

A Guide to Confession for Children

First, make a good examination of Conscience

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

- ▶ Do I give time every day to God in prayer?
- ▶ Do I put my trust in superstitions, good luck charms, rather than God alone?
- ▶ Have I rejected any Church teaching or denied that I was a Catholic?

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

- ▶ Have I used the words "God" or "Jesus" in anger or irreverently?
- ▶ Have I used foul or ugly language? Have I wished evil on another?

III. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.

- ▶ Have I missed Mass on Sunday or any holy day of obligation?
- ▶ Do I arrive at church late or leave early? Do I try to be reverent and pay attention during Mass?
- ▶ Do I avoid unnecessary work on Sunday?
- ▶ Do I make Sunday a day of prayer or rest?

IV. Honor your father and your mother.

- ▶ Do I respect and obey my parents?
- ▶ Have I dishonored or mistreated them by word or deed?
- ▶ Am I willing to help around the house or must I be nagged a hundred times?
- ▶ Do I try to get along with my brothers and sisters? Am I a tattletale or bully?
- ▶ Do I give a good example, especially to younger siblings?
- ▶ Do I respect others in authority: priests, nuns, police, old people, baby-sitters?

V. You shall not kill.

- ▶ Do I beat up others or hurt their bodies?
- ▶ Do I say cruel things, or make fun of others to hurt their feelings?
- ▶ Do I say mean things about others behind their backs?
- ▶ Have I stopped speaking to anyone? Do I encourage others to do bad things?
- ▶ Do I try to love all people, born and unborn?

VI. You shall not commit adultery.

- ▶ Do I treat my body and other people's bodies with purity and respect?
- ▶ Do I look at television shows, movies, or pictures that are bad?
- ▶ Am I modest in my speech and the clothes I wear?

VII. You shall not steal.

- ▶ Have I taken things that were not mine from a store or another person?
- ▶ Have I destroyed or misused another person's property for fun?
- ▶ Do I return things that I borrow? In good condition?

VIII. You shall not commit false witness against your neighbor.

- ▶ Am I honest in my school work?
- ▶ Do I tell lies to make myself look good?
- ▶ Do I tell lies to protect myself from punishment?
- ▶ Do I tell lies that make another person look bad or get them in trouble?

IX. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

- ▶ Do I allow my parents to spend time with one another, or do I get jealous and want them to pay attention only to me?
- ▶ Do I get mad when I have to share my friends?
- ▶ Are there kids I will not play with or be mean to because they look different?

X. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

- ▶ Am I jealous or envious of the things or abilities that others have?
- ▶ Am I thankful to God and my parents for what they have given me?
- ▶ Do I share the things I have with my family, friends and poor people?

Next, go to Confession

▶ **Find out when Confession is available (or make an appointment with a priest)**

▶ **Ask Jesus (in the Blessed Sacrament, if you can) to help you make a good confession**

▶ **How to “go to confession”**

- 1. Walk into the confessional (or reconciliation room) and either kneel behind the screen or sit facing the priest**
- 2. Make the sign of the cross, saying “Bless me Father, for I have sinned.”**
- 3. Tell the priest how long it has been since you last went to confession.**
- 4. Tell the priest what sins you have committed and how many times you have committed them, to the best of your knowledge.**
- 5. Tell the priest, “That is all I remember, Father.”**
- 6. If the priest asks you any questions, try to answer him honestly.**

7. **When the priest gives you a “penance,” try to remember exactly what it is he asks you to do.**
8. **Say the “Act of Contrition”:**

The Act of Contrition

Oh my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend you, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of your grace to sin no more, to amend my life, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Amen.

9. **While the priest prays the prayer of Absolution over you, pray that you receive the grace to turn your life more toward God. When the priest blesses you (at the end of the prayer), make the sign of the cross.**
10. **Leave the confessional (or reconciliation room) and do your penance.**