

For all: Have I indulged in pornographic magazines, videos, or internet websites? Have I masturbated or fornicated? Do I dress modestly (i.e. does my dress reflect my dignity as a child of God or could I lead others to sinful thoughts by my dress)? Have I looked lustfully at someone or used impure speech in speaking of another? Have I led others to impure thoughts or actions by my bad example? Do I avoid laziness, gluttony, and the occasions of impurity?

7. You shall not steal.

Have I stolen or accepted stolen goods? Have I deliberately destroyed the property of others? Have I cheated anyone of what I owe? Do I pay my debts promptly? Have I cheated on my taxes? Do I gamble excessively? Do I share what I have with the poor and the Church according to my means? Am I stingy? Have I returned or made equal restitution for anything obtained immorally?

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

Have I lied? Have I sworn falsely? Have I gossiped? Have I plagiarized? Have I revealed secrets or confidential information without good reason? Have I ruined anyone's reputation by spreading lies or maliciously revealing their faults and sins? Am I critical, negative or uncharitable in my talk? Am I sincere?

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

Have I deliberately and consciously entertained sexual thoughts about anyone besides a spouse? Do I guard my imagination and senses? Have I watched shows, plays, pictures, or movies that contain impure scenes with the deliberate intention of being aroused by them? Do I pray at once to banish impure thoughts and temptations?

10. You shall not desire your neighbor's goods.

Am I envious or excessively desirous of the possessions, abilities, talents, beauty, or success of others? Have I been happy when someone was hurt? Do I work, study and keep busy to counter idle thoughts? Is my heart set on earthly possessions or on the true treasures in Heaven?

Conditions for a Mortal Sin: **Grave matter**, that is, a serious wrong or what is thought to be seriously wrong; **Full knowledge**, that is, before or while committing it, the person clearly is aware that it is wrong; **Complete consent**, that is, the person freely gives full consent to it.

How to make a good confession

It is very important that we examine our conscience daily. With total humility, we should open ourselves to be corrected by the truth revealed by God. **"If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged"** (1 Cor. 11, 31). Make this examination in the presence of God, listening to his voice within us. This will be the best way to prepare for confession. Following you will find some helpful practices.

Go to a quiet place, preferably before Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament. Only God can show us our hearts, how we have responded to His love and give us the grace to change.

Contemplate the life of Jesus and His love manifested upon the Cross. *"They shall look on him whom they pierced"* Jn 19:37.

Ask Yourself: How have I responded to so much love, to so many graces?

Attitude: Keep in mind that your examination is not just about numbering sins but about discovering the twisted attitudes of the heart and of **being able to feel sorrow for your sins which includes a firm proposal to not commit them again.** Keep in mind that there are always areas in which we are weaker and require special attention.

Act of Contrition

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

Guide to Confession



God is a loving Father who desires that we see our sins, so that He can give us the grace of repentance and forgiveness. He wants us to be free. Satan, however, does not want us to see our sins. When we seek to follow God's will, Satan will try to accuse us with our own sins, so that we will become disheartened and return to our old ways. We must learn to discern the difference: God reveals our sins to free us and forgive us; the devil hides our sins and reveals them only to lead us to despair. We should vigorously reject these thoughts. **God ALWAYS forgives when there is repentance in our hearts.**

ST. JOSEPH'S CATHOLIC CHURCH
1813 Oakdale Rd. ♦ Modesto ♦ 551-4973
Sacrament of Penance (Confession) offered:

Monday-Thursday: 5:00pm-5:30pm
Friday: 6:30-7:30pm
Saturday: 8:30-9:30am & 4:00-5:00pm

How to go to Confession:

