

SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (CONFESSION)



The Sacrament of Reconciliation offers us the opportunity to reflect on the areas in our lives where we have failed to be the people God has created us to be and to bring these failures to God in humility and confidence that God loves us. In all our parishes (Daysland, Heisler and Killam) we hold two communal celebrations of reconciliation during the penitential seasons of Advent and Lent. Always few priests from other parishes are available for confession at these services.

*It's because of God's promise of grace that we can take a hard look at our sins. Lord invites us to transparently confess our sins, our brokenness and our emptiness to Him. **Take a time and come to the church to confess your sins** to the Lord in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. Ask the Holy Spirit to bring to mind the ways you have failed to love your God, your family, your neighbor and yourself.*

We need your healing, merciful God: give us true repentance. Some sins are plain to us; some escape us, some we cannot face. Forgive us; set us free to hear your word to us; set us free to serve you.

How to go to Confession

1. There are no special words you need to say. Greet the priest, make the sign of the cross and tell him how long it has been since your last confession. You might use these or similar words: "**Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been (state how long) since my last confession. These are my sins.**"
2. Tell your sins simply and honestly to the priest. You might even want to discuss the circumstances and the root causes of your sins and ask the priest for advice or direction. Make sure to tell the priest when you finished confessing your sins. You might say: "**These are all the sins I remember. I am sorry for all my sins and I ask for your penance and absolution, Father**".
3. Listen to the advice the priest gives you and accept the penance from him. Wait for the Prayer of Absolution by priest and then make an Act of Contrition for your sins.
4. The priest will then dismiss you with the words of praise or simply he might say: "Thank you".
5. Spend some time with Our Lord thanking and praising Him for the gift of His mercy. Try to do your penance as soon as possible.

ACT OF CONTRITION

**Oh 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. Amen.**

God forgives you. Forgive others; forgive yourself.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE FOR ADULTS

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

- Do I give God time every day in prayer?
- Do I seek to love Him with my whole heart?
- Have I been involved with superstitious practices or have I been involved with the occult?
- Do I seek to surrender myself to God's word as taught by the Church?
- Have I ever received communion in the state of mortal sin?
- Have I ever deliberately told a lie in Confession or have I withheld a mortal sin from the priest in Confession?
- Are there other "gods" in my life? Money, Security, Power, People, etc.?

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

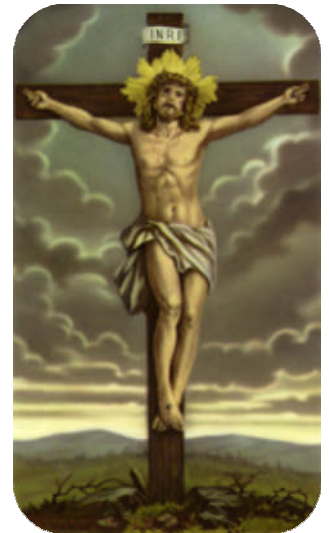
- Have I used God's name in vain: lightly or carelessly?
- Have I been angry with God?
- Have I wished evil upon any other person?
- Have I insulted a sacred person or abused a sacred object?

3. ***Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.***

- Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation?
- Have I tried to observe Sunday as a family day and a day of rest?
- Do I do needless work on Sunday?

4. ***Honor your father and your mother.***

- Do I honor and obey my parents?
- Have I neglected my duties to my spouse and children?
- Have I given my family good religious example?
- Do I try to bring peace into my home life?
- Do I care for my aged and infirm relatives?



5. ***You shall not kill.***

- Have I had an abortion or encouraged or helped anyone to have an abortion?
- Have I physically harmed anyone?
- Have I abused alcohol or drugs?
- Did I give scandal to anyone, thereby leading him or her into sin?
- Have I been angry or resentful?
- Have I harbored hatred in my heart?
- Have I mutilated myself through any form of sterilization?
- Have I encouraged or condoned sterilization?
- Have I engaged, in any way, in sins against human life such as artificial insemination or in vitro fertilization?
- Have I participated in or approved of euthanasia?

