

Celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Ten Steps for Children

1. Examination of Conscience

We examine our conscience to find out how we have loved God and others, and how we have *failed* to love God and others. We do this:

- On our own in personal prayer
- At Liturgy, during the penitential rite (Lord, Have Mercy)
- At prayer services prior to reconciliation

We admit our own responsibility in our failings so we can ask for forgiveness and make better choices in the future.

2. We Approach the Priest:

The priest will say,

“In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”

We make the sign of the cross while he says this.

3. We Begin:

We say, “**Bless me, Father, for I have sinned.**”

Then say, “**It has been _____ since my last confession.**”

4. We Continue:

“**These are my sins: _____**”

We tell the priest those we remember from our Examination of Conscience, or others that we need to tell.

5. After telling the priest our sins, we say:

“**I am sorry for these and for all of my sins.**”

The priest will say a few words to us. We listen to him.

6. The priest will give us a penance (usually a prayer or a kind deed).

We should nod and say, “**Yes, Father.**”

7. The priest may then ask us to say an Act of Contrition. *(If you are attending a prayer service as part of the celebration of Reconciliation,*

sometimes this is included in the prayers, and you may not have to say it again.)

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. Amen.**

8. Then the priest will give us the Lord's forgiveness, which is called absolution.

The priest says a prayer laying his hands gently on or just over our head:
"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 sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give 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."

We make the sign of the cross and say, "Amen."

9. The priest dismisses us, often with a handshake or other sign of peace.

We say, "Thank you, Father."

Then you leave. During a Reconciliation prayer service, you go back to your seat and sit/kneel to pray.

10. **We do the penance the priest assigned**, and thank God for His mercy and the strength we have received in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.