

CONFESSION

**Small handbook - to help with
preparing your soul for the
confessional.**



Tibi soli peccavi “Against Thee only have I sinned”

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*Largely taken from
The Catholic prayer Book,
Burns and Oates 1891*

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I confess to almighty God, to blessed Mary ever Virgin, to blessed Michael the Archangel, to blessed John the Baptist, to the holy apostles Peter and Paul, and to all the saints that I have sinned exceedingly in thought word and deed, *through my fault, through my fault, through my most grievous fault.* Therefore I beseech blessed Mary every Virgin, blessed Michael the Archangel, blessed John the Baptist the holy apostles Peter and Paul and all the saints to pray to the Lord our God for me.

V. May almighty God have mercy upon you, forgive you your sins and bring you to life everlasting. Amen.

V. May the almighty and merciful Lord grant us pardon absolution and remission of our sins. Amen.

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Confession, or Penance, is one of the seven sacraments instituted by Jesus Christ, and is necessary for salvation to all those who have fallen into mortal sin after Baptism; hence it is called by the Holy Council of Trent A SECOND PLANK IN SHIPWRECK. In this sacrament Jesus Christ has deposited His precious Blood, as a life-giving fountain to cleanse our souls from the filth of sin, to heal them of their wounds, to strengthen and comfort them in their weaknesses and infirmities, and enrich them with His grace. This divine Blood is dispensed to us by the priest in the holy absolution, and is abundantly poured upon all those souls who come to Confession with proper dispositions. How fortunate are we, who are able at so small a cost to purchase paradise again, which we had lost through our own fault. For what does it cost you to receive this sacrament, by which your soul is cleansed from all its sins, even though they were more in number than the sins of all the world? Very dear did it cost our Lord to institute it, - no less than the scourging, the thorns, the nails, the cross, His blessed passion and death. But for you to reap the fruit of it all, one act of true sorrow, one tear of sincere repentance, one good Confession is sufficient. And what is requisite to make this good Confession? First, a careful examination of our conscience, aided by God's grace, which will enlighten us to know, and strengthen us to tell all our sins: secondly, a full and true confession of them to God's minister, who sits in the tribunal of penance, that he may comfort the sorrowing, and reconcile the repentant sinner to his God: thirdly, an act of sincere sorrow for every sin, and a firm steady resolution never again to offend Almighty God: lastly, the performance of our Sacramental Penance. Go, then, to Confession. By means of it, if you are in mortal sin, your soul is freed from the slavery of the devil; the chains of sin are broken; you gain once more grace and the gifts which had been lost through sin, and you obtain strength to preserve you from falling again. There is joy throughout Paradise, when a sinner confesses and turns with his whole heart to God.

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Even if you are not conscious of mortal sin go to Confession, for by frequent and good Confessions the soul becomes stronger in keeping clear the from the curse of sin, is enriched with an increase of grace and the gifts of the Holy Ghost; it is better disposed to receive the favours of God; acquires new light by which to recognise the temptations of the devil; and advances steadily in the sanctity which becomes a Christian.

PREPARATION FOR CONFESSION

Come, O Holy Ghost! fill the hearts of Thy faithful, and kindle in them the fire of Thy love.

V. Send forth Thy Spirit, and they shall be created.

R. And Thou shalt renew the face of the earth.

Let us pray

O God, who hast taught the hears of the faithful by the light of the Holy Ghost, grant that, by the gift of the same Spirit, we may be always truly wise, and ever rejoice in His consolation. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Our Father, Hail Mary.

PRAYER BEFORE COMMENCING THE EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE.

