

## How to Go to Confession

- 1) The Priest will begin with the Sign of the Cross.
- 2) You say:  
**“Bless me Father for I have sinned, it has been \_\_\_\_\_ (weeks, months, years) since my last confession. These are my sins.”**
- 3) Confess all mortal sins that you have never confessed before. You may then confess venial sins as your conscience prompts you.
- 4) The Priest may give you counsel.
- 5) The Priest will give you a penance.
- 6) You now make an act of contrition in these or similar words:

**“O 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.”**

- 7) The Priest will now give you absolution.
- 8) Thank the priest and go perform your penance.

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## Mortal Sins

**An act is a mortal sin if all three of the following things were operative at the time of the behavior.**

- A. The act itself constituted grave matter (read through the following list)**
  - B. Done with knowledge that it was grave matter**
  - C. Done with full freedom**
- You are not culpable of mortal sin if either B or C did not apply at the time of the behavior: although confessing grave matter is still be beneficial.**

*What follows is a list of The Ten Commandments with their corresponding sins. Be sure to also examine your conscience for **sins of omission** (failure to do what God wants us to do).*

- 1. I Am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.**
  - Involvement in new age or occult practices, e.g., witchcraft, Ouija boards, séances, palm reading, tarot cards, hypnotism, divination, astrology, black magic, sorcery, horoscopes, etc.
  - Involvement in satanic, false, or pagan worship
  - Willfully denying the faith of the Catholic Church
  - Joining the Masons or other secret society

- Apostasy (leaving the Catholic Church)
  - Schism (leaving the Catholic Church and joining a different religion)
  - Getting married outside of the Catholic Church without the Church’s dispensation
  - Receiving the sacraments of Eucharist, Marriage, or Confirmation in a state of mortal sin
  - Failure to receive Holy Communion at least once per year (ideally, during the Easter Season)
  - Desecration of the Holy Eucharist
  - Presumption (intentionally committing a mortal sin while thinking that you can go to confession later)
  - Anger or hatred of God
  - Failure to pray daily
- 2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.**
    - Blasphemy (speaking ill of God)
    - Using God’s name in vain, such as: “O my G...”
    - Using profanity
    - Slander or insult of a priest or person representing God or the Church
    - Perjury (lying under oath)
  - 3. Remember to keep holy the Lord’s Day.**

- Missing Mass on Sunday or another Holy Day of Obligation without a serious reason
  - Doing unnecessary work on Sunday
  - Requiring others to do unnecessary work on Sundays
  - Intentional failure to fast or abstain on appointed days
- 4. Honor your father and mother.**
    - Failure to care for aged parents
    - Serious disrespect for or disobedience to parents, superiors or authorities
    - Abuse or neglect of children
    - Failure to baptize children in a reasonable time after birth
    - Neglect of the religious education and formation of children
  - 5. You shall not kill.**
    - Murder
    - Having an abortion
    - Performing, promoting, sympathizing or assisting someone in having an abortion
    - Voting for abortion rights
    - Willfully injuring or trying to hurt another person
    - Willfully leading another into serious sin
    - Driving dangerously (drunk, high, too tired, text messaging, distracted, etc.)
    - Willfully harboring hatred for another
    - Taking or selling illegal drugs

- Willful drunkenness
- Self-mutilation
- Excessive tattoos or body piercing
- Promotion of or involvement in euthanasia or assisted suicide
- Serious entertainment of suicidal thoughts
- Attempting or intending suicide
- Willful failure to bury the body or ashes of the dead
- Willful engagement in unjust lawsuits
- Bigotry (hatred of persons of other races or religions)
- Intentionally placing temptation before the weak
- Cruelty to animals
- Refusal to forgive

**6 & 9. You shall not commit adultery & You shall not desire your neighbor's wife.**

- Adultery
- Masturbation
- Viewing pornography or indecent shows/images
- Fornication (sexual acts between unmarried persons)
- Cohabitation (living with a lover outside of marriage)
- Sodomy (sexual acts between people of the same gender)
- Supporting homosexual “marriage” or romantic relationships
- Transvestism (cross-dressing)
- Incest

- Bestiality (sexual acts with animals)
- Anal sex or other degrading acts
- Prostitution
- Raping another
- Using contraception
- Onanism (during intercourse: intentional withdrawal before climax)
- Sterilization or agreeing to a spouse's sterilization
- Dressing or acting in a manner intended to cause sexual arousal in another (spouses excepted)
- Kissing or touching another passionately for the purpose of arousal, i.e. ‘making out’ or ‘necking’ (spouses excepted)
- Intentionally causing an orgasm outside of intercourse
- In-vitro fertilization or artificial insemination
- Selective reduction of embryos or fetuses in the womb
- Involvement in or support of human cloning
- Unjust divorce or desertion
- Polygamy
- Destroying the innocence of another by seducing or introducing them to immorality
- Lust in the heart (“if I could I would”)
- Reading sexually explicit materials
- Willfully entertaining impure thoughts

**7 & 10. You shall not steal & You shall not desire your neighbor's goods.**

- Stealing
- Buying, selling, receiving or concealing items known to be stolen
- Willfully destroying or vandalizing another's property
- Willful failure to make restitution (pay someone back)
- Failure to tithe to the Church
- Excessive gambling
- Serious failure to fulfill work requirements
- Padding expense or per diem accounts
- Taking advantage of the poor, simple, inexperienced or less fortunate
- Denying help to the poor, needy or destitute when able to help them easily
- Defrauding workers of their wages
- Defrauding creditors
- Bribery or taking bribes
- Blackmail
- Fraud or embezzlement
- Price fixing
- Tax evasion
- Forgery, cheating
- Excessive waste or expense
- Violating copyrights
- Pirating computer software
- Slavery
- Serious and willful greed or avarice

**8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

- Telling large or premeditated lies
- False witness or perjury (lying under oath)
- While in Confession, telling a lie or withholding a serious sin
- Serious gossip
- Detraction (revealing the faults of another without a serious reason)
- Calumny (harming the reputation of another by falsities)
- Violation of a confidence without good reason
- Being an accomplice to another's grave sin

**Seven Deadly Sins (Vices)**

1. Pride: vanity, judging others.
2. Envy: coveting of another's goods, family, career, talents as a person.
3. Greed: failure to share what we can both materially (financially) and in friendships, failure to support the needs of the church.
4. Gluttony: Overeating and too much: sugar, caffeine, nicotine, and alcohol. Any abuse or neglect of the body.
5. Wrath: anger, vengeance, intentionally hurting another.
6. Sloth: laziness and procrastination.
7. Lust: See commandments 6 & 9