Shrine of St. Therese

Preparing for the Sacraments of
Reconciliation/Confession &
First Holy Eucharist
First Reconciliation and First Holy Eucharist Preparation

Welcome to the Shrine of St. Therese Sacramental Program! Preparing to receive two special Sacraments takes time, devotion and dedication. As Sacramental Preparation is a 2-year Program, students are to complete 1 year of Catechism prior to entering the Sacramental Preparation Program. (*Exception: Only 1 yr. needed if the child is either in Catholic School/ Home school*)

Parent Goals for Sacramental Preparation

The Holy Catholic Church calls upon parents to help suitably prepare their children for reception of the sacraments. The home is where the faith is developed and lived out. Each parent models to their child what the life of faith looks like. The following will help you to assist your child in this time of sacramental preparation.

☐ Attend Sunday Mass and Holy Days of Obligation with your children

☐ Register with the Shrine as a Parishioner (If from another Parish, please have a letter from Pastor indicating he is aware of your presence in the Shrine Program).

☐ Provide proof of Child's Baptism to the parish.

☐ Attend Parent Sessions

☐ Do home lessons and tasks with your child to foster love and understanding for the Faith.

☐ Make sure your child attends the religious education sessions offered by your parish and does any assigned homework.

☐ At home, work on memorization items. Explain the meaning of the prayers to your child. (See List)

☐ Have family prayer time together daily. (Ex. Bless Meals, Day or night prayers, etc)

☐ Have a Bible or Saint Stories or a Catechism of the Catholic Church, as well as religious articles such as a crucifix, holy water and sacred images in the home.

☐ Go to Reconciliation on a regular basis. Parents model this by their personal participation in the sacrament. It is recommended that once your child has made their First Reconciliation, that your family go back and receive this grace and forgiveness at least once a month.

*Our Father, who art in heaven, how did You know my name?*
The Invitation

God created us with the ability to choose to love Him. We sometimes choose our own ways and ignore His ways. By using our ability to choose against God, we sin. We turn away from God. (cf. CCC 398)
The truth is that evil exists and we live in a fallen world due to Original Sin. (CCC 396) That is why we are in need of God’s mercy. We have been given free will to choose to love God and follow Him. When we freely choose not to love and follow God, we sin. This sin wounds our relationship with both God and mankind. (CCC 1487)

Our Relationship with God

Just like in any relationship, there are going to be things said and done that cause harm in the relationship. In our relationship with God, we are the ones who offend, and sometimes even depart from Him. Despite this, He prompts us to come back to Him. He waits for us to return as He pours out His mercy on us.

When we offend or hurt someone we are taught from a young age to say the word “sorry” directly to the person we have offended. This is the same for our loving Father. Through our sins we offend Him and can even cut off our relationship with Him, so we need to be able to say the words of apology and ask for forgiveness. Just as we don’t say “I’m sorry” once or twice a year to people we love as “catch all” for everything we have done — for this would certainly harm our close relationships even more — the same is true for our heavenly Father. This is why the sacrament of Reconciliation is so important. It not only restores our relationship to God, but also strengthens it.

We come to confess our sins to the priest in the confessional; the priest stands in the person of Jesus Christ, so when we hear those words of forgiveness it is God who forgives us.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation

What is the sacrament of Reconciliation?
Reconciliation is the sacrament by which sins committed after Baptism are forgiven.
☐ Mortal sin kills the life of Christ in our soul.
☐ Venial sin makes our soul "wounded".
☐ Reconciliation is like medicine.
☐ It cures our "wounded" souls.
☐ It is much stronger than any medicine for the body.
☐ It even gives life to dead souls (forgiving mortal sin).
☐ This sacrament helps us to be good afterwards (gives grace = God's help).
☐ Our sins may be big. Our sins may be many. But Our Lord always forgives us if we are sorry.
☐ God sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins and restore us to life.

What must you do to receive the sacrament of Reconciliation worthily?
To receive the sacrament of Reconciliation worthily I must:
a. Know my sins (examination of conscience)
b. Be sorry for my sins (repentance)
c. Make up my mind not to sin again (firm amendment)
d. Tell my sins to the priest (confession)
e. Do the penance the priest gives me (restitution)

What is the best way to do these five things?
The best way to do these five things is to:
a. Pray to the Holy Spirit to show me my sins.
b. Think of Jesus’ sufferings and death. Think of how much He loves me.
c. Do an examination of conscience to find out my sins. Daily Examination is best to form this habit.
Examination of Conscience and Forgiveness

Jesus told a parable about two men who went to the temple to pray (Luke 18:9-14). One man prayed, “I thank you, Lord that I am not like the rest of humanity—greedy, dishonest, adulterous—or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and pay tithes on my whole income.” The other man stood at a distance and would not even raise his eyes to heaven. He had a different attitude, “Oh God, be merciful to me a sinner.”

How often are we really like the first one justifying our sin … especially when we “sugar coat it” so it does not seem that bad? Our pride and self esteem get in the way of us seeing ourselves as sinners. We need to work on the attitude of needing God’s mercy and coming before Him and saying, “Oh God be merciful to me a sinner.”

The first step is to be honest with ourselves and to examine our conscience for the times we have sinned. You can assist your child in taking this first step by teaching them what is right and what is wrong. This is how you can gradually form your child’s conscience. Our conscience is the power of our mind to judge the morality of an act, whether the things we do are truly good or evil.

You can help your children see when they are not loving toward one another, when they hurt someone, when they hold a grudge or when they don’t tell the truth. You do this already, but now you can help them to understand how their sin also hurts God and they need to also tell Him they are sorry. The way Jesus has asked us to do this is through the Church. Jesus says to Apostles after the Resurrection. “Whose sins you forgive are forgiven them, and whose sins you retain are retained.” (John 20:23) This is the power of the Church who, through the priest, forgives sins. It is not the priest who is forgiving the sin but Jesus acting through the Priest.

Forming the Habit of a Daily Examination of Conscience

It can be hard to remember all the sins we have committed if we try to think of all of them right before we go to confession. That is why it is important to do an examination of conscience on a daily basis. We begin this exercise by asking the Holy Spirit to enlighten us and help us see how we have offended God in our thoughts, words and actions. There are many printed aids, resources on the internet and even smart phone apps that can help us “jog our memory” of the sins we have committed, even the ones in the past that often get forgotten.

PARENT TIPS

“Father gave me three Hail Mary’s for my Penance”

In movies this seems to be the most common penance. However, if children have not memorized prayers, then this might be a bit difficult for them. One thing you can do to help your child prepare for the sacraments is help them to memorize their prayers. Each night during “bed time prayer” work on helping your child memorize a prayer, line by line until they have it all memorized. Then move on to the next prayer. You can also make this a contest with other siblings, or add a prayer after the meal time grace. There is a list of basic prayers to learn near the end of this packet.
"How do I know my sins?"
Each night, it is good for parents and children to pray "bed time prayers." The child could begin by thanking Jesus for the good things that happened in the day. You can pray next to your child and form them by saying, "Now we are going to take some time in silence and ask the Holy Spirit to help us to think of the things that we did that hurt other people. Perhaps by something we said that hurt someone's feelings or a lie we told. Maybe we hurt someone by hitting or punching or pushing."
After a few days of prompting your child using different examples in their life, you can then simply move to just saying, "now we are going to think about the sins we have committed this day and ask for Jesus to forgive us." The child should not say the sins aloud, just as you would not say your sins aloud in front of the child. This is a great way to learn how to "Examine your Conscience". This is a perfect time to practice and pray the "Act of Contrition"

"But Mom, they deserved it!"
Children often struggle with justifying the sin. Such as, "my brother deserved to get hit over the head with a shovel because he teased me" or "it was my turn to play with the toy, so I took it out of my sister's room."
It might be hard for a child to feel sorry for the sin when they feel their action justified the means and they certainly intend to do it again if they feel the need. When a child fails to see the sin in their action, parents should help them see that they made a wrong choice in dealing with a difficult situation and that the choice was a sin.
So instead of getting angry and hitting the sibling with a shovel, they should have told the sibling to stop teasing them and walk away. Or if it was their turn to play with the toy, they should just ask because it is in the room of someone else, therefore permission is needed. If the situation can be broken down and better choices are presented to the child, they will come to see that their bad choice hurt others and therefore they hurt God as well.

