

# RECONCILIATION

March 14, 2021

Fourth Sunday  
In Lent



The Sacrament of Reconciliation and Penance is one of the most powerful means of grace Jesus has left to his Church. All of us have fallen short of God's commandments and sinned against him and our neighbors. But through the ministry of his priests God offers his mercy and forgiveness so that we can come to enjoy the blessings of his love and look forward to eternal life with him.

The charism of the forgiveness of sins was given to the Apostles (cf. John 20:21-23)

and their successors, the bishops. This gift is shared with priests who offer it freely to all who approach Christ with a contrite heart.

"THEN I DECLARED MY SIN TO YOU;  
MY GUILT I DID NOT HIDE.  
I SAID, 'I CONFESS MY  
TRANSGRESSION TO THE LORD,'  
AND YOU TOOK AWAY THE GUILT  
OF MY SIN."

:: Psalm 32:5

Making a good confession is simple:

1. Make a thorough examination of conscience by reviewing your life since your last confession. The

10 Commandments and the Beatitudes are two useful means for determining where you have fallen short of the life of holiness.

2. If you have trouble remembering the Act of Contrition, [print out a copy to read from](#) when you go into the confessional.

3. When you go into the confessional, state your sins clearly. You do not need to explain the circumstances of your sins; if the priest

has any questions, he will ask.

4. Listen to the priest as he offers advice, assigns a penance, and pronounces the words of absolution. If



Watch the video:

[youtu.be/0DVBr1VLwfM](https://youtu.be/0DVBr1VLwfM)

the penance is unclear or you have any questions, just ask!

5. After leaving the confessional, do your penance as soon as possible and rejoice in the gift of mercy you have received!

St. Paul admonishes us to “be reconciled to God.” (2 Corinthians 5:20) During this Lenten season, as we continue to walk in the desert and practice our penances, bring your sins before the Lord and ask for his mercy. He is waiting with love and joy for you!



“THE REGULAR CONFESSION OF OUR VENIAL SINS HELPS US FORM OUR CONSCIENCE, FIGHT AGAINST EVIL TENDENCIES, LET OURSELVES BE HEALED BY CHRIST AND PROGRESS IN THE LIFE OF THE SPIRIT.”

:: *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1458

### Family Discussion Questions

1. Why do you think God is so eager for us to ask for forgiveness — and to extend forgiveness to others?
2. How do you feel when you receive forgiveness from someone you have wronged, such as a family member?
3. What is keeping you from receiving the Sacrament of Reconciliation more often? What would help to overcome those obstacles?

### Family Challenge

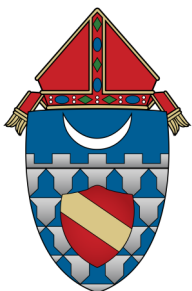
Make a plan to regularly go to Confession as a family! Choose a schedule that makes sense for you (every one or two months is sufficient for most families) and then put it down in your calendar so you don't forget!

### Additional Videos

- Why Confess My Sins to a Priest?: [youtu.be/xtvjmsPmVpw](https://youtu.be/xtvjmsPmVpw)
- DOs and DONTs of Confession: [youtu.be/aOXOmA4blde](https://youtu.be/aOXOmA4blde)

### Other Resources

- [Examination of Conscience](#) (USCCB)
- [The Name of God Is Mercy](#) by Pope Francis (Random House, 2016)
- [Going to Confession](#) by Fr. Lawrence G. Lovasik SVD (Catholic Book Publishing, 1986)



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