



# How Do You Make A Good Confession?

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IN ORDER TO MAKE A GOOD CONFESSION, THERE ARE FOUR THINGS THAT MUST BE DONE  
BEFORE ENTERING THE CONFESSIONAL

## I. PRAY

God's grace preceeds any good action; so, if we want our confession to be good, we must heartily pray for the grace to make a good confession. A simple prayer can be:

*My dear Lord, you know that I love You and want to make a good confession. I can do nothing good without You, so please help me make good confession. Help me remember all of my sins. Grant me the courage to tell them to the priest. Help me to be truly sorry for them and grant me the strength to never sin again and the prudence to avoid their near occasion. My dear Blessed Mother, pray for me and help me make a good confession. My dear Guardian Angel, ever at my side, help me to remember all of my sins. My dear [Patron Saint], beseech Our Lord to grant me perfect contrition for all of my sins.*

## II. EXAMINE YOUR CONSCIENCE

We cannot confess our sins and receive God's absolution until we have found them out. This requires an honest and careful examination of your life since your last confession. This takes time and should not be rushed. Every grave sin needs to be confessed, along with the number of times committed. You can find a number of age appropriate 'Examinations of Conscience' on the Alcuin Institute webpage.

## III. BE SORROWFUL

Contrition (or sorrow) is an essential element of making a good confession. Without contrition our sins shall not be forgiven. We can obtain contrition by praying for it and by cultivating sorrow by considering:

- (i) how our sins disfigure and mar our once beautiful souls*
- (ii) the just punishments for our sins, namely the horrors of hell and purgatory*
- (iii) the excruciating torments endured by Christ for our sins, and*
- (iv) how our sins displease and offend our good and all loving Father.*

## IV. RESOLVE NEVER TO SIN AGAIN

During your examination of conscience reflect upon your major sins and make a mental note of the circumstances that surrounded those sins. Any authentic resolution to amend one's life requires that we not only make a promise to avoid committing those sins but also to avoid the people, places, and situations that tend to cause us to perform those sinful acts.