**Difference between Mortal/Venial Sin**

*Venial Sin* = immoral action that is lesser in kind, but does not rupture our relationship with God.

*Mortal Sin* = immoral action of greater kind, and must have all 3 parts listed to be considered mortal:
1) Grave Matter =i.e. 10 Commandments, serious sins
2) Full knowledge = Must know it’s a serious sin
3) Full Consent = Freely choose the action (not coerced)
A CHILD'S EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE:

Based on 10 Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods besides me.
   * Did I do my prayers with all my heart?
   * Did I bother others while they were praying?
   * Was I ashamed to be a Catholic or afraid to tell others about Jesus?

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain.
   * Did I use God’s name or Jesus’ name in anger or fun?
   * Did I curse (ask God to hurt someone or wish harm on someone)?
   * Did I make fun of holy things?

3. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath.
   * Did I miss Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation through my own fault?
   * Did I come to Mass late or leave early without a good reason?
   * Did I whisper, laugh, talk or tease others during Mass?
   * Do I take time to spend with my family on Sundays?

4. Honor your father and mother.
   * Do I disobey my parents?
   * Do I disobey my teachers or priests?
   * Did I make fun of old people?
   * Was I mean to my parents?

5. Thou shalt not kill.
   * Did I think of myself as better than others (pride)?
   * Did I hurt my brothers or sisters or friends? Was I mean to them?
   * Did I call others bad names?
   * Was I angry? Was I stubborn? Was I lazy?
   * Did I try to get even with others? Did I lead others to sin by my example?

6 & 9. You shall not commit adultery.
   You shall not covet your neighbor’s spouse.
   * Did I have bad thoughts and like them?
   * Did I tell bad stories?
   * Did I listen to bad talk? or read bad books? or go to bad movies or watch bad T.V. shows?
   * Did I purposely look at or draw bad pictures or see them on the internet?

7 & 10. You shall not steal
   You shall not covet your neighbor’s possessions.
   * Did I steal anything? How much? Where from?
   * Did I tell others to steal?
   * Did I hurt or spoil another’s property?
   * Did I cheat in class or at home?
   * Did I keep valuable things that I found?
   * Was I jealous of others when they did better than me in class, had cool things?

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
   * Did I tell lies?
   * Did these lies hurt others?
   * Did I talk about my or others sins without a good reason?
   * Did I say mean things about others when they were not around?
   * Did I gossip or repeat things that make others look bad?
PART II: Preparing to Receive the Eucharist: The Blessed Sacrament

The most blessed Eucharist contains the body, blood, soul, and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ. The whole Christ is truly, really, and substantially contained (Catechism 1324, 1374). It is truly Jesus Himself.

Jesus did not just inhabit this earth 2,000 years ago and then leave, but rather He physically remained here on earth with us for all generations. At this very moment Jesus is physically present in every tabernacle in every Catholic Church around the world. Why do we genuflect towards the Tabernacle when we enter a church? Consider who is inside the tabernacle, the infinite Creator of the Universe, who is all deserving of our utmost love and respect.

Perhaps the most incredible thing we will ever do in this life occurs each and every time we receive the Eucharist. The infinite and eternal Creator of the Universe is sitting on our tongue. The Eucharist is God, the most powerful entity in the universe. The Eucharist is by far the most powerful thing on this earth. When you go to mass, visualize what you are actually receiving when you receive communion. When you pray after receiving communion, reflect on what just happened.

This may be hard to believe, but remember that nothing is impossible for God. Could not God’s word, which can make what did not exist from nothing, also change existing things into what they were not before? (St. Ambrose, Catechism 1375). To deny that God can accomplish such a feat is to deny that God is the Almighty, all-powerful. God created the universe out of nothing. Why can’t He convert bread into Jesus through the words and ministry of the Priesthood?

The Sacrifice of the Mass

When the Priest says the words, “this is my body...this is my blood,” the bread and wine transform into the body, blood, soul, and divinity of Jesus Himself. This is called "transubstantiation." Although the outside appearance remains, the bread and wine are transformed—the "substance" into God the Infinite and Eternal Creator of the Universe.