Behold me, O my Jesus, like another prodigal son at Thy feet, terrified at the number and enormity of my sins, not knowing where to turn for refuge, unless to Thy most sacred feet, there to confess them all, confiding in thy great mercy. O sweet Lord and Master, I have been truly ungrateful to Thee for the love and countless blessings Thou hast bestowed upon me, and particularly for Thy great patience with me. I deserve to find in Thee a severe judge, but instead of such, I feel consoled in looking upon Thee hanging from the Cross, with Thine arms extended, ready to receive me once more into Thy sacred Heart. Thy bleeding wounds invite me to repentance. Perfect, then, O my crucified

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Jesus, the work that Thine infinite charity towards my poor soul has begun, by calling me to repentance. Enlighten my understanding and refresh my memory, that I may be able to recall to mind all my sins, their number and circumstances. Inflammé my will with a lasting hatred for mortal sin, and a pure and burning love for Thee, O my sweet crucified Jesus.

O Mary, my ever pure and Immaculate Virgin Mother of Sorrows, assist and protect me. O holy guardian Angel, give me now, more than ever, thy powerful aid and care, that I may make a good confession, and obtain for me real and true contrition. Amen.

O most merciful God, I most humbly thank Thee for all Thy mercies unto me; and particularly at this time, for Thy forbearance and long suffering with me, notwithstanding my many and grievous sins. It is of Thy great mercy that I have not fallen into greater and more grievous sins than those which I have committed, and that I have not been cut off and cast into hell. O my God, although I have been so ungrateful to Thee in times past, yet now I beseech Thee to accept me, returning to Thee with an earnest desire to repent, and devote myself to Thee, my Lord and God, to praise Thy holy name for ever.

Receive my confession, and spare me, O most gracious Lord Jesus Christ, whom I, an unworthy sinner, am not worthy to name, because I have so often offended Thee. Rebuke me not in Thine anger, and cast me not away from Thy face, O good Jesus, who hast said that Thou wilt not the death of a sinner, but rather that he should be converted and live. Receive me, I beseech Thee, returning to Thee with a penitent and contrite heart. Spare me, O most kind Jesus, who didst die upon the cross, that Thou mightest save sinners. To whom shall I flee but unto Thee, my only hope and my salvation? Have mercy upon me, O most gracious Lord, and despise not the humble and contrite heart of Thy servant. Grant me, I beseech Thee, perfect contrition for my sins, that I may detest them with the deepest sorrow of heart. Send forth Thy light into my soul, and discover to me all those sins which I ought to confess at this time. Assist me by Thy grace, that I may be able to declare them to the priest Thy vicar, fully, humbly, and with a contrite heart, and so

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obtain perfect remission of them all through Thine infinite goodness. Amen.

O most gracious Virgin Mary, beloved Mother of Jesus Christ my Redeemer, intercede for me to Him. Obtain for me the full remission of my sins, and perfect amendment of life, to the salvation of my soul, and the glory of His name. Amen.

I implore the same grace of thee, O my Angel guardian; of you, my holy patrons N. and N.; of you, O holy Peter and holy Magdalen, and of all the Saints of God. Intercede for me a sinner, repenting of my sins, and resolving to confess and amend them. Amen.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE UPON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

The First Commandment.

“I am the Lord thy god,” &c. – Exodus XX.

Have you been guilty of heresy or disbelief, or wilful doubting of any article of faith? How often? And for how long a time? Or have you rashly exposed yourself to the danger of infidelity, by reading bad books, or keeping wicked company? How often?

Have you, by word or by deed, denied your religion, or gone to places of false worship, so as to join in any way in the worship, or to give scandal? How often?

Have you been ignorant of the articles of your creed, of the commandments, or any of those things which Christians in your station are bound to know? For how long a time?

Have you despaired of salvation, or of the forgiveness of your sins? Of have you rashly presumed upon finding mercy; going on in your sins, without any thoughts of amendment; or depending upon a death-bed repentance? How long have you been in this way?

Have you, after falling into mortal sin, neglected for a long time to turn to God by repentance? And for how long a time?

Have you committed anything that you judged or doubted to be a mortal sin, though perhaps it was not so? How often? Of have you

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exposed yourself to the evident danger of mortal sin? How often? and of what sin?

Have you been negligent in the worship of God? seldom or never adoring and praising Him, or giving Him thanks; praying but little, or with little attention; and neglecting to make acts of faith, hope, or love of God? How long has this negligence continued?

