

A Teen's Guide to the Sacrament of Reconciliation

"Christ Himself is waiting for you. He will heal you, and you will be at peace with God."

– St. Pope John Paul II

HOW TO PREPARE FOR THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

- **Begin with Prayer**

Dear Holy Spirit, come into my heart and prepare my soul for this moment of grace. Grant me the gift of self-knowledge, that I may better understand the sins which keep me from You, and grant me courage, that I may confidently confess them to Your representative. Mother Mary, please stand beside me and pray for me, that I may receive this gift of mercy from your Son.

- **Prayerfully Examine Your Conscience** (*The below is an examination of conscience based on the ten commandments, found in the book of Exodus (Ex).*)

1. **"I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me" (Ex 20:2,3)**

Have I doubted or denied the existence of God? Have I failed to love God and put Him first in my life? Have I failed to express my love for God by making time to pray every day? Have I failed to trust in God's plan for my life? Have I received Holy Communion under the state of mortal sin? Have I engaged or believed in superstition, fortune telling, horoscopes, good-luck charms, tarot cards, palmistry, Ouija boards, séances, reincarnation, etc.? Have I made a god out of money, drugs, alcohol, popularity, TV, girlfriend/boyfriend, self-image, etc? Have I ever denied being a Catholic or a truth of the Church?

2. **"You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain" (Ex 20:7)**

Have I used God's name in vain or irreverently in any way? Have I cursed or sworn? Have I failed to fulfill the promises I have made to God? Have I blasphemed God? Have I disrespected the Blessed Mother, the Church or the saints through my speech (mocking, joking, irreverence, etc.)? Have I lied under oath?

3. **"Remember that you keep holy the Sabbath Day" (Ex 20:8)**

Have I intentionally missed Holy Mass on Sunday or Holy Days of Obligation? Have I deliberately come to Mass late or left early? Have I failed to avoid work on Sunday, keeping it as a day of rest, prayer, time for family and recreation



4. "Honor your father and your mother" (Ex 20:12)

Have I disrespected or disobeyed my parents? Have I failed to be attentive to the needs and well-being of my family? Have I been the source of anxiety or conflict in my family? I dishonored and/or disrespected those in authority (ie teachers, coaches, officers, etc

5. "You shall not kill" (Ex 20:13)

Do I hold anger or hatred towards another? Have I deliberately harmed or killed another? Have I had an abortion, or encouraged someone to do so? Have I attempted suicide or seriously thought about it? Have I abused alcohol or drugs? Have I been reckless in driving? Have I mutilated myself (ie. cutting)? Have I slandered another's reputation through useless gossip?

6. "You shall not commit adultery" (Ex 20:14) and 9. "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife" (Ex 20:17)

Have I willfully entertained impure thoughts or desires? Have I aroused my desires by impure stares or inappropriate conversation? Have I used impure speech? Have I sought to read or watching something for the purposes of being aroused? Have I willfully viewed pornographic materials or media? Have I committed impure acts by myself (masturbation)? Have i committed impure acts with another? Have I dressed immodestly?

7. "You shall not steal" (Ex 20:15) and 10. "You shall not covet your neighbor's goods" (Ex 20:16)

Have I stolen, accepted stolen property or encouraged another to steal? Have I cheated? Have I willfully damaged or destroyed another's property? Have I wasted time at school or work? Have I neglected to care for the poor and the Church according to my means? Have I been envious of what other people have (family, beauty, possessions, talents, career, etc.)?

8. "You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Ex 20:16)

Have I lied or sworn falsely? Have I cheated? Have I gossiped or revealed private information about another without good reason? Have I exposed the mistakes or sins of another without necessity? Have I told disparaging lies about another person? Have I plagiarized? Have I lied, or omitted confessing mortal sins, in the Sacrament of Reconciliation



HOW TO GO TO CONFESSION

- **Begin by making the sign of the Cross and saying:**

"Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been ____ (weeks/months/years) since my last confession and these are my sins."

- **Confess your sins honestly and freely.**

Conclude by saying, *"for these and all of my sins I am truly sorry."*

- **Listen attentively to the Priest as he offers some advice and assigns you a penance**
- **Pray the Act of Contrition** (one you know of the one listed below)

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 my 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.