In the Eucharist, Christ gives us the very body, which He gave up for us on the cross, and His blood that He poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. The sacrifice of Christ on the cross and the sacrifice of the Eucharist are one single sacrifice. The victim is one and the same; only the manner of offering is different (Catechism 1365-67)

The Communion Rite at Mass:

The Holy Spirit converts the bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus through the ministry of the ordained priest. Since Christ is present under each of the species (bread and wine), communion under the species of bread alone makes it possible to receive all the fruits of the Eucharistic grace (Catechism 1390).

When we reply “Amen,” we are saying, “I believe this is Jesus” (Catechism 1396).

We must be in a state of grace to receive communion. Anyone having sinned mortally must not receive communion without having received absolution from the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Catechism 1415). We are obliged to receive communion at least once a year, but can receive it every day (Catechism 1417). One should refrain from eating or drinking anything (except water) one hour before receiving the Holy Eucharist.

Children and parents are to understand that conversion is a lifelong process, and that catechesis for the Sacrament of Eucharist is to be ongoing.
The Invitation

Our Hunger for God

We are born with an innate hunger for God. God has created us so that we can live in His divine presence forever. In Holy Communion we experience an intimate divine presence as we are united to God in a special way through His son, Jesus Christ. This is but a foretaste of the union that will happen in heaven.

The Passion, Death and Resurrection

We remember the passion, death and resurrection of Jesus during the Holy Triduum, which ends the season of Lent. We remember the Last Supper, when Jesus turned the bread into His Body and the wine into His Blood and told the apostles to partake in the holy act.

This was no ordinary meal, the apostles were then asked to eat His Body and drink His Blood and to do this in memory of Him. This mystery continued to unfold the next day with the death of Jesus, as He offered Himself up for crucifixion. The third day was the climax of the whole event; Jesus was raised from the dead! Jesus spent 40 days with His apostles teaching them to go out and bring the Gospel message to all people, baptizing them in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Your child may not completely understand why Jesus had to suffer and die for us, but you can help your child see that it was out of love that He offered to suffer and die for us so that we can be with God in heaven for ever. This was the only way that the gates of heaven could be open for us. This is the greatest act of love there is.

How Can I Help My Child Prepare for the Eucharist?

The most important thing you can do to help your child prepare for the sacrament of Eucharist is to know, love, and receive the sacrament yourself. The whole purpose of Eucharist is for your child to grow in his or her relationship with Jesus Christ. All the sacraments have this as their purpose—know this and live this first.

You can help by being a good witness to your child. If you have not gone to Mass in a long time, the simplest way to remedy the situation is to start going again (be sure to go to Reconciliation before receiving Eucharist again). If you don't know exactly what to do, approach a priest and explain the situation. If children see that their parents have a strong connection with their church and take their faith seriously, they will naturally follow.

The second most important thing you can do to help your child with this sacrament is to take time to talk to them and teach them. Explain in your own words what the sacrament of Eucharist is. Then ask them how they understand the sacrament. Help them to learn the responses at Mass. Practice together. Do a Church tour. Help them memorize prayers to prepare them to receive the Eucharist and make a thanksgiving afterward. Simple phrases such as "My Lord and My God" or "O Sacrament Most Holy, O Sacrament Divine! All Praise and all Thanksgiving be every moment Thine!" For more information, read the Catechism of the Catholic Church sections which cover the sacrament of Holy Eucharist (CCC 1322-1419).
Talking to your Children: Why Do We Have to Go to Mass?

For many parents, this question will be asked by their children more times than they can count. For a time, parents may answer, “Because I said so” but eventually children will need better reasons.

For many the reason for going to Mass is simple - because parents make us go! (That's OK, they make us do lots of things that we may not want to do - but that are good for us!) But why SHOULD we go to Mass?

It's important to remember that we are NOT going there to be entertained! Mass is something WE PARTICIPATE in. Most of our complaints about Mass come from the fact that we don't UNDERSTAND why we are there or what's going on during the mass. So why should we go?

