

Going to Confession:

A guide for young people



Parish of the Sacred Heart and St Aldhelm

Before Confession

1. Ask God to help you make a good confession
2. Remember God loves you and wants to forgive your sins
3. Examine your conscience: Look at what you have done and how you have lived and see the things that you are sorry for
4. Tell God that you are sorry for your sins
5. Remember the priest is there to give you God's forgiveness, and you tell your sins to him because your sins harm the whole Christian family, in that sense they are not private, so you need to admit them to someone
6. Go to the priest when it is time

At Confession

1. The priest welcomes you
2. Make the sign of the cross and say: "Bless me Father for I have sinned"
3. Tell the priest how long it is since your last confession. Then tell him the things that you have done wrong and that you are sorry for them
4. After you have confessed your sins the priest may ask you a few questions to understand and help you better
5. Then listen to what the priest says and what he asks you to do as a **penance**

6. Then say an act of Contrition

Act of Contrition

**O my God, I am very sorry for all my sins,
and with your help I will not sin again.**

7. The priest gives the absolution, and you make the sign of the cross and know your sins are forgiven

After Confession

1. Go and pray in the church
To thank God:
For loving you always
For forgiving you today
2. Say your **penance** if the priest gave you some prayers to say
3. Think about what the priest asked you to do to make your life better
4. Say a prayer for him too – he needs prayers too

Remember

1. God never stops loving me. When I sin, I put a block between me and the warmth of the love of God. When I go to confession, God takes the block away and so I can feel the warmth of his love
2. The priest is there to help you in Confession, in any way he can, and, in God's name to forgive your sins. He will never, ever, tell anyone what you tell him in confession
3. Try and go to confession regularly, especially before Christmas and during Lent

Why do we focus on our sins?

1. Because sins are bad for us – they damage us, make us insensitive and careless of self and others
2. Because they hurt others – we are part of the family of God and any harm we do, harms our brothers and sisters – just like in our human family
3. Because they create a culture of deceit, dishonesty and selfishness which damages our society
4. Because they can develop into habits which we can easily not notice, and so change our character