

FIRST STEPS

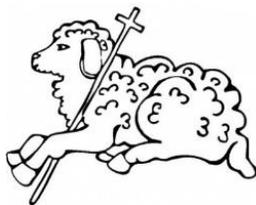
The Penance

I turn to follow the Good Shepherd with renewed joy. I remember and do the action or prayer the priest has given me.

I know that to overcome evil with good I must turn more completely to the Lord every day.

Lord, help me to grow closer to you and more like you every day.

Thank you for your merciful love that calls me to the feast of the Eucharist. I am glad I am not alone. From baptism I belong to you, and to the Church. We are called to give witness to the world as a 'light of the world,' a 'city set on a hill.'



PREPARATION

Examination of conscience.

The Word of God in the Scriptures and words from people in our lives can help us as we examine our conscience. We can also find a prepared 'examination of conscience' to assist us.

PRAYER

(Pause often. Let the words come from your heart.)

Come, Holy Spirit. Enlighten my memory. Help me know that God the Father loves me.

Jesus, You gave Your life for me on the cross. You stretch out your hand to me now. Help me confess how great You are and how I have turned away from You in my thoughts, in my words, in my actions. Help me to turn back to You.

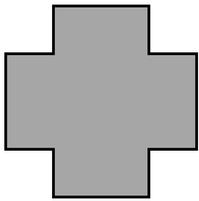
I want to put on the royal robes of my baptism. I want to celebrate the feast of the Eucharist with an open heart. I ask all the angels and saints to pray for me, and in particular Mary and Joseph, that I may go from here to help the Church shine the light of Christ wherever I am. Amen.

Rite of Penance and Reconciliation

GREETING WITH THE PRIEST

Priest: Peace be with you.

Penitent: ***And with your spirit.***



The penitent makes the sign of the cross and says:

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

Amen.

PENITENT AND THE PRIEST

GIVE PRAISE TO GOD

Priest: Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good.

Penitent: ***His mercy endures forever.***

Then the penitent is dismissed by the priest.

Praised be Jesus Christ!

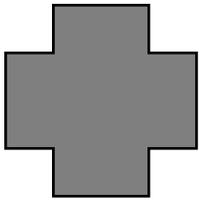
We are freed from our sins to walk as children of the light, renewed in the grace of our Baptism to praise of God with our thoughts, words, and actions.



ABSOLUTION

*The priest imposes his hand over the penitent
and says:*

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.



*The penitent makes the sign of the cross
and says with the priest:*

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

READING OF THE WORD OF GOD

LISTEN!

*We listen to the word of God and compare it
to our life.*



CONFESSION

The penitent **speaks** to the priest with humble trust and truthfulness, from the heart. The priest has made a promise never to speak of what you say to him.



The penitent **tells** when he/she last celebrated the sacrament (or that this is the first time!) and then **confesses** his/her sins. The priest can help the penitent make a complete confession.

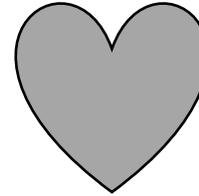
The penitent then **listens** to any advice the priest may give to listen better to the voice of Jesus, the Good Shepherd, and follow Him. The penitent **should ask** any appropriate questions.

The penitent **accepts the penance** from the priest.

ACT OF CONTRITION

There are many choices: the Confiteor (from Mass), a prayer you learned in school or parish- or even this simple prayer. The important thing is to pray from your heart to God, to be sorry for your sins, and to intend to turn from sin to God with God's help.

**LORD JESUS, SON OF THE LIVING
GOD, HAVE MERCY ON ME,
A SINNER.**



My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.

In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things.

I firmly intend with your help, to do penance, to sin no more and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.