

# The Catholic Diocese of Peoria

## Guide to Confession

### *The Ten Commandments*

1. ***I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.***
  - ✚ Have I denied the existence of God?
  - ✚ Does something or someone influence my decisions other than God?
  - ✚ Have I doubted or denied my faith?
  - ✚ Have I rejected the Christian faith, associating myself formally with another religion?
  - ✚ Have I received communion at a non Catholic service?
  - ✚ Have I engaged in superstitious or occult practices?
2. ***You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain.***
  - ✚ Have I used the name of God in cursing or blaspheming?
  - ✚ Have I failed to keep the vows or promises I that I have made to God?
  - ✚ Have I spoken about the Church, saints or sacred things with irreverence, hatred or defiance?
  - ✚ Have I watched TV or movies or listened to music that treated God, the Church, sacred things or the saints with irreverence?
  - ✚ Have I been disrespectful in my behavior in the church?
3. ***Remember to keep Holy the Lords Day.***
  - ✚ Have I set time aside each day for personal prayer to God?
  - ✚ Have I missed mass on Sunday or other Holy days of obligation?
  - ✚ Did I habitually come late to or leave early from mass without a good reason?
  - ✚ Have I fasted an hour before communion?
  - ✚ Have I received a sacrament while in a state of mortal sin?
  - ✚ Did I do unnecessary shopping and business on Sunday or other holy days of obligation?
  - ✚ Did I do unnecessary labor on Sunday or other holy days of obligation?
  - ✚ Do I do penance on Friday, if not abstaining from meat, then some other form of penance?
  - ✚ If I am 14 years of age or older, did I abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Friday's of Lent?
  - ✚ If I am between the ages of 18 & 59, did I fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday?
4. ***Honor your Father and Mother.***
  - ✚ If still under the care of my parents, did I obey all that they reasonably asked of me?
  - ✚ Have I neglected the needs of my parents in their old age or in their time of need?

- ✚ Do I live in humble obedience to those who legitimately exercise authority over me?
  - ✚ Have I provided for the religious education and formation of my children for as long as they are under my care?
  - ✚ Have I broken the law?
5. ***You shall not kill.***
    - ✚ Have I intentionally killed a human being?
    - ✚ Have I procured, performed, cooperated or advised another in the intentional killing of an unborn child through abortion?
    - ✚ Have I seriously considered or attempted suicide?
    - ✚ Have I unjustly inflicted harm on another person?
    - ✚ Have I afflicted another person with verbal or emotional abuse?
    - ✚ Have I failed to forgive?
    - ✚ Have I harbored anger, resentment or hatred?
    - ✚ Am I prejudiced or unjustly discriminated against someone because of their race, color, nationality, gender or religion?
    - ✚ Did I, by my actions, recklessly endanger my life or health, or that of another person?
    - ✚ Have I gotten drunk or abused other drugs?
    - ✚ Do I endanger my life by not eating right or exercising?
    - ✚ Have I encouraged others to sin by giving scandal?
  6. ***You shall not commit adultery.***
  9. ***You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.***
    - ✚ Have I committed adultery, having sexual relations with someone who is married or with someone other than my spouse?
    - ✚ Have I committed fornication, having sexual relations with someone of the opposite sex when neither one of us is married?
    - ✚ Have I committed sodomy, having sexual relations with someone of the same sex?
    - ✚ Have I raped someone?
    - ✚ Have I committed masturbation, using my sexual organs for my own pleasure? (impurity with self)
    - ✚ Have I engaged in sexual foreplay reserved for marriage?
    - ✚ Have I used artificial means of birth control?
    - ✚ Have I undergone an operation to render myself sterile for contraceptive purposes?
    - ✚ Have I willfully entertained impure thoughts?
    - ✚ Have I purchased or made use of pornography in any form?
    - ✚ Have I Movies or TV that involve sex & nudity?
    - ✚ Have I listened to music or jokes that are harmful to purity?

