



The Sacrament of Reconciliation includes the following steps:

After **examining our conscience** and telling God of our sorrow, we go to the priest. We may kneel at the screen or sit to talk face-to-face with the priest.

1. The priest greets us, and **we pray the Sign of the Cross**. "*In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. My last confession was _____ weeks (months, years) ago.*" OR "*This is my first confession.*" The Priest invites us to trust in God. He may read God's Word with us.
2. **We confess our sins.** The priest may help and counsel us. He can never tell anyone our sins. After confessing all the sins we remember since our last confession, we may conclude by saying, "*I am sorry for these and all of my sins.*"
3. The priest talks with us about ways we can do better. **The priest gives us a penance** to perform. Penance is an act of kindness or prayers to pray, or both.
4. The priest asks us to express our sorrow, usually **we pray the Act of Contrition**. (We may read or recite an Act of Contrition like the ones below or use our own words.)

"Dear God, I am sorry for all my sins. I am sorry for the wrong things I have done. I am sorry for the good things I have failed to do. I will try to do better. Help me to show Your love. Amen."

"O my God, I am very sorry for all my sins, because they displease you, who are all-good and deserving of all my love. With your help, I will sin no more. Amen."

5. **We receive absolution.** Absolution is the sacramental forgiveness of the Church through the ordained priest. The priest says, "*I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.*" We make the sign of the cross and respond, "Amen."

6. If he closes by saying, "*Give thanks to the Lord for He is good,*" we answer, "*For His mercy endures forever.*" **The priest dismisses us** by saying, "*Go in peace.*"

7. We go forth and spend time in prayer and thanksgiving. **We give thanks to God** for forgiving us again. If we recall some serious sin we forgot to tell, we can rest assured that it has been forgiven with the others, but we need to be sure to confess it in our next Confession.

8. **We perform the act of penance** the priest has given us.

Resolve to return to the Sacrament of Reconciliation often. We Catholics are fortunate to have the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It is the ordinary way for us to have our sins forgiven. This sacrament is a powerful help to get rid of our weaknesses, grow in holiness, and lead a balanced and virtuous life.