



MARÍA REINA DE LA PAZ PARISH

@ Saint Lawrence O'Toole Church

494 New Britain Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION



*“Receive
the Holy Spirit
Whose sins you forgive
are forgiven them,
and whose sins you retain
are retained.” John 20, 23*

HOW TO GO TO CONFESSION

Pray to the Holy Spirit for self-knowledge and trust in the mercy of God. Examine your conscience, be truly sorry for your sins, and resolve to change your life.

1. Go to the priest and begin with the Sign of the Cross. Welcoming you, the priest will say: “May God, who has enlightened every heart, help you to know your sins and trust in his mercy,” or similar words are taken from Scripture. Your answer: “Amen.”
2. Then say, “Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been ____ weeks/ months/years since my last confession.”
3. Confess your sins openly and candidly. Tell the priest of all mortal sins and the number of times each was committed, and then you may confess some of your venial sins. (Although it is not strictly necessary to confess venial sins, the Church recommends that you do.) If you do not know whether a sin is mortal or venial, ask the priest. If you have no mortal sins, confess venial sins you have committed since your last confession; you may also mention some mortal sin from your past life for which you are particularly sorry, indicating that it has already been confessed.
4. Then listen to the priest for whatever counsel he may judge appropriate. If you have any question about the faith, how to grow in holiness, or whether something is a sin, feel free to ask him. Then the priest will assign you a penance.
5. Pray the Act of Contrition when the priest tells you.
6. Listen as the priest absolves you of your sins and enjoy the fact that God has truly freed you from all your sins. If you forget to confess a mortal sin, you are still forgiven but must mention it the next time you go to confession.
7. Do the penance the priest assigns you.

THE MORTAL SIN

The mortal sin is a deliberate and free choice of something known to be seriously wrong that destroys our friendship with God and separates us from him. (Cf. 1 Jn 5:16-17)

All the following three conditions must be met for a sin to be mortal: (1) it must be something serious; (2) it must be done with enough knowledge of its gravity; and (3) it must be done with enough freedom of the will.

Mortal sin, if not erased by repentance and God's forgiveness, it causes exclusion of the Kingdom of God and the eternal death of hell.

THE VENIAL SIN

The venial sin a minor offense against God's law that hurts our relationship with God but does not destroy it. Venial sin impedes the progress of the soul, and whoever commits it deserves temporary punishment.

The deliberate venial sin that remains without repentance, disposes of us quickly or little by little to commit a mortal sin.

CONDITIONS FOR A GOOD CONFESSION

- A. Examination of conscience: That is to remember all the sins we have committed since our last confession.
- B. Sorrow for having offended God: That is to feel sincere pain of having offended God, and detest sin. (You must ask God to reach repentance)
- C. A resolution of sinning no more: True contrition for sins is more than an emotion of remorse for sin. True contrition means that you intend to live differently from now on.
- D. Confess your sins to a priest: Tell the priest all the sins you have discovered in your examination of conscience.

This confession of sins must be:

Sincere: not wanting to fool the priest, for it is impossible to deceive God.

Complete: without omitting any sin

Humble: without haughtiness or arrogance.

Prudent: we must use appropriate and correct words, and without naming people or discovering other people's sins.

Brief: without unnecessary explanations and without mixing other matters.

Satisfaction or penance: fulfill the penance imposed by the priest, with the intention of repairing the sins committed. Penance is obligatory to fulfill it because it is part of the same Sacrament.

AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE BASED ON THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

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

Do I seek to love God with all my heart and with all my soul and with all my strength (Dt 6:5)?

Do I put anything or anyone above God? Do I pray daily?

Have I had any involvement with the occult, witchcraft, Wicca, Ouija boards, seances, tarot cards, new age crystals, fortune telling, or the like? Have I put faith in horoscopes?

Have I received Holy Communion in the state of mortal sin?

Have I abused the Sacrament of Penance by lying to the priest or deliberately not confessing a mortal sin?

Have I denied a truth of the faith out of concern for the respect or opinion of others?

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

Have I used God's holy name irreverently?

Have I blasphemed God, the Church, Mary, the saints, or sacred places or things?

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

Do I try to keep Sunday as a day of prayer, rest, and relaxation, avoiding unnecessary work?

Have I deliberately come late or left early from are still forgiven but must mention it the next time you go to confession?

Do the penance the priest assigns you. If you are anxious or unsure of what to do, take this guide with you or tell the priest and he will make it easier for you.

Have I deliberately come late or left early from Mass without a good reason?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

Do I honor and respect my parents?

Have I deliberately hurt my parents?

Do I treat my children with love and respect?

Have I neglected family duties?

Do I honor and obey my lawful superiors?

Do I support and care for the well-being of all family members?

5. You shall not kill.

Have I deliberately harmed anyone?

Have I had an abortion or encouraged an abortion?

Have I attempted suicide or seriously considered it?

Have I abused drugs or alcohol?

Have I led anyone to sin through bad example or through direct encouragement?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

For the married:

Am I faithful to my spouse in thought and action?

Have I used artificial contraception, or been sterilized?

Was I married outside the Church without proper permission of the Church?

For the unmarried:

Have I engaged in sexual activity with anyone of either sex?

For all:

Have I used impure language or told impure jokes?

Have I deliberately viewed pornographic magazines, videos or internet websites?

Have I masturbated?

Do I dress modestly?