**TOP 10 reasons to go to Mass:**

1. **The Eucharist.** The Body, Blood, Soul and Divinity of Jesus Christ is available to us! It is the pinnacle of our life as Christians. What better way to follow Jesus than to receive Him in the Eucharist! Sometimes the teaching on the Eucharist is hard for us to understand. It was hard for His followers too - read John 6. If you have trouble with your belief in the True Presence of Jesus in the Eucharist - PRAY! He will help you.

2. **Grace.** Grace is like Gatorade for the soul. Grace is God's life and God's help given to us to live a better life in Him. We receive grace through the sacraments. Mass is loaded with grace - ready for us to receive. The more open we are to it - by actively participating, the better!

3. **The Third Commandment. Keep holy the Sabbath.** Simple words, simple meaning. "So God blessed the seventh day and hallowed it; because on it God rested from all his work." (Genesis 2:2) We, too, must keep it a special and holy day. The church teaches that Mass is the most important way to do just that. It is not just a good idea - it is our obligation as People of God. Remember the words of Jesus - "If you love me you will keep my commandments" John 15:15. For Christians the Sabbath is now the first day of the week, Sunday, because it was on Sunday that our Lord rose.

4. **Community.** We are the Church, the Family of God. God's people are not in this world to struggle along by themselves. We are all one in the Body of Christ. At Mass we join with Him in a special way. We join with those around us. It is a time to be with others for prayer and friendship. It is a mystical connecting with all our brothers and sisters around the world, in heaven and purgatory. Through Christ we become a community unlike any we know on earth. It is a glimmer of what heaven will be like.

5. **Prayer.** The Mass is the ultimate prayer. There is singing, psalms, prayers of thanksgiving, prayers seeking forgiveness, prayers of worship and praise, the Lord's 22. Prayer and more. We pray as individuals and as a group. If you struggle with going to Mass - think of it from this perspective. The words we say are more than just a reply to the priest's words - they are prayer! Read them, say them, sing them, shout them, BELIEVE THEM!

6. **Learn about the Bible.** Every time Mass is celebrated we hear the Word of God. We hear from the Old Testament. It sets the stage for the Gospel reading. We hear from the New Testament - perhaps a letter from Paul or the Acts of the Apostles. In the Gospel we learn about Jesus from Matthew, Mark, Luke or John. Sometimes the readings are familiar, sometimes not. You hear more scripture at a Catholic Mass than at any other type of Sunday service! If you don't read the bible on your own - here is a chance to hear it proclaimed. If you do read the bible on your own, Mass is a time to get a better understanding of what you are reading. Jesus never said anything about go and write the Gospel for the world, he said go and PROCLAIM the Gospel. So we do.

7. **The Our Father.** One of the highlights of Mass is The Lord's Prayer. We use the words Jesus gave us and pray together as a family. Remember - it is the "Our" Father, not the "My" Father. Jesus wants us to pray together! The Our Father is the perfect prayer - we give praise to God, we ask that our lives be lived His way instead of our way, we ask for His continued presence in our lives, we ask for His forgiveness, and we pray for His strength in the battle against evil. It's all there. Pray it! Mean it!

8. **Making time with God.** If nothing else, ask yourself if you have at least one hour a week to set aside for God. Think of that. Imagine Jesus hanging on the cross, dying for YOU - and all He asks is that you join Him on Sunday for an hour or so, "Do this in remembrance of Me"(Luke 22:19) Can you do it? Yes. The question is - will you do it, for Him?

9. **Suffering souls in purgatory.** The souls in purgatory need our prayers. Special intentions are offered at Mass for those who have died - both as a group and individually. It is important not to assume that anyone who died is automatically in heaven - we must pray for them! And the cool part is those who are in purgatory can't pray for themselves but can pray for us.

10. **It's what Jesus wants us to do.** Period. Once you figure out what Sunday Mass is all about then ask yourself this question. Self, am I the type of person to always do the bare minimum? Do I only show up for the game, or do I spend time practicing? Do I only practice the piano when I have to? If you want to really be good at anything, the bare minimum is never enough. Being a Christian is no different. Try going beyond the minimum with Mass. Find a weekday Mass you can attend even one day a week. What an awesome way to say to God, I am not just trying to squeak into heaven. I want to get as much of You as I can as often as I can.

