

Hi everyone, this year you will get a chance to go to confession. If you are anything like me when I was your age, you might think that the whole thing is pretty weird, confusing and intimidating but don't worry, the more you grow in your faith and the more that you go to confession, the less scary it becomes. It might be intimidating when you go into the confessional, but the best thing to do is be honest with the priest. I prefer to sit sometimes I look at the priest, sometimes I stare at the floor, but one thing you need to remember is that the priest is in persona Christy which is just a complicated way of saying that you are speaking directly to God. After my first confession, I didn't go to confession for almost four years, so when I went, I sat down and said to the priest I have no clue what I am doing. And sometimes you'll get a really compassionate priest who will make you feel welcome, and other times your priest might not be very compassionate, and you might be a little bit afraid, and I am not going to lie sometimes I'll go to confession with a priest and be a little bit afraid. But know that it is not your fault when this happens. Priests have different gifts. Some of them are very gifted at hearing confessions, and others aren't, and that's totally okay because we can't all be good at everything. So you have sat down or knelt down on the kneeler, and you have either said, father, it has been two weeks or however long it might have been since my last confession, or you have said, father, I haven't been to confession for a while, and I don't know what to do can you please guide me through it. When I go to confession, I try to remember six rules!

1. Never go in without writing your confessions down. I have a journal that I take into my time of prayer before I go into confession so that as I go through my examination of conscience, I can take notes. I always do this because I don't know about you, but sometimes I get into the confessional, and my mind goes blank. The important thing to note is that you should not write your name on it, and you should make sure you don't lose it.
2. Always be sincere! How do you do this well... You might want to say please because you wouldn't walk up to your parents and say, mom, forgive me for hitting my brother. You would say, mom, please forgive me. So when I write out my sin, I might say, Lord, please forgive me for such and such I renounce the sin of such and such.
3. I take my time, sometimes there might be a long line of people waiting for confession, but you need to remember that confession is a huge gift! God is completely wiping your slate clean you get a fresh start. This is an incredible gift, and when you get an incredible gift, you don't just look at it

and say, oh cool, then move on. You take your time with it, so ignore everything happening outside the confessional, which means the room that confession is happening in and just focus on having a heartfelt conversation with you and God, which brings me to my 4th point.

4. Go often! Confession is a gift, and all we have to do is receive it! I personally make a habit of going every two weeks but try and go at least every two months. Going to confession will make you a better person because God's forgiveness works in incredible ways. When you confess something, you try and never commit that sin ever again. There are some sins that I have confessed 2 or 3 times that I have not done since. However, there are some sins that I confess almost every time, and that is okay. What matters is that you are trying your best to change.
5. Always have an act of contrition with you. Some priest asks you to make an act of contrition, and other don't but the point of it is to show God and tell him that you are really sorry and that you are taking this seriously. You can look one up online and write it down on a piece of paper or what I did is I wrote my own in my journal that I always bring to confession.
6. Finally, say the things that you are most nervous or embarrassed to say first because I promise you that priests have heard every sin under the sun, and God will Love you all the more for your honesty.

After you have confessed all your sins, the priest will give you a penance. It is crucial that you do it because it shows God that you really want his forgiveness. Sometimes a priest will tell you to pray a rosary other times, they might tell you to do something for a month or whatever it might be. I suggest that you always write it down so bring in a piece of paper and a pen.

Remember, some people might get emotional from going to confession, some people might feel like a weight has been taken off their shoulders, others might feel nothing out of the ordinary. Just remember that we don't go to confession because of how it makes you feel! You go to receive a gift that each and every one of us needs to be a better son or daughter of God.

I am now going to lead you through an examination of conscience so please grab a journal or pen and paper and find a space where no one can see what you are writing down. Once this video is done, take the time you need to finish examination!

Let us begin in the name of the father son and Holy Spirit Amen! Prayer to help us make a good confession...

Examination of conscience

Relationship with God

- Have I prayed every day?
- Have I been angry with God
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me whenever I have been tempted to sin?
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me do what is right?
- Do I go to mass every Sunday and holidays unless I was sick or had a really good reason?
- Am I putting too much focus on sports, my appearance or other things?
- Do I trust God?
- Do I say oh my God?
- Do I swear

Relationship with others

- Have I been obedient and respectful to my parents and teachers
- Have I talked back to my parents, teachers or other adults?
- Have I been selfish towards my parents, brother, sisters, teachers or my friends and schoolmates?
- Have I hated someone?
- Have I lied?
- Have I held grudges or not forgiven others?
- Have I cheated on my homework or other exams?
- Have I been kind and generous with my friends and family?
- Have I looked at pornographic pictures, books, or watched inappropriate movies?
- Do I fast on Ash Wednesday or Good Friday?
- Do I go to confession at least once a year?
- Do I gossip?
- Do I pray for my family and friends?
- Have I participated in impure activity with myself such as masturbation?
- Do I dress in a way that doesn't respect that I am a child of God
- Have I taken anything that is not mine?
- Am I jealous of others talents or possessions?