

Before Confession

- ◀ Spend some time preparing in prayer and ask the Holy Spirit to guide you.
- ◀ Use an Examination of Conscience to help you remember what things have kept you from loving God and others.

During Confession

1. The priest will greet you and begin with the Sign of the Cross.
2. You can begin by saying something similar to:
3. “Bless me Father for I have sinned. My last confession was...ago (*roughly how long*) and these are my sins.”
4. If you are not sure how to begin, or what to say, let the priest know that. He is there to help!
5. Share your sins simply in your own words.
6. When you have finished, let the priest know. You can do so in your own words or use something similar to this:
7. “I am sorry for all these sins and for any that I cannot remember.”
8. The priest will talk with you, ask you to do a penance and pray an Act of Contrition, if you haven't already.
9. The priest will then give you absolution (*forgiveness of your sins*) by praying the prayer of absolution and make the sign of the cross over you. You can then also make the sign of the cross.

After Confession

- ◀ Give thanks, you're forgiven!
- ◀ Return to your seat, take time in prayer and complete the penance that the priest gave you.

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. Amen.

Examination of Conscience

[Based on the Our Father]

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name.

Do I make God a priority in my life? Do I pray to God? Do I attend and participate at Mass?

Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Am I kind to others? Do I do what Jesus wants me to do? Do I treat others the way I would like to be treated? Do I share with others? Am I helpful to my family? Do I show respect to my teachers and classmates?

Give us this day our daily bread.

Do I remember to say thank you? Am I sometimes greedy or jealous of others? Do I appreciate the good things I have in my life? Do I think of ways to help those who have no food? Do I take things that don't belong to me?

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Do I say I'm sorry when I have been wrong? Do I forgive and forget when someone does something bad to me? Do I help solve problems between my friends or do I cause more trouble? Do I say bad things about people who have hurt me? Do I gossip?

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Do I play fairly in sports and games? Do I cheat in school? Do I tell the truth? Do I set a good example by my kindness? Do I let other kids tempt me to do things I know I shouldn't do?

Examination of Conscience

[Based on the Ten Commandments]

1

I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange Gods before me.

- ◀ Have I treated people, events, or things as more

2

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

- ◀ Have my words, actively or passively, put down God, the Church, or people?

3

Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

- ◀ Do I go to Mass every Sunday (or Saturday Vigil) and on Holy Days of Obligation (Jan 1; the Ascension; Aug 15; Nov 1; Dec 8; Dec 25)?
- ◀ Do I avoid, when possible, work that impedes worship to God, joy for the Lord's Day, and proper relaxation of mind and body?
- ◀ Do I look for ways to spend time with family or in service on Sunday?

4

Honor your father and your mother.

- ◀ Do I show my parents due respect?
- ◀ Do I seek to maintain good communication with my parents where possible?
- ◀ Do I criticize them for lacking skills I think they should have?

5

You shall not kill.

Have I harmed another through physical, verbal, or emotional means, including gossip or manipulation of any kind?

6

You shall not commit adultery.

- ◀ Have I respected the physical and sexual dignity of others and of myself?

7

You shall not steal.

- ◀ Have I taken or wasted time or items that belonged to another?

8

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

- ◀ Have I gossiped, told lies, or embellished stories at the expense of another?

9

You shall not covet your neighbor's spouse.

- ◀ **If Single:** Have I seen someone else just as an object?
- ◀ **If Married:** Have I honored my spouse with my full affection and exclusive love?

10

You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

- ◀ Am I content with my own means and needs, or do I compare myself to others unnecessarily?

Christ's Two Commandments

How well do we love God and others? Do we love as Christ calls us to? In the Gospel of Matthew, Christ gives us Two Commandments: *“He said to him, ‘You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments’”* (Mt 22:37-40).

Not sure what love is? St Paul describes it for us in his Letter to the Corinthians. Is this how you love God and others? *“Love is patient, love is kind. It is not jealous, [love] is not pompous, it is not inflated, it is not rude, it does not seek its own interests, it is not quick-tempered, it does not brood over injury, it does not rejoice over wrongdoing but rejoices with the truth. It bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never fails”* (1 Cor 13:4-8).

The 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.

The Hail Mary:

Hail Mary, full of grace! The Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women, and blessed is the fruit of thy womb, Jesus. Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and at the hour of our death. Amen.

The 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.

The Apostles' Creed:

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth. I believe in Jesus Christ, His only Son, our Lord. He was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit and born of the Virgin Mary. He suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried. He descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again. He ascended into heaven, and is seated at the right hand of the Father. He will come again to judge the living and the dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic Church, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting. Amen.

The Hail Holy Queen:

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, hail, our life, our sweetness and our hope. To thee do we cry, poor banished children of Eve: to thee do we send up our sighs, mourning and weeping in this vale of tears. Turn then, most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy toward us, and after this our exile, show unto us the blessed fruit of thy womb, Jesus, O merciful, O loving, O sweet Virgin Mary!

L Pray for us, O holy Mother of God

R That we may be made worthy of the promises of Christ. Amen.

Prayer to St Michael the Archangel:

St Michael the Archangel, defend us in battle, be our protection against the wickedness and snares of the devil. May God rebuke him we humbly pray; and do thou, O Prince of the Heavenly host, by the power of God, cast into hell Satan and all the evil spirits who prowl about the world seeking the ruin of souls. Amen.