obtaining forgiveness.

## WHY SHOULD WE GO TO CONFESSION FREQUENTLY?

Frequent Confession greatly helps us to overcome temptations, to keep in the state of grace, and to grow in virtue.

## WHAT IS NECESSARY TO MAKE A GOOD CONFESSION?

Five things are necessary for a good confession.

### 1. Examination of conscience – Find out my sins.

We should make an earnest effort to call to mind all the sins we have committed since our last worthy Confession.

### 2. Sorrow for sins.

We should have sorrow for our sins because sin offends our loving Father who made us to know, love and serve Him in this world, so as to be happy with Him forever in the next.

### 3. Firm resolution never more to offend God.

We must resolve not only to avoid sin, but also the persons, places and things that may easily lead us into sin.

### 4. Confess our sins to a Priest.

It is impossible for us to confess all of our venial sins. We should select those that are most significant. Whereas, all mortal sins must be confessed -- their kind and the number of times we have committed each one.

### 5. Say the Penance which the Priest gives us.

The Priest gives us a penance that we may make some atonement to God for our sins, receive help to avoid them in the future and make some satisfaction for the temporal punishment due to them.

## PRAYER BEFORE CONFESSION

O Holy Spirit, source of all light, come to my assistance and enable me to make a good confession. Enlighten me, and help me to know my sins. Bring to my mind the evil which I have done and the good which I have neglected. Grant me, moreover, heartfelt sorrow for my sins, and the

grace of a sincere confession, so that I may be forgiven and admitted into Your everlasting friendship. Mary, my Mother, help me to make a good confession. (Hail Mary, 3 times.)

## EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

### THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF GOD

#### 1. I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD; YOU SHALL NOT HAVE STRANGE GODS BEFORE ME.

The first commandment requires that I give due honor to God as the Lord of my life. Do I live a prayerful and holy life?

#### 2. YOU SHALL NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD IN VAIN.

The second commandment forbids all false, rash, unjust and unnecessary oaths, blasphemy, cursing, and profane words.

#### 3. REMEMBER THAT YOU KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH DAY.

The third commandment obliges us to attend Mass on Sundays and Holydays of obligation. We should make Sundays a special day of prayer and rest.

#### 4. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER.

The fourth command forbids all disobedience, contempt and stubbornness towards our parents, teachers, or lawful superiors.

#### 5. YOU SHALL NOT KILL.

The fifth command forbids all willful murder, fighting, anger, hatred, revenge and bad example.

#### 6. YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

9. YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S WIFE. The sixth and ninth commandments forbid all impurity or immodesty in words, looks, thoughts and actions.

#### 7. YOU SHALL NOT STEAL.

The seventh command forbids all unjust taking or keeping what belongs to another.

#### 8. YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR.

The eighth command forbids all rash judgment, back-biting, slander and lies.

#### 10. YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S GOODS.

The tenth command forbids all desires to take or keep wrongfully what belongs to another.

### THE SIX COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH

1. To assist at Mass on all Sundays and holy days of obligation
2. To fast and abstain on the days appointed
3. To confess our sins at least once a year
4. To receive Holy Communion during the Easter time
5. To contribute to the support of the Church
6. To observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage

### THE SEVEN CAPITAL SINS

Pride, Covetousness, Lust, Anger, Gluttony, Envy and Sloth.

### ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You, and I detest all my sins, because of Your just punishments, but most of all because 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 confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

# METHOD OF CONFESSING

Enter the confessional or Room of Reconciliation and start your confession by making the Sign of the Cross, and in moderate, low voice say: **“Bless me Father, for I have sinned. My last confession was** (give length in days, weeks, months, etc.) **ago. If it is your first confession, say: “This is my first confession.”** Then say: **“These are my sins.”** Then tell your sins according to kind and number, keeping in mind that **all grave sins must be confessed.** When finished confessing, say: **“I am sorry for these and all the sins of my past life.”** Then listen to what the Priest

says; answer all questions. If you have a question, feel free to ask the Priest. The Priest is there to help you. Do not be afraid, for God is merciful and loving. Pay particular attention to the Penance the Priest gives you. He may invite you to pray an Act of Contrition. Use the formula on this prayer card, or another one you know. Then the priest will recite the words of absolution. In concluding, say: “Thank you, Father.” Leave the place of confession and do or say your Penance as soon as possible. Give God thanks for His great love for you.

