

Need Help Making a Good Confession?

Guidelines for Older People

Going to the Sacrament of Reconciliation (Confession) is not difficult, but it does require preparation.

You begin with prayer, placing yourself in the presence of God, our loving Father. You want to find healing and forgiveness through being repentant and firmly resolving to sin no more.

Review your life since your last confession, searching your thoughts, words and actions for that which did not conform to God's command to love Him and one another through His laws and the laws of His Church. This is called an 'examination of conscience.'

Family

- Do I try to both talk *and listen* with an open heart to my family members?
- Have I had a smile for family members and loved ones, or am I critical, hurting someone's feelings?
- Am I grateful to those who look after me and visit me?
- Have I paid attention to my family's concerns, worries, and problems, or do I prefer to talk about my own?
- Am I at peace with everyone in my family?
- Do I apologize and forgive quickly?
- Do I always look for the best in people I encounter?

Friends

- Have I been a busybody, or unkind to a neighbor either by my thoughts or by my actions?
- Do I try to encourage and bless others? Or do I criticize them and act disappointed in them?
- Do I try to listen to those around me and to learn from them, or am I selfish and preoccupied with myself all the time?
- Do I give to the poor wherever they may be?

- Have I used my physical limitations as an excuse for laziness?
- Have I been immoderate in any activity: eating, drinking, smoking, or watching too much TV?
- Did I criticize my doctor, my caretaker, my child, for not serving me better?

Faith

- Do I give more of my time to prayer than I used to do, to thanking God for everything, even my old age?
- Do I try to read Sacred Scripture regularly?
- Have I read any spiritual books or religious literature, or attended any events to learn more about my faith?
- Do I believe that I have no need of confession, because I'm old and never even leave my home?
- Do I pray for a deeper faith, a greater trust, and a yearning love for God above all?

<h4>Helpful tips</h4>

- If you find yourself forced by health or circumstances to remain indoors; if you are confined to a hospital or rehabilitation center or nursing home; even if the confinement is temporary—take time to grow in your faith.
- You have a unique opportunity to grow in prayer and in godliness, and to devote more time to that which is truly important, your relationship with God.
- Choose your reading material carefully, and be sure to include the Scriptures and some inspirational reading or music.
- Use this valuable time to reconnect with God in prayer—pray for your family, pray for the reparation of sins, pray for the conversion of a loved one, for our leaders, for world peace.
- Pray for the grace to acknowledge your shortcomings, and for the will to overcome them.

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