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# Three Moments of Forgiveness

## One: An Examination of Conscience

In preparing to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we take some quiet time to reflect on our lives since our last confession. We call to mind all our sins, venial and mortal.

## Two: The Celebration of the Sacrament

Empowered by Christ to forgive sins in His name (John 20:22-23) the priest represents God and the Church, and so receives our confession, speaking forgiveness in the name of Christ and the community.

## Three: Penance and Satisfaction

After celebrating the sacrament, we go forth, striving to amend our lives. We do penance, making up for our sins, and seeking God's grace that we might avoid sin in the future.

*Jesus said, "Neither do I condemn you. Go, and from now on do not sin anymore. (John 8:11)"*

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# Examining One's Conscience

1. Is God truly the Lord and Master of my life? Do I sometimes put things and events ahead of God, in ways that I shouldn't? Do I work to strengthen and nourish my faith? Have I neglected private prayer in my daily life? Have I indulged in superstition, such as astrology, psychics, or crystals?

2. Have I shown disrespect to the name of God, or of Mary and the saints? Have I been true to any vows I have taken? Have I tried to imitate the saint whose name I bear? Have I sworn by God's name falsely or rashly?

3. Have I failed to attend Mass regularly on Sunday and Holydays, been consistently late, or left early? Have I dishonored the Sabbath by engaging in unnecessary work? Have I misused the leisure time I do have?

4. Have I been disrespectful to my parents or neglected them? Have I abused or neglected my spouse or children? Have I provided my children with instruction and example in the Catholic faith? Have I failed to show respect to rightful authority?

5. Have I participated in, assisted with, or condoned any attack on human life, especially abortion or euthanasia? Have I failed to respect the dignity of others, especially through racist actions,

words or thoughts? Have I failed to care for my own life and health in any way? Have I abused drugs or alcohol?

6. Have I lived a chaste life, according to my state of life (married or single)? Have I failed to respect my own sexuality, by inappropriate thoughts or actions, alone or with others? Have I placed myself in occasions of temptation?

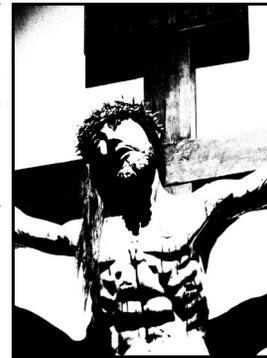
7. Have I stolen from others or cheated them in any way? Have I damaged or reduced the value of others' property through vandalism or carelessness? Have I failed in my responsibilities as an employee or employer? Have I failed to be a good steward of my time and my talent, for God and others in the community? Have I given generously of my treasure to God through the Church and for the needs of the poor?

8. Have I failed to speak the truth in my dealings with others? Have I damaged others through my speech, by gossiping or lying, or by participating in such conversations?

9. Have I entertained lustful thoughts and desires? Have I behaved immodestly, inviting others to sin?

10. Have I been jealous or envious of others? Have I coveted their belongings or achievements? Have I allowed myself to indulge in greed, gluttony, or overindulgence?

*Sin may be by action or omission, in thought, word or deed.*



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## Going to Confession

After a thorough examination of conscience, one approaches the Sacrament of Reconciliation. One comes before God with both true contrition (be truly sorry), and a firm resolve to amend one's life. (The priest may begin with a reading from Sacred Scripture.)

- ✠ The Penitent says: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen. Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been (*how long?*) since my last confession. These are my sins.
- ✠ Tell the priest your sins. A good confession means confessing all the sins one remembers, since one's last confession, including the number of times any mortal sins were committed. After confessing all your sins, say: "For these and all the sins of my past life, I am truly sorry".
- ✠ The priest then gives you a penance, and may discuss your confession with you.
- ✠ The Penitent prays an Act of Contrition, using a formal prayer, or one's own words.
- ✠ The priest then gives the penitent Absolution, forgiving all sins committed since the penitent's last confession
- ✠ Go in Peace.
- ✠ Thanks be to God!

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## Acts of Contrition

*Praying the Act of Contrition is an essential part of the Sacrament of Penance. The prayer expresses one's heartfelt sorrow for sin, and states the commitment, with the help of God's grace, to live a better life. Each Catholic should know an Act of Contrition by heart. Two are listed below:*

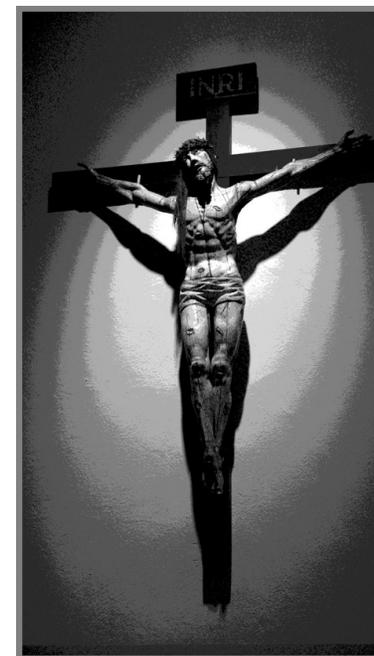
O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you. I detest all my sins because of your just punishment, but most of all because they offend you, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to sin no more, and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen

O 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.

St. Patrick Catholic Church,  
406 E. Pinhook, Lafayette, LA 70501  
337-237-0988  
Sacrament of Reconciliation  
Sat: 3:00-3:30 p.m.  
Weekdays 7:15 a.m.

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## A Sacrament of Forgiveness and Healing



A guide to celebrating the  
Sacrament of Reconciliation

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