Have you made a sacrilegious Confession or communion, by concealing some mortal sin in Confession, or what you doubted might be mortal; for want of a hearty sorrow for your sins, and a firm purpose of amendment; or by being grossly negligent in the examination of your conscience? How often?

Have you received any other sacrament, for example, Confirmation, or Matrimony, in mortal sin?

Have you neglected to perform the penance enjoined in confession? or said it with wilful distraction? How often?

Have you been guilty of idolatry, or of giving divine honours to anything created, or used any witchcraft, or charms, or spells, or such like other diabolical inventions? How often? and with what scandal or ill example to others?

Have you employed prayers or sacred names to superstitious uses? How often?

Have you consulted fortune-tellers, or made use of any superstitious practices, to find out things to come, to recover things, lost, &c.? How often?

Have you given credit to dreams, taken notice of omens, or made any other superstitious observations? How often?

Have you blasphemed God or His Saints? How often?

Have you abused the Holy Scriptures, or scoffed at holy things? How often?

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The Second commandment.

“Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.”

Have you taken God’s name in vain, or used it without respect in common discourse? Have you taken a false oath, or sworn to what you did not certainly know whether it was true or false? Have you taken a rash oath, or without a sufficient reason? Have you taken an oath to do anything that was wicked or unlawful? or broken you lawful oaths? How often?

Have you had a custom of swearing rashly and inconsiderately by the name of God, by your soul, or by the way of imprecation upon yourself? How many times a day have you sworn in this manner? Have you sworn by the blood or wounds of God, or any other blasphemous oath? How often?

Have you cursed yourself or others, or anything else? and if so, was it from your heart? How often?

Have you been accessory to others swearing, cursing, or blaspheming? How often?

Have you made a rash vow, without sufficient knowledge or deliberation?

Have you broken any vow or solemn promise made to God? How often?

The Third Commandment.

“Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath-day.”

Have you neglected to keep holy the Sunday? Have you, when prevented from hearing Mass on Sundays and holydays, supplied the omission by prayers at home, and taken care that those under your charge did the same?

Have you done any servile work without necessity upon those days? or been accessory to others so doing? How often?

Have you spent those days in idleness or in sin? or been accessory to others spending them so? How often?

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The Fourth Commandment.

“Honour thy father and thy mother.”

If a Child. – Have you been wanting in your duty to your parents, by not loving them, or not showing them due respect: or by disobeying them? and was it in any matter of moment? Or have you been disobedient or disrespectful to any other lawful superiors? How often?

Have you desired your parents' death, or cursed them? Or given them injurious language? Or lifted up your hand against them? Or threatened them? Or provoked them to swear, or otherwise to offend God? Or caused them any considerable trouble or uneasiness? How often?

Have you stolen from your parents, or otherwise wronged them? Or squandered away their substance? How much, and how often?

Have you neglected to succour your parents in their necessities, either corporal or spiritual?

If a Parent – Have you been negligent in procuring that your children should be speedily baptized? Or that they should be timely instructed in their prayers and the Christian doctrine? Or have you been wanting in giving them early impressions of the fear and love of God? Or in taking care of their discharging their duty with regard to the sacraments?

Have you neglected to correct them, or been excessive in your correction?

Have you neglected to remove from them the occasions of sin, such as wicked companions, bad books, romances, &c.; or suffered them to lie in the same bed with one another, with danger to their chastity?

Have you flattered them in their passions, or indulged them in their evil inclinations?

Have you given them bad example? How often, and in what kind?

If a Servant – Have you disobeyed your master or mistress? Have you been wanting in diligence or industry? Have you injured or destroyed their property through carelessness or neglect? Or suffered others to injure them?

Have you stolen from them, or given anything away without their knowledge?

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Have you betrayed their confidence by revealing their secrets, by tale-bearing, by lies, &c.?

Have you obeyed or flattered them in anything sinful?

If a Master or Mistress – Have you neglected to watch over the conduct of your servants?

Have you refused, without necessity, to allow them time to hear Mass on Sundays and holydays, or to frequent the sacraments?

Have you overburdened them with work, or treated them injuriously?

The Fifth Commandment.

“Thou shalt not kill”

Have you been guilty of anger or violent passion? And if so, what scandal was given?

Have you desired any one’s death, through hatred or malice? or for your temporal interest? How often?

Have you revenged yourself of any one by word or action, or desired revenge, or taken pleasure in the thoughts of it? How often?

Have you provoked, challenged, or struck others, or been guilty of quarrelling or fighting with them? How often? and what mischief have you done them?

Have you borne malice to others, or refused to be reconciled to them? For how long a time?

And what sort of evil had you in your heart against them?

Have you procured, or thought to procure, a miscarriage? Or given any counsel, aid, or assistance thereunto? How often?

Have you done anything to shorten your own or any other’s life, or to hasten death? or rashly exposed yourself or others to danger? How often?

Have you desired your own death, through passion or impatience? Or entertained any thoughts of making away with yourself? or attempted or designed any such thing? How often?

Have you neglected to give alms according to your condition and ability? Or to reclaim sinners when it lay in your power? How often?

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Have you been guilty of any spiritual murder, by drawing others into mortal sin? Or have you been accessory to the sins of others, by counsel, or command, or provocation, or any other way? How often? And what sins?

Have you give scandal or occasion of sin to others, by lewd or irreligious discourse; by drunkenness or swearing; by immodesty of dress or behaviour, &c.?

N.B. – The circumstances of scandal is generally found in all sins that are known to others, by reason of the force of ill example, which encourages others to sin.

The Sixth Commandment.

“Thou shalt not commit adultery.”

Have you been guilty of any acts of impurity? (*Under this head, all sins against purity must be carefully examined, as well as whatsoever leads to their indulgence or commission.*) Have you been guilty of filthy talking? of reading immodest books? of indecency of dress? of looking at unchaste objects? of taking any dangerous or improper liberties?

N.B. – As the sins against this and the Ninth Commandment are most grievous, and at the same time, most various, the prudent counsel of your director will assist you, if necessary, in a more particular examination.

The Seventh Commandment

“Thou shalt not steal.”

Have you been guilty of stealing, or cheating, or in any way wronging your neighbour in buying or selling, or in any other bargains or contracts? Or have you been accessory to another’s committing any such injustice? How long? and to what value?

Have you unjustly retained what belonged to another? How long? And to what injury?

Have you caused any damage to your neighbour in his house, cattle, or other goods? How often?

Have you contracted debts without design of paying them; or without any prospect of being able to pay them? Or have you delayed or refused to pay your just debts when you were able? Or have you, by prodigal

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expenses, rendered yourself unable; and so wronged your creditors, or your own family? How often?

Have you been guilty of negligence in the securing or administering of trusts confided to your care, whether for ecclesiastical, charitable, or other purposes? Has any actual loss resulted from this negligence? To what extent? Have you been negligent in the administration of property otherwise entrusted to you, as guardian or administrator? If so, have others thereby suffered? To what extent?

Have you been guilty of usury in the loan of money? How often?

Have you put off false money? How much? How often?

Have you professed any art, or undertaken any business, without sufficient skill or knowledge? And what injury has your neighbour suffered from it?

Have you bought or received stolen goods? or taken of those who could not give? How often?

Have you neglected your work or business to which you were hired, or by contract obliged? How often? and to what injury? Or have you broken your promises in matters of consequence?

N.B. – In all sins of injustice, whereby you have done any wrong to your neighbour, either in his person or his goods, or in his character, honour, or good name, you are strictly obliged to make full satisfaction and restitution. If it be in your power; otherwise the sin will not be forgiven.

Have you, then, neglected or delayed, without just cause, to make satisfaction and restitution, when it was in your power? How long?

The Eighth Commandment

“Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour.”

Have you been guilty of telling lies? And whether in any matter of consequence, or to the injury of anyone? How often?

Have you been guilty of hypocrisy or dissimulation? How often?

Have you entertained a bad opinion of your neighbour without grounds, or judged rashly of his actions or intentions? How often?

