



Encountering Jesus Christ

Receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation brings Joy and Peace!

There are a few steps needed to make a good confession. Since most people receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the first time as a small child, it is helpful to review the steps. Let's take a closer look.

When you come to Church to confess your sins, you begin by examining your conscience. The best way to begin is by praying to the Holy Spirit "to help you to know your sins and to be truly sorry for them." The Holy Spirit will bring to mind your sins, convicting you in a gentle way that these sins have offended God.

- When you enter the place set aside for the celebration of the Sacrament of Reconciliation with the option of either behind the screen or face to face, the priest may greet you and together you will make the Sign of the Cross.
- Father may pray this prayer: "May the Lord be in your heart and help you to confess your sins with true sorrow." You may answer: "**Amen.**"
- You begin the confession of your sins by saying: "**Father, my last confession was ...weeks, months, or years ago. These are my sins.....**"
- You finish your confession by saying: "**I am sorry for these and for all my sins.**"
- The priest may talk with you about your confession. You may also seek his help and guidance by asking him questions. The priest will then give you a penance, asking you to either pray or perform an act of charity.
- The priest will then ask you to pray the Act of Contrition.

ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You. And I detest all my sins because of Your just punishment. 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 sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

- The priest prays the words of absolution. You bow your head to receive God's forgiveness. "God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of His Son has reconciled the world to Himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sin; through the ministry of the Church may God grant you pardon and peace, (you make the Sign of the Cross as the priest prays): "I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." You answer: "**Amen**"

It is helpful to know the format for confessing your sins, but it is not the most significant aspect. Opening your heart to Jesus Christ in this Sacrament of Healing is the most important part. Come and receive the mercy of Jesus. The priest will guide you if needed. When you go to Confession, the priest is thankful for the grace that Our Lord has showered upon you, giving you the courage to come and make a good confession and that your relationship with God will be strengthened. Finally, have no worry as the priest will not repeat or remember your sins. You will experience God's love and mercy as well as inner peace in receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