6. ***You shall not commit adultery.***

- Have I been faithful to my marriage vows in thought and action?
- Have I engaged in any sexual activity outside of marriage?
- Have I used any method of contraception or artificial birth control in my marriage?
- Has each sexual act in my marriage been open to the transmission of new life?
- Have I been guilty of masturbation?
- Do I seek to control my thoughts and imaginations?
- Have I respected all members of the opposite sex, or have I thought of other people as mere objects?
- Have I been guilty of any homosexual activity?
- Do I seek to be chaste in my thoughts, words, and actions?
- Am I careful to dress modestly?

7. ***You shall not steal.***

- Have I stolen what is not mine?
- Have I returned or made restitution for what I have stolen?
- Do I waste time at work, school, and home?
- Do I gamble excessively, thereby denying my family of their needs?
- Do I pay my debts promptly?
- Do I seek to share what I have with the poor?
- Have I cheated anyone out of what is justly theirs, for example creditors, insurance companies, big corporations?

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

- Have I lied? Have I gossiped?
- Do I speak badly of others behind their back?
- Am I sincere in my dealings with others?
- Am I critical, negative or uncharitable in my thoughts of others?
- Do I keep secret what should be kept confidential?
- Have I injured the reputation of others by slanders?



9. ***You shall not desire your neighbor's wife.***

- Have I consented to impure thoughts?
- Have I caused them by impure reading, movies, television, conversation or curiosity?
- Do I pray at once to banish impure thoughts and temptations?
- Have I behaved in an inappropriate way with members of the opposite sex: flirting, being superficial, etc.?

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

- Am I jealous of what other people have?
- Do I envy the families or possessions of others?
- Am I greedy or selfish?
- Are material possessions the purpose of my life?



Our participation in the Sacrament of Penance recognizes our need to reconcile ourselves to the loving call of God as we recognize how our sins hurts and destroys the Body of Christ as we hurt each other.

Children should receive the sacrament more often in order to better appreciate this gift of reconciliation and to teach them not to be apprehensive about this gift of reconciliation.

What is the Sacrament of Reconciliation?

Reconciliation is the sacrament of God's loving forgiveness by which we are set free from sin. This sacrament also helps us to grow in God's

grace. It strengthens us to avoid sin and to lead holier lives, and reconciles us with the Church which we have wounded by our sins.

What five steps are necessary for receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation worthily?

The five steps necessary for receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation worthily are:

1. Examination of conscience (*review your life to see how you offended God*);
2. Contrition – imperfect or perfect (*the person must be sorry for his or her sins*);
3. Resolution (*to amend one's life and avoid the near occasions of sin in the future*);
4. Confession (*telling the sins to the priest*);
5. Acceptance of penance (*satisfaction for sins*).

How often should we receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation? The Church commands us to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation (confession) at least once a year (recommended time: Lent and Easter season), if we have a serious sins. All mortal sins must be confessed but we may also confess venial sins and faults. In other words, all that which keeps us from drawing closer to God is subject matter for confession.

Is it beneficial to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation frequently, even if we committed only venial sins? It is an excellent practice to receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation frequently. Even if we have no serious sins to confess, this sacrament helps us to realize that all sin offends God. It helps us to know and correct our faults, to grow in grace and love of God and neighbor, and to strengthen our will power and self-control. It helps us to become better Catholics.

What is sin? Sin is disobedience to God's law.

What is mortal sin? Mortal sin is serious offense against God's law. A sin is serious or mortal when these three conditions are present:

1. It regards a serious wrong (serious, important matter).
2. Before or while committing it, the person clearly is aware (knows) that it is something wrong.
3. The person freely gives full consent to it.

What is a venial sin? A sin is venial when one of the conditions for a mortal sin is missing.

Prayer Before Confession

O Lord, grant me light to see myself as You see me and the grace to be truly sorry for my sins. O Mary, help me to make a good confession.