

## SIMPLE STEPS FOR A GOOD CONFESSION

1. **Prepare.** Confession is more than just “wiping off the sins” from our souls. It expresses sadness for our failure to live as the children of God we have become in Baptism while at the same time looking forward to striving once again with God’s help to live up to that call. Prepare by reflecting on your life. Examine your conscience against the objective standards of our Christian living: the ten commandments, the beatitudes, the virtues, and the example of Jesus.
2. **Enter.** You will be greeted by the priest.
  - a. You begin with making the sign of the cross and saying, “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”
  - b. Then express why you are there, “Father, I have come seeking the Lord’s forgiveness for I have sinned.”
  - c. You may indicate some further information such as how long it has been since your last confession, your age, your state of life, or any other information that will help the priest in giving you counsel.
3. **Confess.** Then you confess your sins. For mortal sins, you must call them by name and indicate how frequently you’ve committed them. For venial sins, general information is sufficient. Don’t forget to mention the motivations that may have led you to commit these sins.
4. **Listen.** The priest will then seek to give you some advice to help you grow in virtue and to strengthen your moral life. At the end of which he will give you a penance which you are asked to accept.
5. **Sorrow.** Say the Act of the Contrition to express your intention to amend your life and turn away from sin.
6. **Absolution.** The priest next says the prayer of absolution that forgives your sins. Receive this forgiveness by making the sign of the cross when he says, “I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.”
7. **Thanksgiving.** As you leave the confessional forgiven, give thanks to God whose mercy knows no end!