- ✚ Have I set out to seduce someone or allow myself to be seduced?
- ✚ Have I made unwanted and unwelcome advances toward another?
- ✚ Have I purposely dressed immodestly?
- ✚ Am I living in a valid and licit marriage according to the laws of the Catholic Church?
- ✚ Have I given scandal by living with a member of the opposite sex without the benefit of marriage?

### ***7. You Shall Not Steal.***

### ***10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.***

- ✚ Did I take something that doesn't belong to me?
  - ✚ Did I deface, destroy or lose another's property without making restitution?
  - ✚ Did I cheat on a test, my taxes or in business?
  - ✚ Do I pay employees a living wage, or fail to give a full days labor for a full days pay?
  - ✚ Did I take advantage of another's hardship or ignorance by charging more for a product than it is worth?
  - ✚ Have I squandered money in compulsive gambling?
  - ✚ Am I envious of others on account of their possessions?
  - ✚ Have I misused natural resources?
  - ✚ Do I contribute my time, talent and money to support the poor, my parish, and the work of the church?
8. ***You shall not bare false witness against your neighbor.***
    - ✚ Have I deceived another by lying?
    - ✚ Did I perjure myself under oath?
    - ✚ Am I guilty of passing on gossip?
    - ✚ Am I guilty of detraction, destroying another's reputation by telling others about his/her faults for no good reason?
    - ✚ Am I guilty of slander or calumny, telling lies about another person in order to destroy his/her reputation?
    - ✚ Am I guilty of libel, writing lies about another person in order to destroy his/her reputation?
    - ✚ Am I guilty of rash judgment, assuming the worst of another person based on circumstantial evidence?
    - ✚ Have I failed to make reparation for a lie I told, or for harm to another's reputation?
    - ✚ Did I betray another's confidence through speech?

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#### *Steps for making a good confession:*

1. Pray that the Holy Spirit will help you to know your sins.
2. Examine your conscience.
3. Express in prayer your sorrow for having committed these sins, or pray for the help to be truly sorry.
4. Resolve not to commit these sins again and avoid the situations which lead to sins.
5. Confess your sins to the priest.
6. Pray or perform your penance the priest gives you as soon as possible.

#### *Prayer Before Confession*

Come Holy Spirit into my soul. Enlighten my mind that I may know the sins I ought to confess, and grant me your grace to confess them fully, humbly and with contrite heart. Help me to firmly resolve to not commit them again. O Blessed Virgin, Mother of my Redeemer, mirror of innocence and sanctity, and refuge of penitent sinners, intercede for me through the Passion of Your Son, that I may obtain the grace to make a good confession. All you blessed Angels and Saints of God, pray for me, a most miserable sinner, that I may repent from my evil ways, that my heart may be henceforth be forever united with yours in eternal love. Amen.

#### *Act of Contrition*

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

#### *Guide for making an individual confession*

- ✠ Begin by making the Sign of the Cross and saying: ***“Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been (how long) since my last confession”***
- ✠ The priest may give you a blessing at this time. If he has already done so, continue by confessing your sins, in kind and number, to the best of your ability. ***“These are my sins...”***
- ✠ You may conclude by saying: ***“For these and all my sins, I am sorry.”*** If you don’t know how to confess, feel uneasy or forget your sins, ask the priest to help you.

- ✠ The priest may offer some advice and will assign you your penance. He then may ask you to pray an

#### **Act of Contrition**

- ✠ The priest will then grant you *absolution*. God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of 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 the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. ***“Amen”***
- ✠ The priest may say “Give thanks to the Lord for He is good!”  
Respond: ***“His Mercy Lives Forever”*** Priest: ***“Go in peace”***
- ✠ After confession, pray or perform your penance as soon as possible. It is a good practice to pray an extra prayer for your priest – confessor.

***I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over the one sinner that repents than over the ninety-nine righteous people who have no need of repentance. Luke 15:7***