

HOW TO GO TO CONFESSION: A GUIDE FOR CHILDREN

Jesus loves you! He doesn't want anything to come between you and Him ... so He gives us the Sacrament of Confession to forgive our sins and to help make us stronger in our life of faith.



Before going into Confession, first we should take some time and *examine our conscience* to see what sins we have committed:

The Ten Commandments:

1. **I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.**
Have I thought that money, things, or popularity were more important than God?
Have I made an idol of sports or entertainment figures?
2. **You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.**
Do I use God's name carelessly?
Do I use God's name or other bad words in anger?
3. **Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.**
Did I attend Mass on Sunday?
Do I pay attention during Mass? Do I distract others during Mass?
Did my behavior make it difficult or impossible for my family to get to church on time?
Have I remembered to pray daily?
4. **Honor your father and your mother.**
Do I obey my parents?
Have I done my chores without complaining?
Have I been disrespectful to teachers, coaches, or others in authority?
5. **You shall not kill.**
Did I lose my patience or lose my temper?
Have I been in a fight with anyone?
Do I hold grudges and try to get even with others?
Have I been unfair to others, especially those who are different than I am?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

Do I show respect for my body?

Do I respect the bodies of others?

Do I avoid harmful things like drugs, tobacco and alcohol?

7. You shall not steal.

Have I taken something that belongs to someone else?

Have I “forgotten” to return something that I borrowed?

Have I broken or damaged things that belong to others?

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Do I play fairly or do I ever cheat at school or games?

Have I been honest or have I lied?

Have I hurt someone by what I have said or done?

Have I copied someone else’s homework or cheated on a test?

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

Have I been jealous of the friends that someone else has?

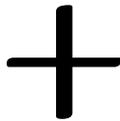
Have I tried to be kind to others?

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Have I been jealous of the things that my friends have?

Have I nagged my parents into buying things because my friends have them?

Have I helped others when they needed help?



After we have examined our conscience, we can go into the confessional with the priest.

The priest will say, “In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”

We say, “Amen.”

Then we tell the priest how long it has been since our last confession: **“Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been (however many days, weeks, months or years) since my last confession.”**

Then we tell the priest what sins we have committed since our last confession. At the end we say, **“For these and for all my sins, I am truly sorry.”**

The priest will give you some advice to help you not commit these sins again, and then he will give you a **penance** – prayers to say or good works to do.

Then we say the 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.**

**Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us;
in His Name, my God, have mercy.**

The priest will pray the prayer of Absolution and forgive our sins in the name of Jesus. Then he will say, “Go in peace.”

We say, “Thanks be to God!”