

God forgives you

A guide to the Sacrament of Reconciliation
Making your confession



***“While he was still a long way off,
his father saw him and was
moved with pity. He ran to the
boy, clasped him in his arms and
kissed him tenderly.”***

These lines are from the story
Jesus told us about the prodigal
son. They tell us of the welcome
we all receive when we turn back

to our Father to ask for His forgiveness.

Making our confession is sometimes difficult and we can get nervous but keep in your mind how loving and forgiving our God is to us. No matter what we do He never stops loving us. We are always His children and He always welcomes us home with gentleness and great joy.

Perhaps you don't think you can go to confession yet or you are too worried about what you will have to say.

Maybe a start would be to ask your priest for a chat some time.

He might be able to set your mind at rest.

Ask God to help you and to guide you as you try to come closer to Him.

God is with you now.

His love for you is all around you and in your heart.

Listen for His call.

Before you make your confession

Think about the sins you want to confess to the priest.
One great saint said we should begin with the things that most hurt or annoy other people before looking at the ways in which by our actions we annoy ourselves!

Here are some questions that might be useful as you prepare your confession

- How have I behaved at home and with my friends and family?
- How have I behaved at work or school?
- Have I been loving and honest in my dealings with others?
- Have I shared what I have with those who are in need?
- Have I given a good example of a Christian life in my words and actions to those who know me?
- Have I made time for God, attending Mass on Sundays and praying every day?
- Have I made any effort to deepen my knowledge of God and of my Faith?
- Have I shown forgiveness to those who have hurt me?
- Have I treated myself and others with respect and dignity?
- What do you think are the most serious things you want to confess to the priest?

Ask the Holy Spirit to help you make a good and honest confession.

"It's been a long time Father ..."

If it has been a long time since you last went to confession, don't worry. The priest is very used to this and he is always delighted when someone wants to take this step closer to God. Just tell him that it is a long time and let him help you to make a good confession.

During your confession

You can take this leaflet with you into Confession.

Sometimes there is a choice of either face to face confession where you can see the priest, or kneeling behind a curtain or grille so that the

priest can't see you. You are free to choose which one is more comfortable for you.

- Make the sign of the cross with the priest.

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

The priest might say a short prayer or some words from the Bible.

- You can now speak in your own words or you can say:

Bless me Father for I have sinned.

It is ... since my last confession (say roughly how long)

And these are my sins.

- Tell the priest simply in your own words what sins you want to be forgiven. When you have finished let the priest know. You can use these words if you want to:

I am sorry for all these sins

and for any sins that I cannot now remember.

- The priest will now talk to you and ask you to do a penance. You can ask him questions if you want to. He will ask you to say an "act of contrition" (an act of sorrow). You can say any of these prayers or another prayer you know.

***O my God, because you are so good,
I am very sorry that I have sinned against you,
and by the help of your grace I will not sin again.***

OR

***Lord Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God,
have mercy on me, a sinner.***

OR

***Lord Jesus, you were called the friend of sinners,
I am a sinner and I ask for your mercy.
By your saving death and resurrection free me from my sins
and bring forth in me a harvest of love, holiness and truth.***

OR

***O my God, I am truly sorry for all my sins, because they offend you
who are infinitely good, and I firmly resolve, with the help of your
grace, never to offend you again.***

or

***God my Father, I thank you for loving me always.
I am sorry for all my sins,
for what I have done and for what I have failed to do.
I will sincerely try to love you and others in everything I do and say.
Help me to walk in your light today and always.***

- Wait while the priest says the prayer of “absolution” (where Jesus forgives you all your sins.)

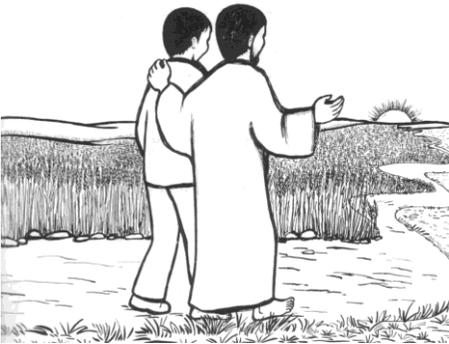
Make the sign of the cross as the priest says these words:

*“I absolve you from your sins
in the name of the Father and of the Son
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”*

After your Confession

If the priest asked you to say prayers for your penance say these now.

Thank God for forgiving you your sins and ask for God’s help as you try to love God and your neighbour with all your heart. This is a new beginning. The past has all been forgiven. Think about some of the situations where you know it will be hard to do the right thing and ask God to be with you there. You might like to say this prayer.



***Father, I thank you for forgiving
me my sins.
I will try to love you
with all my heart
and I will try to love others too.
Help me wherever I am
to remember your kindness
and to show that kindness
in my life. Amen.***

Parishes of St. Oswald and St. Sebastian, Liverpool.
www.sebosw.org