

WHY SHOULD I GO TO CONFESSION?

If you haven't been to Confession in a while, the Catholic Church wants to welcome you back, and invite you to participate in this beautiful sacrament of healing. Take a step in faith. You'll be surprised about how free you feel after taking part in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. So many Catholics describe incredible feelings of peace, joy, relief, and love that they never expected. Jesus is calling you to experience His mercy in this way too.

WHAT ARE "SOME" BENEFITS OF GOING TO CONFESSION?

1. Confession helps us to better "know thyself."

St. Augustine and countless other saints and doctors of the Church talk about the importance of knowing ourselves well. Through coming to know ourselves better, we realized how fallen we are, and how badly we need God's help and grace to get through life. Frequent Confession helps remind us to rely on God to help rid us of our sins.

2. Confession helps us overcome vice.

The grace we receive from the Sacrament of Confession helps us combat our faults and failings and break our habits of vice much more easily and expediently than we could otherwise do without the sacramental grace.

3. Confession brings us peace.

Guilt from the sins we commit can make us feel all mixed up inside and cause us to lose our peace and joy. When we hear God's forgiving words to us from the lips of the priest in Confession, a burden is lifted off our shoulders and we can again feel the peace of heart and soul that comes from being in a good relationship with God.

4. Confession helps us become more saintly, more like Jesus.

Jesus was perfectly humble, perfectly generous, perfectly patient, perfectly loving—perfectly everything! Don't you wish you could be as humble, generous, patient, and loving as Jesus? Saints throughout history have felt that way too, and they have frequented the Sacrament of Reconciliation to help transform them into people who are more like Christ. Little images of Christ—that's what saints are!

5. Confession makes our will stronger.

Every time we experience the Sacrament of Confession, God strengthens our will and our self-control to be able to resist the temptations that confront us in our lives. We become more resolute to follow God's will and not our own whims.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT NAMES OF THE SACRAMENT AND THE EFFECTS OF IT?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (1423 -1424) explains the Sacrament of Reconciliation, its various names and the graces that flow from the sacrament:

- "Sacrament of **PENANCE** because we obtain pardon from God's mercy for the offense committed against him, & are also reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by their sins.
- "Sacrament of **CONVERSION** because it makes sacramentally present Jesus' call to conversion, the first step in returning to the Father from whom one has strayed by sin."
- "Sacrament of **PENANCE**, since it consecrates the Christian sinner's personal and ecclesial steps of conversion, penance, and satisfaction."
- "Sacrament of **CONFESSION**, since the confession of sins to a priest is an essential element of this sacrament. It is also a 'confession' – acknowledgment & praise – of the holiness of God & his mercy.
- Sacrament of **FORGIVENESS**, since by the priest's sacramental absolution God grants the penitent pardon and peace."
- "Sacrament of **RECONCILIATION** because it imparts the love of God who reconciles: 'Be reconciled to God.' We should be ready to respond to the Lord's call: 'Go; first be reconciled to your brother'"

HOW DO I MAKE A GOOD CONFESSION?

The basic requirement for a good confession is to have the intention of returning to God with your whole heart, like the "Prodigal Son," and to acknowledge your sins with true sorrow before the priest. Modern society has lost a sense of sin. As Catholic followers of Christ, we must make an effort to recognize sin in our daily actions, words and omissions.

The Gospels show us the importance of the forgiveness of our sins. The lives of the saints prove that a person who grows in holiness has a stronger sense of sin, sorrow for sins and a need for the Sacrament of Reconciliation. No wonder the saints are filled with joy! They have realized the key to handing over their burdens to Christ through the Sacrament of Confession, so they can be free to serve Him with love and energy.

(extracted from CatholicsComeHome.org)