Have you been guilty of backbiting, or uncharitable conversation, by speaking of the known faults of your absent neighbour? How often?

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Have you been guilty of the sin of detraction, which consists in taking away or lessening your neighbour's reputation by publishing his secret faults or defects? How often have you done so? From what motive? and before how many?

Have you been guilty of calumny, which consists in saying of your neighbour what is false or uncertain? How often? and before how many?

N.B. – In either case, you are obliged to restore his character as far as you are able.

Have you willingly given ear to detraction or calumny? Have you taken pleasure in it? Or in any way encouraged it? Or not hindered it when you might? How often?

Have you injured your neighbour's honour by reproaches and affronts, or robbed him of his peace of mind by scoffs and derision? How often?

Have you, by carrying stories backwards and forwards, or in any other way, caused mis-understanding or quarrels betwixt others? How often? and to what prejudice?

N.B. – Here, also, judges, lawyers, solicitors, &c., ought to examine themselves, what injustice they may have been guilty of in managing causes, &c.; as well as accusers, witnesses &c.

The Ninth Commandment.

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.”

Have you taken pleasure in any unchaste thoughts or imagination? Have you entertained any impure desires or feelings?

The Tenth Commandment.

“Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.”

Have you desired your neighbour's goods, no caring whether you had been right or wrong? Or been in a disposition of stealing, or otherwise wronged him, if it lay in your power? How often?

Have you desired your neighbour's loss or misfortune, or any public calamity, that you might be the gainer by it? How often?

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The Commandments of the Church.

- I. Have you neglected to keep holy the days of obligation? Have you worked on those days without necessity, and without leave from your pastor?
- II. Have you neglected to hear Mass on Sundays and holydays of obligation? or have you heard it with wilful distractions? or not taken care that your children and servants should hear it? How often?
- III. Have you broken the days of abstinence commanded by the Church? Or eaten more than one meal on fasting days? or been accessory to others so doing? How often?
- IV.,V Have you neglected to confess your sins once a year? Or to receive the Blessed Sacrament at Easter?
- VI. Have you solemnised marriage at the forbidden times? Have you married within the forbidden degrees of kindred? or with any other known impediment?

The Capital or Deadly Sins.

Pride. – Have you been guilty of pride, or complacency in yourself, or contempt of others? How often?

Have you been guilty of vainglory, by doing your actions to procure esteem? How often?

Have you taken delight in the esteem and applause of others? or have you been uneasy and discontented when you did not receive such esteem or applause? How often?

Covetousness. – Have you been guilty of covetousness, in desiring or loving too much the things of this world? Have you sought after them too eagerly? or been too much distressed at the loss of them? How often?

For the sins of Lust, see the Sixth Commandment.

For the sins of Anger, see the Fifth Commandment.

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Gluttony. – Have you been guilty of gluttony, by eating or drinking to excess, so as to endanger or injure your health or reason? How often? and with what scandal?

Have you indulged in inordinate gratification of your appetite? How often?

Have you made others drunk? or sought to make them so? or boasted of having made them so? How often?

Envy. – Have you envied or repined at your neighbour's good, either spiritual or temporal? or rejoiced at his harm? How often?

Have you been guilty of jealousy, in consequence of any attention or preference shown to others? Have you rejoiced to see them disappointed or mortified?

Sloth. – Have you been guilty of sloth, or laziness of mind or body, which has prevented you from discharging your duty? How often?

Have you neglected your spiritual duties? or discharged them with tepidity or indolence? Have you studied too much your own ease, leading an unmortified and unchristian life?

Have you squandered away much of your time in idleness or useless occupation?

Have you entertained with pleasure the thoughts of saying or doing anything which it would be a sin to say or do? How often?

Have you had the desire or design of committing any sin? What sin? How often?

Have you gloried in any sin whatsoever? How often? and before what company? and what sin?

N.B. – Here, also, masters and servants, husbands and wives, lawyers and physicians, ecclesiastics and magistrates, &c., ought to examine into the sins which are peculiar to their states, and how far they may have neglected the duties of their respective callings.

