

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

4. 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.

What does the Church teach about confession?

The Church teaches that in order for there to be a true confession three things are necessary:

1. That you recognize and truly feel sorry for what you have done that has offended God and/or another person and desire to not commit it again.
2. That you verbally confess your sins to a priest in an individual, one to one manner (you must confess any and all mortal sins).
3. That you receive from the priest and complete an act of penance which manifests your desire to make up what you have done wrong and to no longer do it again.

Examination of Conscience

It will be helpful for you to determine the areas in which you need to ask for God's forgiveness by reviewing the Ten Commandments (God's written desire for the way in which we are to

love Him and others). Remember these are not to be treated as suggestions, God gave us Commandments. To break them is to break our covenant with God and to fall into grave sin. You Priest will also be able to advise on other ways to prepare.

How to make your Confession

The first thing to do is speak to your priest, who will advise you on how to go about making your Confession. There is an old saying about Confession "all should, some do, none must". Needless to say anything you tell your priest during Confession is strictly "under the seal of the confessional" which means the priest cannot and will not repeat it to anyone.

The above text has been prepared by the

**Diocese of the United Kingdom
ANGLICAN CATHOLIC CHURCH**

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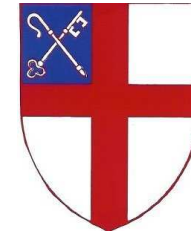
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Why Confession ?

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**THE
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Confession and Absolution is also known as the Sacrament of Reconciliation, or Penance

Why Confession ?

We confess our sins to God through His minister the priest in the Sacrament of Confession. This does not mean we can't also confess to God directly, if in fact, we feel we should do this, too.

The 'advantages' to confessing directing to a priest are: the Church's guarantee of forgiveness, spiritual counselling, humility, help in overcoming self-deception and rationalization in matters of sin, and most importantly is the sacramental grace received. None of the above are provided in private confessions to God. Like St. Paul, who writes in his letter to the Colossians (ch 1:18), Catholics believe the Church is, in a mysterious way, the Body of Christ still living in the world today, therefore God will answer our pleas for forgiveness and mercy with greater compassion, if voiced in union with this Mystical Body of Christ, than if they are voiced privately and independently of the Mystical Body of Christ.

Some claim that confessing to a priest is not biblical. In John 20, we read of Christ appearing to the disciples on Easter Sunday. He breathed on the apostles giving them the authority to forgive, and not to forgive. This means they had to hear the sins in order to forgive/not forgive. Jesus then says "as the Father has sent me, so I send you". This means the apostles are to continue Christ's mission, the essence of



which is the forgiveness of sins. In 2 Corinthians, St. Paul describes the apostles as ambassadors of Christ's work of reconciliation. In the Epistle of James we read that the presbyters (priests) are called to pray for the sick and forgive their sins. Why are priests called to perform this task? Obviously, the priests have an authority that ordinary Christians do not. It is clear that Christ gave the apostles the power to forgive sins.

Blind to our own sins

One of the effects of being sinners is that we are blind to our own sins. Satan wants us to believe that there is no evil in what we do. If we fall into this trap, our hearts may become hardened and insensitive to the demands of love. This is why conversion of heart is so important. "Therefore, as the Holy Spirit says: If today you hear his voice, harden not your hearts... Take heed brethren, lest perhaps

there be if any of you with an evil heart of unbelief..." (Heb. 3). 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 begin to walk in the will of the Lord, 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.

Making a good confession

It is very important that we examine our conscience daily. With total humility, we should open ourselves to be corrected by those close to us. "If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged". (1 Cor. 11, 31). This examination should be done 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 very helpful practices.

1. 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.
2. Contemplate the life of Jesus and His love manifested upon the Cross. "They shall look on him whom they pierced." Jn 19:37.