

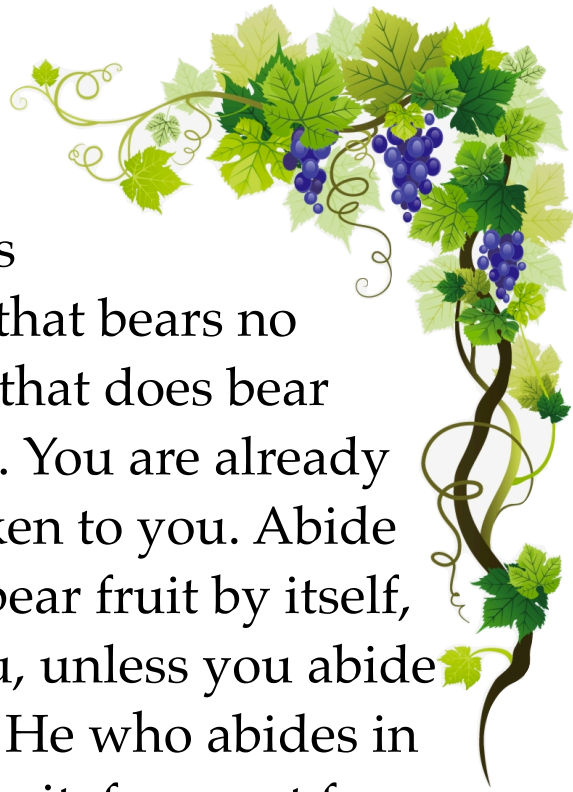
My Confession Companion

for children and their parents



*St John the Baptist Catholic Church
Front Royal, Virginia*

*The Holy Gospel according to
Saint John the Evangelist*



I AM THE TRUE VINE and my Father is the vinedresser. Every branch of mine that bears no fruit, he takes away, and every branch that does bear fruit he prunes, that it may bear more fruit. You are already made clean by the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit by itself, unless it abides in the vine, neither can you, unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing. If a man does not abide in me, he is cast forth as a branch and withers; and the branches are gathered, thrown into the fire and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask whatever you will, and it shall be done for you. By this my Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be my disciples. As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love. These things I have spoken to you, that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be full.

THIS IS MY COMMANDMENT, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you.

(15:1-14)

Steps to Receive the Sacrament of Penance:

1. CONTRITION

Examine your conscience.

Be sorry for your sins.

Resolve to avoid sin and occasions for sin.

2. CONFESSION

Confess your sins to the priest

Say an act of contrition

Receive absolution

3. SATISFACTION

Do your penance (say prayers, repair harm, etc)

Go and sin no more, your sins are forgiven!

The sacrament of Penance, or Confession and Reconciliation, requires a sincere review of our life in the form of an examination of conscience.

Thinking of your friendship with Jesus and considering the Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes, with the help of your parents, ask yourself some questions:

Do I like Jesus? Do I love Him? Would I want to be his disciple? His friend? Do I treasure my friendship with Jesus above all else? Do I want to give him great joy? How have I given Jesus joy or pain in my relationship with others? What are some blockages in my friendship with Jesus? Am I bearing good fruit for Jesus?

The commandments of God:

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall have no other gods besides me.

Has God been the source, center, and hope of my life? Have I put myself, anyone, or anything before God? Have I given to anyone or anything the love, honor, and worship that belong to God alone? Have I failed to pray to God? Have I been thankful for God's blessings?

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Do I have a respect for God and his holy name? Have I shown disrespect for or dishonored God's name in any way? Have I cursed or used foul language?

3. Remember the Lord's Day, to keep it holy.

Have I worshipped God faithfully on Sundays (or Saturday evenings) by coming to Mass? Have I been disrespectful in God's house? Have I paid attention during Mass? Did I laugh or talk during Mass?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

Have I loved and respected my parents as I should? Have I disobeyed them, deceived them, or caused them pain by my words and deeds? Have I treated my other family members with patience and love? Have I respected and obeyed my teachers?