1. You always have the option to go to confession anonymously, that is, behind a screen or it may be possible face to face.
2. After the priest greets you in the name of Christ, make the sign of the cross. **You then say: “Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been (state how long) since my last confession. These are my sins.”**
3. Tell your sins simply and honestly to the priest. **You must tell all mortal sins and, as best you can, the number of times each was committed. Also any situations/circumstances that make them more serious.** You don't have to go into detail about the sins or other problems you are having, especially if there is a long line of people.
4. If you aren't sure about whether something was sinful or not, ask the priest. Listen to the advice the priest gives you and accept the penance from him. The priest will ask you to say an Act of Contrition.
5. The priest will then pray the words of absolution forgiving you of your sins. He then will say something like “Go in peace, your sins are forgiven.” **You reply: “Thanks be to God.”**
6. Spend time with Our Lord thanking and praising Him for the gift of His mercy. Perform your penance as soon as possible.

Examination of Conscience

Precepts of the Church

Do I go to confession at least once a year and when I have serious sins to confess?

Do I receive Holy Communion at least once during the year, during Eastertide if possible?

Do I fast for one hour before Holy Communion (water and medicine allowed)?

Do I ordinarily abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Fridays during Lent (for ages 14 and over) and fast on one full meal on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (for ages 18-59)?

Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.

Do I strive to love God with my whole heart, mind, soul and strength? Do I give Him the priority in my life that He deserves as my Creator and Lord or rather do I make compromises on my love for God for the sake of pride, pleasure or the avoidance of a necessary sacrifice? Do I spend time in prayer daily? Have I had any direct involvement with the occult, witchcraft, wicca, ouija boards, séances, tarot cards, new age crystals, fortune telling, or the like? Have I put faith in horoscopes? Have I received Holy Communion in the state of mortal sin? Have I abused the Sacrament of Reconciliation by deliberately lying to the priest or deliberately choosing not to confess a mortal sin? Have I publicly denied a truth of the faith out of concern for the respect and opinion of others? Have I doubted or denied my faith? Have I read books against the Catholic Faith?

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

Have we always treated the all-holy name of God with the greatest possible reverence and awe? Have I deliberately cursed or shown contempt for or ridiculed God? Did I cause scandal by doing this in the presence of others? Have I failed to keep the promises/oaths made in the presence of God and while invoking His Name? Did I curse or swear? Do I use profane language?

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

Have I deliberately missed Mass on a Sunday or Holy Day of obligation without a serious reason such as illness or lack of transportation? Have I deliberately come late or left early from Mass without a good reason? Do I try to keep Sunday as a day of rest and relaxation by avoiding unnecessary work? Have I deliberately allowed my children to miss Mass without a serious reason? Did I omit my Easter Duty? Did I omit my yearly Confession duty?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

For children: Do I honor, respect, and obey my parents? Have I deliberately harmed my parents by word or by deed? Have I spoken badly of them in the presence of others? **For parents:** Do I treat my children with love, respect, and affection? Am I concerned about the well-being (physical, spiritual, mental) of all family members? **For all:** Have I neglected my family responsibilities? Do I respect and obey my legitimate superiors? Have I separated or divorced civilly without consultation according to the mind of the Church?

5. You shall not kill.

Have I intentionally harmed anyone? Have I had an abortion or encouraged or helped someone to have an abortion? Have I encouraged mutilation (vasectomy, etc.) to avoid children? Have I attempted suicide or given deliberate consent to the idea? Have I neglected my spiritual, physical or mental health or tried to harm myself? Have I abused drugs or alcohol? Have I led anyone to sin through bad example or through direct encouragement? Have I gossiped, made fun of, or harmed someone's reputation by my words? Have I harbored grudges or refused to forgive someone who hurt me? Have I refused to help someone who was really in need? Have I been angry, resentful, or kept hatred in my heart? Have I failed to correct my transgressions through charity?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

For the married: Am I faithful to my spouse in thought and in action? Have I used artificial contraception or been sterilized? Was I married outside the Church without proper permission of the Church? **For the unmarried:** Have I engaged in any kind of sexual activity with anyone of either sex (includes prolonged kisses, passionate touches or any use of another person as an object to obtain sexual pleasure)? Am I chaste in my demonstrations of affection?