

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

God gave Moses the Ten Commandments, rules which must be obeyed if we are to please God



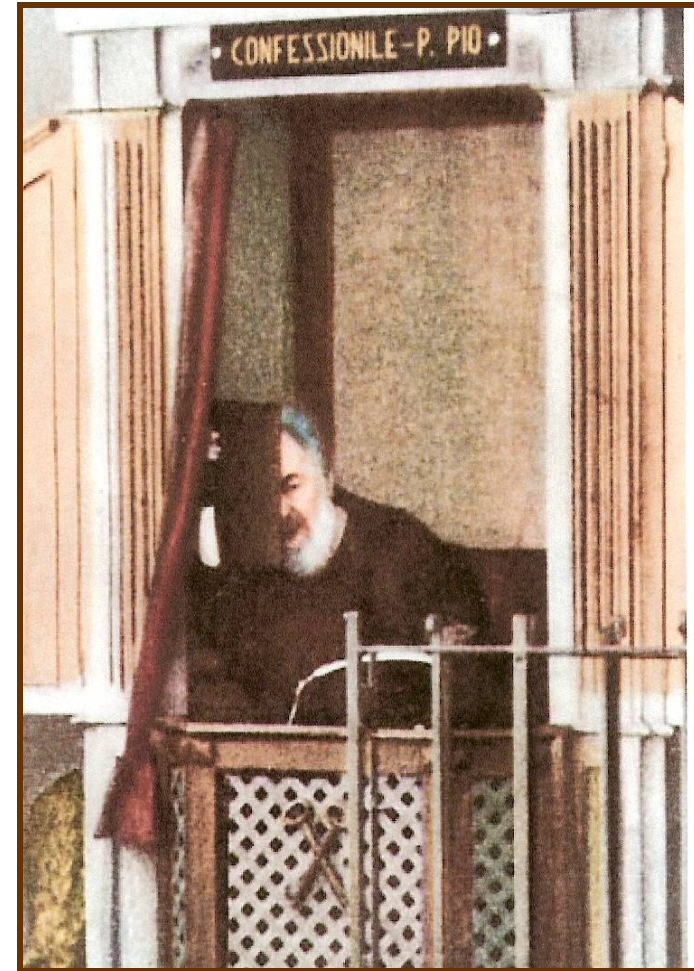
1. **I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.**
2. **You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.**
3. **Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.**
4. **Honor your father and mother.**
5. **You shall not kill.**
6. **You shall not commit adultery.**
7. **You shall not steal**
8. **You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**
9. **You shall not desire your neighbor's wife.**
10. **You shall not desire your neighbor's goods.**

Each person should seek to go to Confession, the great sacrament of Penance or Reconciliation, frequently. As noted before, this sacrament should be approached after making a good examination of conscience. The **ten commandments** and the sins listed on the prior page serve only as a good reference point. You must confess **all** serious sins that you can recall. Also, this examination is not intended merely as a checklist to be used prior to confession, but to also help souls in understanding the nature and gravity of their sins. This knowledge is then to be used by the penitent in trying to avoid committing them again.

As #2056 of the Catechism of the Catholic Church reminds us: *“When someone asks Him, ‘Which commandment in the Law is the greatest?’ Jesus replies ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets’”* (Mt 22:37-40; cf deut 6:5; Lev 19:18).

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THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFESSION... THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE



***“I ABSOLVE YOU FROM YOUR SINS
IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER.....***

WHY CONFESSION ?

In Psalm 129, we read, *“If thou didst keep count of offenses, O Lord, O Lord, who would endure it? But with Thee is forgiveness of sins, that men may serve Thee with reverence.”*

“Each sacrament channels sanctifying grace in a unique way. The sacrament of Penance channels that share of divine life (sanctifying grace) in a forgiving and healing way. The integrity of the human person is made whole again and that healing that tends toward peace is facilitated, and that peace surpasses all understanding.”

(Rev. John Corapi, SOLT, STD)

The Catechism of the Catholic Church says, (based on the authority Jesus gave the apostles in John 20:22, 23; Mt 16:19 *“Whosoever sins you remit, they are remitted, and Whosoever sins you retain, they are retained”*.) “Those who approach the sacrament of Penance **obtain** pardon from God’s **mercy** for the offence committed against Him, and are, at the same time, reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by their sins and which by charity, by example, and by prayer labors for their conversion.”

Ps. 31 states, “I confess my faults to the Lord,” and you took away the guilt of my sin.

It is called the *sacrament of conversion* because it makes present Jesus’ call to conversion in a sacramental manner, the first step in returning to the Father from whom one has strayed by sin.

It is called the *sacrament of Penance*, since it consecrates the Christian sinner’s personal and ecclesial steps of conversion, penance, and satisfaction.

It is called the *sacrament of confession*, since the disclosure or confession of sins to a priest is an essential element of this sacrament. In a profound sense it is also a “confession” - acknowledgment and praise—of the holiness of God and of his mercy toward sinful man.

It is called the *sacrament of forgiveness*, since by the priest’s sacramental absolution God grants the penitent “pardon and peace”.

STRUCTURE OF CONFESSION

The normal practice for administration of the Sacrament of Penance is in private—with only the penitent and the priest present. The priest confessor can not reveal anything that the penitent confesses. On occasion, and during penitential seasons, a parish may hold a “communal penance service”, where the congregation may pray and reflect together with the priest before each person individually goes to confession. (Only in an extreme case of emergency, such as on a battlefield, may a priest give “general absolution” to all at the same time; and that with the stipulation that the individual penitents go to confession individually as soon as possible.)

PRAYER BEFORE CONFESSION

**O LORD, GRANT ME LIGHT TO SEE MYSELF
AS YOU SEE ME, AND THE GRACE
TO BE TRULY SORRY FOR MY SINS,
O MARY, HELP ME TO MAKE A GOOD CONFESSION.**

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

An Examination of conscience should be made before entering the Confessional. Some sins that should be considered are as follows: lies, gossip, swearing, missing Holy Mass, magic, divorce, immodest dressing, pride, vanity, jealousy, hatred, revenge, and abortion. A more detailed examination can be made following the Ten Commandments listed on the back of this pamphlet.

HOW TO GO TO CONFESSION:

The penitent enters the confessional, kneels, and begins in this manner:

1. The Priest will begin with the Sign of the Cross.
2. The Penitent begins by saying “Bless me Father for I have sinned, it has been _____(number of days, weeks, months, etc.) since my last confession. These are my sins”.
3. Confess all mortal sins committed since your last confession by kind and number. You may also confess any venial sins.
4. At the end of your confession say these or similar words: “For these and all the sins of my life I am sorry.”
5. The Priest may ask questions for clarification or give you some counsel on a point from your confession.
6. The Priest will give you a penance.
7. The Penitent makes an **act of contrition** in these or similar words: **O my God, I am heartily sorry for all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven, and, the pains of hell; But most of all because I offend Thee my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen**
8. The Priest will give you absolution by extending his hand in blessing and say the following words which are necessary for forgiveness “I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost”.

The penitent exits the confessional and proceeds to a pew to say the prayers of penance that the priest assigned him.

THE IMPORTANCE OF CONFESSION TO THE SAINTS

Saints have always considered confession to be of the greatest importance after the celebration of the Eucharist and Holy Mass. Both SS. Padre Pio and John Vianney, The Curé of Ars, would spend eleven to twelve hours a day hearing confessions. Penitents would afterwards feel the healing power of God because they again had been reconciled with Him. It should also be noted that satan becomes angry when you want to save your soul.