SOURCE: http://www.catholicyouth.org/index.html
**MAIN OUTLINE OF PRAYERS FOR CHILDREN**

***Asterisk indicates items that are to be memorized***

*Sign of the Cross:*
In the Name of the Father,
and of the Son,
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen

*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.

*Lords Prayer:*
Our Father, who Art in Heaven,
Hallowed by 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.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

*Act of Contrition:*
O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee. 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 my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy Grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and
to amend my life. Amen.

*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.

*Seven Sacraments*
1) Baptism
2) Eucharist
3) Confirmation
4) Confession (Reconciliation)
5) Anointing of the Sick
6) Marriage (Matrimony)
7) Holy Orders (Deacon, Priest, Bishops)

*10 COMMANDMENTS:*

1. I am the Lord thy God, Thou shalt not have any
   strange God’s before me.

2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord Thy God in
   vain
3. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath Day.

4. Honor thy Father and thy Mother

5. Thou shalt not kill

6. Thou shalt not commit adultery

7. Thou shalt not steal

8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor

9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s wife

10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor’s goods

*Why Did God Make Me?*
God made me to know Him, to love Him, and to serve Him in this world, and to be Happy with Him forever in Heaven.
Apostles Creed:
I believe in God the Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ, His only Son our Lord, who was conceived by the power of the Holy Spirit, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilot was crucified, died and was buried, He descended into hell. The third day he rose again from the dead He ascended into heaven, and sits at the right hand of God the Father Almighty.

From thence He shall come 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 of live everlasting, Amen.

PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH:
To knowingly fail at following the precepts is grave matter.
1. You shall attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation and rest from servile labor on those days.
2. You shall confess your sins at least once a year.
3. You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least once during the Easter Season
4. You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence Established by the Church (Ash Wed, Lent, Good Friday, etc)
5. You shall help to provide for the material needs of the Church, according to your own ability.

Holy Days of Obligation in America are as Follows (there are six):
1. November 1st (All Saints Day)
2. Assumption of Blessed Mother (August 15th)
3. Mary Mother of God (January 1st)
4. Immaculate Conception (of MARY) December 8th
5. Christmas (December 25th)
6. Ascension (movable, 40 days after Easter)

WHAT ARE SACRAMENTS?
The sacraments are efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which divine life is dispensed to us.
CCC 1131

Simple Definition:
A Sacrament is an outward sign instituted by Christ to give grace.

WHAT IS THE EUCHARIST?
Having passed from this world to the Father, Christ gives us in the Eucharist the pledge of glory with him.

Participation in the Holy Sacrifice identifies us with his Heart, sustains our strength along the pilgrimage of this life, makes us long for eternal life, and unites us even now to the Church in heaven, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and all the saints.
CCC 1419
HOW TO CELEBRATION THE SACRAMENT OF CONFESSION:

- **Before Going to Confession:**
  Examine your conscience before entering the Confessional; using an **Examination of Conscience** is helpful. Be ready to state the sins you have committed when you enter.

Once you enter the Confessional: Say the following--

- **Step 1:**
  (Make Sign of the Cross) "Bless me Father for I have sinned, It has been ___weeks/months/years since my last Confession".

- **Step 2:**
  Then list or state your sins by saying (NAME SINS AND # OF TIMES FOR MORTAL SINS TO BEST OF YOUR MEMORY)
  End by proclaiming, “For these sins, and all of my past sins I am truly sorry.”

- **Step 3:**
  The Priest will respond to what you said and usually give some advice or words of encouragement.
  The Priest will then give you your Penance. This is to be done immediately or as quickly as possible.

- **Step 4:**
  You will then recite your Act of Contrition

- **Step 5:**
  The priest will give you Absolution, and he will say:
  “God, the Father of Mercies, through the Death and Resurrection of His Son, has reconciled the world to Himself and send the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God grant you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”

You: Make the Sign of the Cross and say “Amen”

The priest will say “Go in peace” or similar words, you answer “Thanks be to God”

- **Step 6:**
  Be sure to Pray/Do your Penance and spend time in quiet prayer/reflection. Receive the graces from the Sacrament that will strengthen you and lessen your attachment to sin, resulting in a "firm purpose of amendment" to not fall into sin again.

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