A PRAYER FOR OBTAINING CONTRITION

I have now here before me, O Lord, a sad prospect of the manifold offences, by which I have displeased Thy divine Majesty, and which I am assured will appear in judgment against me, if I repent not, and my soul be not disposed, by a hearty sorrow, to receive Thy pardon. But this

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sorrow, O Lord, this repentance must be Thy free gift, and if it comes not from the hand of Thy mercy, all my endeavours will be in vain, and I shall be for ever miserable. Have mercy, therefore, on me, O Father of mercies, and pour forth into my heart Thy grace, whereby I may sincerely repent of all my sins; give me a true contrition, that I may bewail my past misery and ingratitude, and grieve from my heart for having offended Thee, so good a God. Permit me not to be deluded with a false sorrow, as, I fear, I have been too often, through my own of the Father of lights, that so my repentance may be accompanied with amendment and change of life, and I may be fully acquitted from the guilt of all my sins, and once more received in to the number of Thy servants. Through Christ our Lord. Amen.

My Jesus, now that Thy mercy has brought me to Thy feet, would that I might die of true sorrow, would that I might breather forth my soul with true contrition for my great ingratitude! Yes, my Jesus, may my sinful body die, that my soul may live: I ask it of Thee by the fruit of that most precious Blood which has been shed from Thy sacred wounds.

O my God, see me prostrate at the foot of the Cross; sprinkle with the adorable Blood of Thy Son! That Blood pleads for me, and implores from Thee mercy and forgiveness. It asks Thee to grant me a lasting hatred for sin, and to inflict on me the severest punishment rather than that I should once again lose Thy grace by mortal sin. O Father of mercies, behold Thy Son crucified and dead in satisfaction for my sins. In His name, by the merits of His sacred passion, by His scourging and crowning with thorns, by His Blood, His agony, His death, look upon my sinful soul with an eye of pity and compassion; give me an exceeding and hearty contrition for my sins. I repent of them, O Lord, I am sorry for them from the bottom of my heart.

I am grieved above every other evil, for having offended Thine infinite goodness, for having offended Thee, who art the sovereign good, the fountain and author of all good, who art infinitely perfect, and worthy of being adored, loved, obeyed, served, and honoured; while I, a miserable and vile creature, instead of serving, honouring, loving, and obeying Thee, have outraged Thee and abandoned Thee. I have

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transgressed Thy most sacred law by following the sinful and shameful inclinations of my own corrupt heart and perverse will.

Ah! would that I might die of grief at Thy feet, O my crucified Jesus, for having offended Thee, and for having caused Thy cruel death by my sins.

I firmly resolve, by the assistance of Thy holy grace, to be willing to suffer any punishment rather than offend Thee again. Yes, my God, I desire to abandon every occasion of sin; I desire to be converted, and to commence a new and virtuous life, with the assistance of Thy grace; I desire to love Thee with my whole heart and soul, and to die sooner than offend Thee.

When entering the Confessional, kneeling down make the sign of the Cross saying:

Bless me Father for I have sinned, I last went to confession.....ago and since then I accuse myself of.....

Tell the priest all your sins and the circumstances where relevant.

At the conclusion of the confession say “For these and all other sins at this time I cannot remember I am heartily sorry and purpose amendment for the future, I humbly beg pardon of God and ask penance and absolution of you Father.”

When the priest tells you say in an audible voice the act of contrition.

Act of Contrition

Oh my Jesus my love I love Thee Above all things and repent with My whole heart for having offended Thee. Never permit me to separate myself from Thee again. Grant that I may love Thee always And do with me as Thou wilt.

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Penance

Do you penance straight away so it is not forgotten. Be careful to perform your penance in due time, and in a penitential spirit.

After Confession, give God thanks for having admitted you, by means of this sacrament, to the grace of reconciliation, and received you like the prodigal child returning home; make an offering of your Confession to Jesus Christ, begging pardon for whatever defects you may have been guilty of in it; offering up your resolutions to your Saviour, and asking grace that you may fulfill them.

