

The Light is ON for You.

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 19, 2017
NOTRE DAME CHURCH, MALONE

★ **Confession available 6:00am – 10:00pm** ★

Daily Mass at 6:45am

Vespers at 6:00pm

*The confessionals are located behind the altar screen in the chapel
Adoration of the Most Blessed Sacrament begins at 7:15am and will be ongoing in the main church*

★ **How to Go to Confession**

1. Pray to God, asking for guidance in recognizing your sins and courage in confessing them. Remember: we can only be absolved of our sins if we truly intend to avoid them in the future. An **Examination of Conscience** (*see next page of this flyer*) can be very helpful in reviewing your life since your last confession.
2. Approach a priest, asking for the sacrament—either at a regularly scheduled time or by making an appointment. Generally, you will have the option of confessing face-to-face with the priest or from behind a screen.
3. Join the priest in making the Sign of the Cross. You may wish to begin with the traditional opening: **“Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been (period of time) since my last confession and these are my sins.”** It may also be helpful to tell the priest your state in life (single, married, widowed, etc.).
4. Confess your sins simply, openly, and honestly. All serious (mortal) sins must be named specifically, along with the number of times you have committed them (as much as this is possible). It is also recommended that any less serious (venial) sins be mentioned. You might even want to discuss the circumstances and root causes of your sins and ask the priest for advice and direction. There is no need to be fearful or embarrassed. You may wish to conclude by saying, **“I am sorry for these and all the sins of my past life.”**
5. The priest may then share with you some words of counsel or encouragement. He will also give you a penance (prayers

to say or good works to do after your confession) as a means to help heal the wounds of your sins.

6. The priest will then ask you to make an **Act of Contrition** (*see below*).
7. Make the Sign of the Cross as the priest concludes the Prayer of Absolution, absolving you of your sins.
8. After leaving, be sure to complete the penance assigned to you and to thank God for his mercy.

★ **Act of Contrition**

There are many different forms of the Act of Contrition. You may wish to use one of these, another version that you know, or to express sorrow for your sins in your own words.

- I. 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.
- II. O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins because of your just punishments, 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 occasions of sin. Amen

★ Examination of Conscience

For centuries, Catholics have found it helpful to examine their consciences in light of the Ten Commandments, expanding on each one as they review their life and conduct. You may find these questions helpful as you prepare for the Sacrament of Penance.

1. I am the Lord your God, you shall have no other gods besides me.

Did I fail to love God, to make him first in my life, to thank, trust and love him as he deserves? Did I fail to pray? Have I doubted or denied my faith? Was I careless in saying my prayers? Do I give God time everyday in prayer? Do I make a god out of my work, possessions, or image in the eyes of others so that these rule my life instead of God? Am I angry toward God because of illness or misfortune? Have I been involved with magic, horoscopes, Ouija boards, or fortune telling?

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Did I curse or swear? Did I use God's name in vain, lightly, carelessly, by blasphemy? Have I used foul language or jokes? In conversation, have I passively listened to slander and to jokes demeaning the Church or God's authority?

3. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of obligation? Did I leave Mass early without good reason? Have I received Communion at least once a year? Did I receive communion in a state of serious sin? Have I been to Confession recently? In any of my previous Confessions, did I lie to or deliberately conceal something from the priest? Have I allowed myself to become so dominated by my work and chores that I have not set aside Sunday for spiritual and family activities?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

Did I honor and obey my parents? Did I respect my brothers and sisters? Did I respect others with lawful authority (such as my teachers, my boss, or public officials)? Did I speak rudely to them? Did I speak about them to others in a derogatory way? Did I fail to help my parents (at home, or in their time of need)? Did I spend time with my family, or avoid them? Do I blame my parents for my own shortcomings?

5. You shall not kill.

Did I give in to feelings of anger or jealousy? Did I keep hatred in my heart? Have I ever struck anyone in anger, intending to injure the person? Did I fight, give a bad example or cause scandal? Have I abused alcohol or drugs? Have I had or in any way permitted or encouraged abortion? Have I nurtured thoughts about suicide?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

Did I consent to impure glances or thoughts? Did I give my mind over to lustful thoughts or fantasies? Have I encouraged them by stares, curiosity or impure conversations? Did I neglect to control my imagination or desire of other people? Was I immodest in dress or behavior? Did I look at pornography, impure books, magazines or videos? Am I guilty of impurity with myself, premarital sex, or adultery? Do I live chastely according to my state in life (married, single, consecrated celibate)?

7. You shall not steal.

Have I stolen? What or how much? Did I return it or make up for what I stole? Have I cheated on tests or homework? Did I waste time at work? Did I do graffiti? Have I been extravagant in my manner of life, to the neglect of the poor at home and abroad?

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

Have I lied, gossiped? Have I talked about other people behind their backs? Do I always tell the truth? Am I sincere? Did I reveal secrets that I should have kept confidential? Am I critical, negative or uncharitable in my talk? Have I injured the reputation of others by speaking about their failures and sins with little desire or intention to help them? Have I condoned prejudice and hatred toward people of other nationalities, races or religions?

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Is my heart greedy? Am I jealous of what another has? Am I envious of others because I don't have what they have? Do I habitually compare myself with others? Do I work, study, and keep busy to counter idle thoughts? Am I critical, negative, or uncharitable in my thoughts of others? Is my heart set on earthly possessions or on the treasures of heaven? Do I give to those in need, so as not to cling to my possessions?

★ Prayer Before Confession

Oh most merciful God! Prostrate at your feet, I implore your forgiveness. I sincerely desire to leave all my evil ways and to confess my sins with all sincerity to you and to your priest. I am a sinner; have mercy on me, Oh Lord. Give me a lively faith and firm hope in the Passion of my Redeemer. Give me, for your mercy's sake, a sorrow for having offended so good a God. Mary, my mother, refuge of sinners, pray for me that I may make a good confession. Amen.

★ Do Your Penance

When we go to Confession, we are cleansed and freed from our sins. Although the absolution we receive takes away the sin, it does not, however, remedy all the problems that sin causes. When we sin, we weaken ourselves as well as our relationship with God and our neighbors. We must repair the harm caused by our sin (i.e. return stolen goods or restore the reputation of someone about whom we have gossiped). That is why the priest gives us a penance.

The penance given usually depends on the gravity of the sin committed. Penances can consist of prayer, an offering, works of mercy, service to neighbor, voluntary self-denial, sacrifices, and above all the patient acceptance of suffering that brings us closer to Christ. The sacrament is not complete until you do your penance. It should be done immediately in the church, if it is a penance of prayer. Otherwise, it should be done as soon as possible.

Materials on this page are adapted from resources available from Catholic Christian Outreach (www.cco.ca).



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We're opening doors!

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