## PRAYERS AFTER CONFESSION

**“What does it profit a man, if he gain the whole world, but suffer the loss of his own soul?” (Mark 8:36)**

### SAY THE PENANCE GIVEN BY THE PRIEST

#### ACTS OF THANKSGIVING

O my God, from the bottom of my heart, I thank you for having forgiven me. Mary, my Mother, and all you Holy Angels and Saints, join with me in giving thanks to God for his boundless mercy in washing away my sins.

Praise, honor and glory, be given to Your Holy Name, O Lord, who has shown Your mercy to a sinner as myself... In Your goodness and mercy You inspire me with a confident hope of salvation. Truly, You are the God of all consolation, the true comfort of sinners, who guide them to the possession of peace and joy. May all the world know Your goodness, may all feel your mercy, that all may praise You, O God, as you deserve.

#### PRAYER TO THE SACRED HEART

O most holy Heart of Jesus, source of all blessings, I adore You and I love You, and with a lively sorrow for my sins, I offer this poor heart of mine to You. Make it humble, patient, pure and conformed to Your will in all things. Grant, good Jesus, that I will live in You and for You. Protect me in dangers, console me in my afflictions, grant me health of body, assistance in my material needs, Your blessing in all my undertakings and the grace of a holy death.

#### MEMORARE TO THE BLESSED VIRGIN

Remember, O most gracious Virgin Mary, that never was it known that anyone who fled to thy protection, implored thy help or sought thy intercession was left unaided. Inspired by this confidence, I fly unto thee, O Virgin of virgins, my Mother! To thee I come; before thee I stand, sinful and sorrowful. O Mother of the Word Incarnate, despise not my petitions, but in thy mercy, hear and answer me. Amen.

#### PRAYER TO SAINT JOSEPH

Be mindful of us, O Blessed Joseph, and by the aid of your prayer, intercede for us with your foster-Son, and also obtain for us the favor of the most blessed Virgin, your Spouse, the Mother of Him, who with the Father and the Holy Spirit lives and reigns world without end. Amen.

#### PRAYER TO YOUR PATRON SAINT

O heavenly patron, whose name I rejoice to bear, pray always to God for me; confirm me in the faith; strengthen me in the practice of virtue; defend me in the fight, that, victorious over the wicked enemy, I may deserve to attain eternal glory. Amen.

#### THE PRAYER TO YOUR GUARDIAN ANGEL

Angel of God, my guardian dear, to whom God's love commits me here, ever this day be at my side, to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.

#### THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

The Five Joyful Mysteries *Mondays & Saturdays*

1. The Annunciation
2. The Visitation
3. The Birth of Our Lord
4. The Presentation of Our Lord in the Temple
5. The Finding of Our Lord in the Temple

The Five Luminous Mysteries *Thursdays*

1. The Baptism of Our Lord in the Jordan
2. The Wedding Feast at Cana
3. The Proclamation of the Kingdom of God
4. The Transfiguration
5. The Institution of the Holy Eucharist

The Five Sorrowful Mysteries *Tuesdays & Fridays*

1. The Agony of Our Lord in the Garden
2. The Scourging at the Pillar
3. The Crowning with Thorns
4. The Carrying of the Cross
5. The Crucifixion and Death of Our Lord.

The Five Glorious Mysteries *Wednesdays & Sundays*

1. The Resurrection of Our Lord
2. The Ascension of Our Lord into Heaven
3. The Descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles
4. The Assumption of Our Blessed Mother into Heaven
5. The Coronation of the Blessed Virgin Mary as Queen of Heaven and Earth.



#### PRAYER BEFORE A CRUCIFIX

Look down upon me, good and gentle Jesus, while before Your face I humbly kneel, and, with burning soul, pray and beseech You to fix deep in my heart lively sentiments of faith, hope and charity, true contrition for my sins, and a firm purpose of amendment; while I contemplate, with great love and tender pity, Your five most precious wounds, pondering over them within me, call to mind the word which David, Your Prophet, said of You, my Jesus: “They have pierced My hand and My feet, they have numbered all My bones.” (Psalm 22:17,18.)