Thanksgiving

Oh ALMIGHTY and most merciful God, who, according to the multitude of Thy tender mercies, hast vouchsafed once more to receive Thy prodigal child, after so many times going astray from Thee, and to admit me to this sacrament of reconciliation; I give Thee thanks with all the powers of my soul for this and all other mercies, graces, and blessings bestowed on me; and prostrating myself at Thy sacred feet, I offer myself to be henceforth for ever Thine. Oh! let nothing in life or death ever separate me from Thee. I renounce with my whole soul all my treasons against Thee, and all the abominations and sins of my past life. I renew my promises made in Baptism, and from this moment I dedicate myself eternally to Thy love and service. Oh! grant that for the time to come I may abhor sin more than death itself, and avoid all such occasions and companies as have unhappily brought me to it. This I resolve to do, by the aid of Thy divine grace, without which I can do nothing. I beg Thy blessing upon these my resolutions, that they may not be ineffectual, like so many others I have formerly made; for; O Lord, without Thee I am nothing but misery and sin. supply also, by Thy mercy, whatever defects have been in this my Confession, and give me grace to be now and always a true penitent, through the same Jesus Christ Thy Son. Amen.

I return to Thee, O Lord Jesus, and give Thee thanks that Thou hast been pleased to cleanse me from the foul leprosy of my sins. Blessed by Thy name, O Lord, for ever and ever. Truly Thou are a Saviour who

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rejectest none that come unto Thee seriously desiring to repent, but receivest them into Thy favour, and numberest them with Thy children. I acknowledge and adore Thy mercy, and dedicate myself wholly to Thy service hereafter. Assist my weakness, and suffer me not again to fall into my past sins and to be separated from Thee; but so bind my heart and soul to Thee with the cords of Thy love, that I may say with the Apostle, "Who shall separate me from the love of Christ?"

Oh MY Sweet Jesus, behold me at Thy sacred feet, though I deserve it not, cleansed by Thy loving mercy of my most grievous sins. No, I do not deserve to be restored to Thy friendship, after having so often despised Thee; I am indebted for all to Thy merits, Thy goodness. Ah! my sweet Jesus, how grateful I ought to be to Thee! Thou, who wast wholly innocent, didst shed the last drop of Thy most precious Blood, suffer the greatest torture of pain, and die overwhelmed with anguish upon a Cross in order to obtain this absolution for me; whilst I, who am guilty, have done nothing more than make a poor act of contrition. O most merciful Jesus, what return can I make to Thee for so great a benefit? O Thou, Mary ever immaculate, and ye blessed Angels and Saints of Paradise, help me to thank God for this great mercy to me, obtain for me the grace never to separate myself from Him any more, never to offend Him any more, but to be constant in the resolution I have made, and which now renew, to love, adore, and serve Him to the hour of my death.

Grant, O dearest Jesus, that I may never again lose the fruit of Thy most precious blood. Grant that I may die a thousand deaths rather than ever again commit a mortal sin and offend Thy great goodness.

Ah! whatever kind of death Thou hast destined for me, do not permit me, most loving Jesus, to lose my poor soul, by relapsing again into mortal sin, which has caused Thee so much suffering. Amen.

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Satisfaction

SATISFACTION, or Sacramental Penance, is a punishment imposed by the Confessor, when he has heard the sins of the penitent. In the ancient Canons of the Church the most severe penances were imposed for the single grievous sin; and this, moreover, for years and years. But at present the Church has tenderly moderated this severity, and Confessors impose very light penances, which consist for the most part of a few prayers, some slight mortifications, or some good works. Nevertheless, though the fervour of Christians has cooled, the malice of sin is not changed, nor the law of divine justice: so that besides accepting and performing the penance given you in confession, you would do well to add something more of your own accord, by which to satisfy the justice of God. It is surely not great thing, after many sins, to submit to a penance of short duration. If Christians had real faith, instead of being careless in the performance of their penance, they would ask for more, since by sacramental penance we pay off more of our debt than by penance of our own choosing; because sacramental penance receives an especial value and power from the sacrament and from the merits of Jesus Christ.

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