

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

- Have I used God's name carelessly/disrespectfully?
- Have I been angry with God?
- Have I wished evil upon another in thought or speech? Especially eternal damnation?
- Have I disrespected a sacred person or object?

**3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.**

- Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation?

- Do I do unnecessary servile work on Sunday?
- Do I make others work on Sunday unnecessarily?

**4. Honor your father and your mother.**

- Do I honor and obey my parents?
- Have I neglected my duties as a spouse or parent?
- Have I given my family good religious example?
- Do I try to bring peace into my home life?
- Do I care for/visit my aged and infirm relatives?
- Do I respect my elders, and other authority figures?
- Do I put the needs of others before my own?

**5. You shall not kill.**

- Have I harmed anyone, physically emotionally?
- Have I had an abortion or encouraged anyone to have an abortion?
- Have I abused alcohol or drugs?
- Have I lead another to sin by giving scandal?
- Have I been angry? Resentful? Unforgiving?
- Have I harbored hatred in my heart?
- Have I been sterilized for reasons of birth control, or encouraged others?

**6. You shall not commit adultery.**

- Have I been faithful to my marriage vows in thought, word and action?
- Have I engaged in any sexual activity before marriage or outside of marriage?
- Have I used artificial contraception?
- Has each sexual act in my marriage been open to the transmission of new life?
- Have I treated another with lust, as an object of my pleasure? Not in accord with their personal dignity?
- Have I been guilty of any homosexual activity?
- Have I committed self-abuse (masturbation)?
- Have I looked, dressed or acted immodestly?

**7. You shall not steal.**

- Have I taken what is not mine?
- Have I made restitution for what I have stolen?
- Do I waste time at work, school or at home? Lazy?
- Do I engage in excessive entertainment?
- Do I gamble excessively or irresponsibly?
- Do I pay my debts promptly?
- Do I consider all possessions as gifts from God to be shared with others freely?

**8. You shall not bear false witness.**

- Have I lied? Exaggerated? Given a false impression?
- Have I harmed another's reputation by gossip (true stories) or slander (false stories)?
- Have I spoken behind someone else's back?
- Am I critical, negative, or uncharitable of others?
- Do I keep secret what should be kept confidential?

**9. You shall not desire your neighbor's wife.**

- Have I consented to impure thoughts? Have I caused them by impure texting, books, pictures or videos?
- Do I pray promptly to banish impure temptations?
- Do I listen to, or engage in, impure talk, jokes?

**10. You shall not desire your neighbor's goods.**

- Am I jealous of what other people have?
- Do I envy other people's families or possessions?
- Am I greedy, miserly, selfish, or self-centered?
- Are possessions more important than friendship?
- Do I trust that God will care for all of my needs?

\* **Did I follow the rules of the Church with regard to marriage?**

\* **Do I support the pastors of the Church?**

**An Act of Contrition**

**O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven, and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who art all good and deserving of all My love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Amen.**

St. Aloysius Parish—Thorold Ontario—March, 2020

# A Catechism on How to Make a Good Confession



## What is Confession?

Confession, also called Reconciliation, is a divinely established way to repair our relationship with the Heavenly Father. Confession is a gift, whereby the redemption won for us by the blood of Christ is applied to us. It is one of the 7 Sacraments. By sin we offend God, wound ourselves, and others. Confession is a means of reconciling ourselves to God and to His Church. In it, we accuse ourselves of our sins to an ordained priest. In return, we receive Jesus' absolution.

## Why a Priest?

The priest is both an officer of the Church and he represents Christ *in persona Christi*. We ask God's forgiveness through the priest; Jesus grants it through the priest. This role was given to priests on the day of the Resurrection: **"Receive ye the Holy Ghost; whose sins you forgive, they are forgiven,"** (Jn.20:23). Never fear what the priest might think of your sins; he will admire your humility, and will rejoice at your reconciliation.

## Who may Confess?

Catholics have the great privilege of Confession. They also have a responsibility to take advantage of this gift. God invites us into friendship with Him; He also invites us to repair that friendship when it is wounded by sin. You are invited!

## Different Kinds of Sin

There are two kinds of actual sin: mortal and venial. Mortal sin is a serious offense against God that destroys the life of God in the soul. Adam and Eve committed the first mortal sin in eating the forbidden fruit: **"In the day that you eat thereof you shall surely die."** (Gen.2:17). Mortal sin deprives the sinner of **sanctifying grace** and the right to everlasting happiness. Venial sin wounds our relationship with God. How do we judge the differ-

ence? For a sin to be mortal there are three conditions necessary:

1. The act must be a serious offence against the law of God;
2. The sinner must be mindful of the serious wrong;
3. The sinner must fully consent to it.

For example: Stealing \$2 is normally venial whereas taking \$200 would be mortal. Seriously hurting someone would be a mortal sin, but doing so accidentally or unthinkingly would be venial. An act done while half-asleep is done without full consent and therefore cannot be mortal. Unfortunately, mortal sins are easily committed, for instance, deliberately missing Sunday Mass without a good reason.

## Five Steps

1. Examine your conscience.
2. Be sincerely sorry for your sins.
3. Confess your sins to a priest.
4. Resolve to amend your life.
5. Perform the penance the priest assigns.

Please note:

- a) True sorrow is sometimes felt but not always; it is a decision to thoroughly regret the sinful act, and to never repeat it.
- b) Forgetfulness is not a problem—God does not expect our memory to be perfect.
- c) Honesty is required—the kind of mortal sin and the number of times we've committed it must be confessed. If we have 3 serious sins to confess but only mention two of them (out of embarrassment, say) then we are being dishonest—and our friendship is now wounded 4 times. This would constitute a "bad confession" and must be repeated.
- D) There is no sin, however horrible, which cannot be effaced by this Holy Sacrament. Do not be afraid.

## Procedure

The procedure is simple; if you are unsure the priest will help you. Enter and say: **"Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been—state the length of time (days, months, years)—since my last good confes-**

**sion, and these are my sins."** Then tell your mortal sins and the number of times you committed them. Confess some venial sins you have committed. When you have finished, say: **"For these and all the sins of my past, I am truly sorry."** Then the priest may now ask a question or give some advice. He then assigns a penance. If he asks you, make an Act of Contrition in a low tone. The priest will then grant absolution. Thank him and depart. Perform the assigned penance at your earliest convenience so it isn't neglected.

## Goods Effects of Confession

Absolution worthily received has great effects:

- 1) The restoration (or increase) of sanctifying grace, and our friendship with God,
- 2) The forgiveness of sins,
- 3) The remission of eternal punishment due to sin (if necessary),
- 4) The remission, in whole or in part, of temporal punishment due to sin,
- 5) Help to avoid sin in the future,
- 6) The restoration of the merits of our good works, if lost by mortal sin.
- 7) Interior peace.

## A Brief Examination of Conscience

**1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.**

- Do I give God time every day in prayer?
- Do I seek to love Him with my whole heart?
- Do I grow in the knowledge of God by study?
- Have I been involved with superstitious practices (astrology, witchcraft, wizardry, 'Native' spirituality, tarot cards, ouija boards, etc.)?
- Have I been involved in the occult?
- Do I surrender myself to all the teachings of the Holy Catholic Church?
- Have I been prideful in giving myself credit for the good God does?
- Have I been sufficiently grateful to God?
- Have I ever received Holy Communion in the state of mortal sin?
- Have I ever deliberately made a bad Confession?
- Have I avoided Confession out of fear or laziness?