

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?