

Remember: It takes a good person to admit that he or she makes mistakes. You are not bad because you go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. You are a good person trying to become even better.

HELPS FOR CONFESSION

1. Think back to your last Confession. Did you forget to say something? Did you purposely not say something that you should have?
2. PREPARE for confession. If necessary, write on a slip of paper or an index card what you want to say.
3. Don't forget that there exist a) sins of commission: bad things that you shouldn't have done, and b) sins of omission: good things that you should have done, but didn't.
4. Be specific (i.e., "I told a lie," "I stole something").
5. Don't mention other people's names or talk about other people. They have to go to confession for themselves.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF PREPARATION FOR CONFESSION

FIRST COMMANDMENT: 'I am the Lord thy God: Thou shalt have no other Gods before me.'

- Have I loved God as much as I should?
- Have I been more interested in my own will rather than God's?
- Have I failed to pray sincerely and regularly?
- Have I believed in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
- Have I failed to trust in God and His mercy?
- Have I complained against God in adversity?
- Have I used or believed in psychics, card-readers, astrologers and horoscopes?
- Have I been thankful for God's blessings?
- Have I doubted the Christian faith and the teachings of the Church?
- Have I tried to serve God and keep His Commandments?
- Have I given way to superstition?
- Have I frequented the religious meetings of heretics and schismatics?
- Have I neglected my duties to God through fear of ridicule or persecution?

SECOND COMMANDMENT: 'Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image.'

- Have I put another person or object before God in my life?
- Have I been insincere about my religion?
- Have I made an idol of any person or thing, or of myself or my appearance?
- Have I given to anyone or anything the worship that is due to God alone?
- Have I set before myself the holy life of Jesus and tried to imitate Him?
- Have I read the Holy Scriptures regularly?
- Have I neglected to receive Holy Communion on Sundays or without due preparation?

THIRD COMMANDMENT: 'Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord in vain.'

- Have I paid proper attention to holy persons and things?
- Have I broken any solemn promises?
- Have I profaned the holy name of God in any way?
- Have I cursed anyone or anything, or sworn a false oath?
- Have I failed to give proper reverence to holy persons or things?

- Have I had due respect for the clergy of the Church or hindered them in performing God's work?
- Have I broken any solemn vow or promise?
- Have I entered into any unlawful contract or made an unlawful promise?

FOURTH COMMANDMENT: 'Remember the Sabbath Day to keep it holy.'

- Have I always kept Sunday as it ought to be kept?
- Have I stayed away from Church on Sundays or prevented others from going?
- Have I done unnecessary work on Sundays?
- Have I spent the day in unwholesome fashion or profaned it by improper conduct?
- If I could not go to Church because of illness or other grave cause, have I prayed at home?
- Have I caused anyone else to profane the Lord's Day?
- Have I kept the Fasts and Feast Days prescribed by the Church?

FIFTH COMMANDMENT: 'Honor thy father and thy mother.'

- Have I argued disrespectfully with my parents?
- Have I respected my parents and been obedient to them?
- Have I been guilty of deception, or caused them pain by my words or actions?
- Have I neglected them or failed to help them?
- Have I done my duty towards my family?
- Have I been wanting in love or kindness towards my mate or harmed my mate in any way?
- Have I set my children a good example and tried to bring them up properly?
- Have I corrected their faults with patience and not with anger?
- Have I over-indulged and spoiled them?
- Have I neglected my God-children and failed in my obligations toward them?
- Have I worked for my employers honestly and diligently?
- Have I treated fairly all those who have worked for me?
- Have I honored the Church as my spiritual mother by honoring and practicing my religion in accordance with her teachings?

SIXTH COMMANDMENT: 'Thou shalt not kill.'

- Have I harmed others by ridicule & sarcasm or contempt & stubbornness?
- Have I fought with my family and friends?
- Have I caused the injury or death of any one, or wished that they or I were dead?
- Have I done anything to shorten my own life or that of someone else by injuring health, or through evil and intemperate living?
- Have I given way to anger, or harmed others with words or actions?
- Have I defamed others who needed help, or failed to stand up for those unjustly treated?
- Have I been cruel to anyone or have I mistreated or destroyed any life unnecessarily?
- Have I failed to forgive anyone or harbored evil thoughts against them?

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT: 'Thou shalt not commit adultery (or infidelity).'

- Have I given way to impure thoughts, words, or deeds?
- Have I committed any unworthy actions alone or with others?
- Have I masturbated or been involved in sexual acts outside of male/female marriage?
- Have I degraded myself in any way, or forgotten human dignity?
- Have I read immoral books or magazines, or delighted in obscenity of any kind?
- Have I associated with bad companions or frequented unsavory places?
- Have I eaten or drunk or smoked too much? Have I been intoxicated while driving?
- Have I been lazy, idle, or wasted my time?
- Have I led others to commit sinful acts, with me or others?
- Have I been unfaithful to any trust confided in me?
- Have I dressed in such a way that would incite lust?

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT: 'Thou shalt not steal.'

- Have I ever stolen or wished to do so, or shared in stolen goods?
- Have I given to my Church what I know I can afford to give?
- Have I kept anything that did not belong to me?
- Have I bought or kept more material goods or money than I need, and refused, or never thought, to give the rest of it to the poor?
- Have I tried honestly to find owners of lost articles I have found?
- Have I cheated anyone?
- Have I paid my debts?
- Have I lived within my income, and not wastefully and extravagantly?
- Have I given to charitable causes in proportion to my means?
- Have I been honest and upright?

NINTH COMMANDMENT: 'Thou shalt not bear false witness.'

- Have I exaggerated or let others take the blame?
- Have I told lies, or added or subtracted from the truth?
- Have I made careless statements or spoken evil of anyone?
- Have I told any secrets entrusted to me, or betrayed anyone?
- Have I gossiped about anyone or harmed their reputation?
- Have I concealed the truth, assisted in carrying out a lie, or pretended to commit a sin of which I was not guilty?
- Have I tried to see the good in others rather than their shortcomings?

TENTH COMMANDMENT: 'Thou shalt not covet.'

- Have I envied anything good that has come to others?
- Have I been jealous of another's good fortune?
- Have I wished for anything that was another's?
- Have I damaged or destroyed the property of others?
- Have I wished for things God has not given me, or been discontented with my lot?
- Have I been stingy?
- Have I held back anything due another?
- Have I hoped for the downfall of anyone so that I might gain by it?
- Have I failed to be gracious and generous to anyone?
- Have I expected God to give me that which I would refuse one of my fellow men