



## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

1. You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
3. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
9. You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbour.
10. You shall not envy your neighbour.



## ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offended 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 for these sins and to amend my life. Amen

## RITE OF RECONCILIATION

Reconciliation may be face-to-face or anonymous, with a screen between you and the priest. Please choose the option that is the most comfortable for you.

1. The priest greets and blesses you. He may share a brief Scripture passage as well.
2. Make the Sign of the Cross and say: **“Bless me father, for I have sinned. My last confession was...”** (Give the number of weeks, months, or years since your last confession.)
3. Confess all of your sins to the priest. The priest will help you to make a good confession. If you are unsure about how to confess or feel uneasy, please let the priest know and ask him to help you. Answer his questions without hiding anything out of fear or shame. Place your trust in God, our merciful Father, who wants to forgive you.
4. Following your confession of sins say: **“I am sorry for these and all of my sins.”**
5. The priest assigns you a penance and offers advice to help you to be a better Catholic.
6. Say an Act of Contrition (like the one on the previous page), expressing sorrow for your sins.
7. The priest, acting in the person of Christ, then absolves you from your sins.



## Celebrating the Sacrament of Reconciliation

### A SHORT GUIDE TO

- The Sacrament of RECONCILIATION
- What is RECONCILIATION?
- How to make a GOOD CONFESSION
- Examination of CONSCIENCE
- Rite of RECONCILIATION
- Act of CONTRITION



Roman Catholic  
Diocese of Prince Albert

*Nothing can separate us  
from Our Father's Love.*

*Romans 8:39*

## WHAT IS RECONCILIATION?

Reconciliation (also known as Confession) is a Sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ in His love and mercy to offer sinners forgiveness for offenses committed against God. At the same time, sinners reconcile with the Church and the community, which are also wounded by their sins.

Every time we sin, we hurt ourselves, other people, and our relationship with God. In Reconciliation, we acknowledge our sins before God and His Church. We express our sorrow in a meaningful way, receive the forgiveness of Christ and His Church, make reparation for what we have done, and resolve to do better in the future.



The forgiveness of sins involves four parts: contrition, confession, penance, and absolution.

- **Contrition:** a sincere sorrow for having offended God and the most important act of the penitent. There can be no forgiveness of sin if we do not have sorrow and a firm resolve not to repeat our sin.
- **Confession:** Confronting our sins in a profound way by admitting them aloud to God through the priest.
- **Penance:** an important part of our healing process, the penance is imposed by the priest as the means for us to make reparation for our sins.
- **Absolution:** the priest speaks the words by which “God, the Father of Mercies” reconciles us – sinners – to Himself through the suffering, Death, and Resurrection of His Son Jesus Christ.

## HOW TO MAKE A GOOD CONFESSION

Confession is not difficult, but it does require some preparation.

We should begin with prayer, placing ourselves in the presence of God, our loving Father. We seek healing and forgiveness through repentance and resolve to sin no more.

Then we review our lives since our last confession, searching our memories for our thoughts, words, and actions that did not conform to God’s love, to His law, or to the laws of His Church. This is called an examination of conscience.

To begin an examination of conscience:

- Find a place where you can be still and listen to the prompting of the Holy Spirit in your heart.
- Begin with a prayer asking for God’s help.
- Review your life with the help of reflection on the 10 Commandments, the Beatitudes, Jesus’s command to “love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind.” And to “love your neighbour as yourself” (Matthew 22: 37-39), and the outline we have provided to the right.
- Then, while that examination is fresh in your mind, go to a priest and participate in the Rite of Reconciliation.



## EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Recall your sins. Prayerfully ask yourself what you have done with full knowledge and full consent against God’s Commandments and the precepts of the Church. With Jesus’ help here are some things which may help:

Lord Jesus,

- Open my mind and my heart to your Holy Spirit.
- Show me where I am failing to love your heavenly Father.
- Show me where I am failing to love you, failing to accept you as my saviour, failing to seek you and yield to you as my Lord.
- Show me where I am failing to love the Holy Spirit, failing to be open and to be led by Wisdom and Love.

Lord Jesus,

- Show me where I am failing to love any one of your brothers or sisters as you love me.
- Show me where I am failing to love myself as you love me.
- Show me where I am putting myself before God.
- Show me where I am seeking my own desires at the expense of a brother or sister.
- Your power finds its strength in my weakness; without you I can do nothing.