



MARRIAGE & FAMILY LIFE
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Confession
A Guide for Engaged Couples

Where God's Mercy and
Healing Touch Your Life

Ps 103:11-12

"For as the heavens tower
over the earth, so his mercy
towers over those who fear
him. As far as the east is
from the west, so far has he
removed our sins from us."

**HOW TO RECEIVE
THIS SACRAMENT**

(Don't worry; the priest will help you!)

1. Examine your conscience—take an honest look at your thoughts, actions, and priorities. Offer the times you failed to God, and make the commitment to do better with His help. Open up this pamphlet for an examination guide.
2. When you enter the confessional, make the Sign of the Cross, and say, "Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been (state how long) since my last confession." State your sins simply and sincerely to the priest.
3. The priest will give you a penance—an action or prayer—to perform after Confession.

4. Then, say the Act of Contrition to express your commitment to return to God with all your heart:

Act of Contrition:

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You and I detest all my sins, because of your just punishment, 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 do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

5. Spend some time performing your penance and thanking God for His love!
6. The priest will give you Absolution (setting you free from your sins) and

RECEIVE ABSOLUTION
You have received pardon and peace



PRAY ACT OF CONTRITION



RECEIVE YOUR PENANCE



CONFESS YOUR SINS

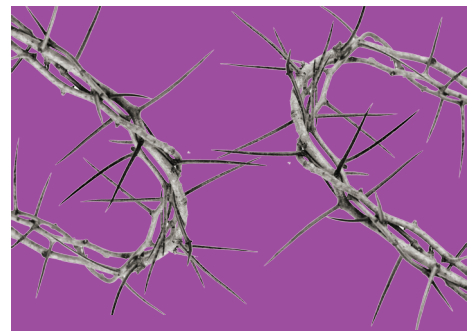


EXAMINE YOUR CONSCIENCE



FIVE STEPS
Confession

will conclude with: "The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace." You respond by saying: "Thanks be to God."



"Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need."

Hebrews 4:16

EXAMINING MY RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

- Have I failed to invest in my relationship with God? Did I stop praying?
- Have I missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation?
- Have I abused God's name?
- Have I received Jesus in Communion with mortal sin in my heart (having not confessed it)?
- Are there other "gods" that I put front and center in my life?
- Have I failed to trust in Him and His love for me?
- Have I rejected any of the Church's teachings?
- Have I participated in superstitious practices or spiritual experiences that exclude God (like Ouija boards, etc.)?
- Have I been ungrateful for God's gifts?

actions?

- Have I willingly entertained impure thoughts and desires?
- Have I engaged in pornography or masturbation?
- Have I engaged in marital intimacy before Marriage?
- Have I used contraception or sterilization, changing the meaning of marital intimacy?
- Have I had an abortion?
- Have I used or manipulated my fiancé(e)?
- Have I failed to support my fiancé(e) in becoming the person God is calling him/her to be?



EXAMINING MY RELATIONSHIP WITH MY FIANCÉ(E)

- Have I failed to prioritize my fiancé(e), giving generously of my time and attention?
- Have I avoided being open and truthful with my fiancé(e)?
- Have I been disrespectful or rude to him/her in thought or action?
- Have I held on to bitterness instead of forgiving?
- Have I flirted or entertained in thought or action improper relations with someone else?
- Have I ignored the needs or neglected the wellbeing of my fiancé(e)?
- Have I intentionally hurt him/her with my words or

EXAMINING MYSELF

- Have I overindulged in food, alcohol, entertainment, or technology?
- Have I been selfish in my motivations?
- Have I kept my priorities straight, or have I served myself first?
- Have I used my time poorly?
- Have I made material possessions too important in my life?
- Have I read books, listened to music, or watched movies that have led me away from God?
- Have I neglected physical, emotional, or spiritual self-care?
- Have I made material possessions too important in my life?

EXAMINING MY RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHERS

- Have I been "too busy" to be present or generous to those around me?
- Have I been dishonest?

- Have I taken anything that was not mine or cheated anyone?
- Have I stolen others' ideas or intellectual property?
- Have I been lazy at work?
- Have I failed to execute my responsibilities?
- Have I sought to hurt anyone by word or action?
- Have I held on to feelings of anger or hatred?
- Have I been envious of others?
- Have I been judgmental or criticized others?
- Have I gossiped about others?
- Have I hurt their reputation?
- Have I made or willingly listened to inappropriate jokes or comments?
- Have I been jealous of what others have?
- Have I been respectful and caring to my parents?
- Have I been generous with my resources?
- Did I set a bad example for people around me?
- Am I negative in my thoughts toward others and myself?
- Have I influenced others to sin or given my approval to these decisions?



"Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new and right spirit within me."

Psalm 51:10