5. You shall not kill.

Have I caused harm or injury to anyone? Have I wished harm on anyone? Have I given way to destructive anger or hatred? Have I failed to forgive anyone or harbored evil thoughts against them? Have I been cruel to anyone?

6 and 9. You shall not commit adultery. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

Did I respect my body and the bodies of others as temples of the Holy Spirit?

7 and 10. You shall not steal. You shall not covet anything that is your neighbor's.

Have I taken or kept anything that was not mine? Have I cheated anyone? Have I caused others to steal or cheat? Have I damaged or destroyed anything that belonged to another? Have I looked with envy, jealousy, or hatred on the possessions, talents, or achievements of others?

8. You shall not bear false witness.

Have I spoken evil, told lies, or spread rumors about anyone? Have I wrongly accused someone? Have I told anyone the sins or faults of another? Have I engaged in idle gossip, hearsay, and back-biting?

The beatitudes of Jesus:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Do I really believe the all is God's and from God? Do I hand my life over to him? Do I share with others, especially those in need? Am I possessive and selfish?

Blessed are they who mourn, for they will be comforted.

Do I lament people's suffering? Do I empathize with those suffering in my family, my school, or among my friends? Do I show compassion toward others? Do I mock and gloat over the faults of others?

Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the land.

Do I try to imitate the meekness of Jesus? Do I love my enemies and forgive those who offend me? Do I intimidate or coerce others who don't do what I say?

Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied.

Do I really want what is true and just for others? Do I pray and in general long for God? Do I fast (from unnecessary things)? Do I regularly pray, come to church, and speak to God?

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Am I compassionate towards others? Do I forgive those who have offended me? Do I make efforts to understand those who are different, or do I enjoy condemning and judging others? Do I talk about others behind their backs or revel in gossip?

Blessed are the pure of heart, for they will see God.

Are my thoughts and deeds pure, or do I cultivate hidden motives and intentions? Am I trusting and trustful? Am I a hypocrite? Am I a slave to some passion: food and drink, entertainment (movies, video games, electronic devices)? In other words, do these actions have more control of me than I have of them?

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called sons of God.

Do I sincerely work for reconciliation at home and school and with my friends? Am I angry, impatient, resentful, or bitter? Do I seek fights and arguments? Do I provoke others to anger? Do I sincerely strive to "turn the other cheek," or do I behave vengefully?



Blessed are they who are persecuted for the sake of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

Have I idolized comfort? Am I ready to suffer for what is right? Am I willing to participate in noble actions even though they may bring criticism from others? Do I do what is wrong out of fear, cowardice, or laziness? Do I avoid responsibility? Am I ashamed to express my belief in Christ and his gospel?

Rejoice and be glad for your reward will be great in heaven.

Do I find my joy in God and the performance of his will? Do I allow moodiness, jealousy, pessimism, anxiety, and grouchiness to fester within me? Do I spread darkness and irritation to others with my complaining? Do I try to control everything around me, including others? Is my treasure in God or in myself and the things of this world? Am I willing to receive joy from Christ and know the joy of believing?

After your examination of conscience, either at home or in church, pray to God that you may make a good confession.

In your own words, ask Jesus to help you remember your sins and be sorry for them. You may want to write them down.

Ask Him to help you never do them again.

Ask Him to heal you with his mercy.

Your confession brings Him joy! Use the back of this booklet to help you when you go to confession.

GOING TO CONFESSION

Go in the confessional, close the door, and kneel down.

Begin with the priest, making the sign of the cross: **In the name of the Father + and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

Then say, **Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. This is my first confession** *(or say how long it has been since your last confession).*

Then tell your sins to the priest. When you're finished, say, **For these and all my sins, I am sorry.** *The priest will offer you counsel, give you a penance, and then ask you to say an act of contrition:*

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of Thy grace to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin. Amen.

Or, **Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner.**

The priest then prays the prayer of absolution, which concludes:

I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, + and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. *Make the sign of the cross and say, Amen.*

The priest will then dismiss you: **The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace.** *You may tell him, Thank you.*

After you leave the confessional, return to your pew or kneel at the communion rail. There, before you leave church, pray the assigned penance, and thank Jesus for His mercy and forgiveness.