

## **THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION FOR YOUTH (SPONSORED BY CONQUEST BOYS CLUB)**

Confession is the sacrament where a Christian, who is repentant for his sins, receives God's pardon through a priest. For that reason, we go to confession with a great confidence in God, sorrow for their sins, and firm decision to be faithful to Christ's love and a more Christian life. Try to go to confession as often as possible, because frequent confession helps us uproot bad habits, renews our love for Christ in the face of our failures, and to have a more sensitive conscience. For a better confession, prepare yourself with a good examination of conscience. Remember that you are going to be reconciled with your best friend, and don't forget that you need to confess all of your sins to the priest and fulfill the penance that he gives you. The following guide may help you.

### **EXAMINING YOUR CONSCIENCE**

Thanks to the love and mercy of God, there is no sin too great to be forgiven; there will never be a sinner who is rejected. Every person who repents will be received with pardon and love by Jesus Christ. (John Paul II).

You can begin with this prayer for help:

My Lord and my God, you know each person's heart. Give me the grace to examine mine sincerely and to know it truly so I can discover all my sins, confess them well and avoid them from now on. Thus I hope to win your pardon and grace on earth and eternal life in heaven. Grant this through Christ our Lord.

Some questions to prepare for confession are offered here as a guideline.

- How long has it been since I went to confession?
- Were my past confessions well prepared?
- Did I fulfill the penance from before?

### **1ST - LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD ABOVE ALL ELSE**

- Have I forgotten to pray to God every day?
- Have I allowed myself to doubt something about my faith that the Church teaches me?
- Have I ever allowed myself to deny these truths in my thoughts or before other people?
- Have I lost confidence in the mercy of God when seeing my own sins?
- Have I taken advantage of his mercy by thinking that it does not matter if I sin, because, in the end, he will always forgive me?
- Have I rebelled against in my thoughts or in my actions when some kind of difficulty has come my way?
- Do I believe in good luck charms or superstitions? Do I believe in magic or spirits?

### **2ND - DO NOT USE THE LORD'S NAME IN VAIN**

- Have I blasphemed? (speaking badly about God, Mary or saints)
- Have I taken the Lord's name in vain? Disrespectfully? When I was angry?
- Even in jest or with little respect?

- Have I sworn to do something bad?
- Have I made disrespectful jokes about prayer, the sacraments or the Church?

### **3RD - KEEP HOLY THE LORD'S DAY**

- Have I purposely missed Mass on Sunday or on other holy days of obligation?
- Have I let myself get distracted in Mass or arrived late (after the gospel)?
- Have I ever received communion knowing that I was in mortal sin?
- Have I respected the fast one hour before receiving communion? (chewing gum, drinking soda or coffee, etc.)
- Have I ever omitted a grave sin in confession because I was embarrassed?
- Have I fulfilled the penance from the last confession?

### **4TH - HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER**

- Have I disobeyed my parents?
- Has my pride or desire to be independent made me misinterpret what my parents were trying to tell me?
- Have I upset my parents with my behavior?
- Have I threatened them, or treated them badly in my words or actions, or have I wished something against them?
- Do I study with responsibility or have I let myself be lazy?
- Have I sacrificed my own personal interests, whims, time to fulfill my duties to help and cooperate with what is needed at home?
- How do I treat my brothers and sisters?

### **5TH - YOU SHALL NOT KILL**

- Do I have any enemies, hatred or resentment against anyone?
- Have I ever let myself be led by my anger?
- Have I stopped speaking to someone because I was annoyed with them?  
Have I refused to make amends with them?
- Have I wished anything bad on my neighbor? Have I rejoiced when something went wrong for someone else?
- Have I fought or hit anyone?
- Have I been a cause of scandal for anyone with my behavior?
- Have I put my life in danger or the lives of others while driving?
- Have I made fun of other people or ridiculed them?
- Do I ask for things from other people in a rude way, lacking charity?
- Am I selfish with the things that I have and it is hard for me to give them to the others?
- Have I put my health in danger by drinking? Doing drugs? Not eating properly or doing excessive dieting?

### **6TH AND 9TH - YOU SHALL NOT CONSENT TO IMPURE ACTS OR THOUGHTS**

- Have I consented to impure thoughts or memories?
- Have I had impure conversations with my friends? Did I begin them?

- Have I looked at impure things? (TV, internet, movies, magazines or billboards?)
- Have I been to activities where I placed myself in a near occasion of sin? (certain dances, movies, concerts, impure literature, or bad company?)
- Have I done anything impure?
- Have I let myself been led by curiosity and fall into the temptation to see pornography? (magazines, movies, internet, etc.)
- Do I have any friendships that lead me into habitual sin? Am I willing to leave them?

## **7TH AND 10TH - YOU SHALL NOT STEAL OR DESIRE YOUR NEIGHBORS GOODS**

- Have I stolen anything or money? Have I helped anyone else to steal?
- Have I returned a stolen item if I could?
- Have I misused other people's things? Or tried to trick them into losing something?
- When I see other people's talents or material things, am I envious?
- Do I use my talents, gifts and qualities that God has given me?

## **8TH - YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS**

- Have I lied? Have I made reparation for any hurt I may have caused by lying?
- Have I criticized other people or spoken about their shortcomings?
- Have I defended other people when they are being criticized unjustly?
- Have I judged other people harshly? (thinking badly of them and without due cause)?
- Have I revealed secrets about other people?
- Have I spoken badly about others?
- Have I cheated on exams or homework?

## **PENITENTIAL RITE**

Confessing your sins should be made in a clear, concise and complete way. It is important to mention the number of times you committed mortal sins and the specific circumstances surrounding each situation. (For example, leading others to sin, giving a bad example, if it was against your will, etc.)

The priest and the penitent may say together:

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The priest invites the penitent to trust in God, in these or similar words:

May God, who has enlightened every heart, help you to know your sins and trust in his mercy. Amen.

Then you confess your sins. The priest may give some advice or counsel and proposes an act of penance. The penitent then prays the act of contrition.(using the following or a similar text):

## **ACT OF CONTRITION**

Lord Jesus Christ, true God and true man, my Creator and Redeemer, I love you above all things. I am sorry with all my heart for the wrong I have done and the good I have failed to do. By sinning, I have offended you, my supreme good, worthy of being loved above all else. To make

up for my sins, I offer my life, all I do, and all I suffer. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Through the merits of your passion and death, take pity on me and grant me the grace never to offend you again. Amen.

## **ABSOLUTION**

God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Give thanks to the Lord for he is good.

*His mercy endures forever.*

Go in peace, and proclaim to the world the wonderful works of God who has brought you salvation.

Or:

The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace