

# TEN STEPS TO CELEBRATE RECONCILIATION

- 1. Choose a Time**  
Parishes usually have communal celebrations during Advent and Lent, and private celebrations sometime during each week.
- 2. Examine Your Conscience**  
Take time to think about your sins. Focus on habits that are hard to change—areas that need Jesus' healing and forgiveness.
- 3. Go to the Priest**  
As Father welcomes you, make the Sign of the Cross.
- 4. Listen to God's Word**  
The priest may read a passage from the Bible.
- 5. Confess Your Sins**  
Tell the priest your sins. He may ask questions or give advice.
- 6. Receive a Penance**  
The priest will give you a task called a penance. It is a sign that you are sorry and want to change. It may be a prayer or a loving action.
- 7. Say an Act of Contrition**  
Tell God you are sorry. Pray in your own words, or say an Act of Contrition such as the following:  
My God,  
I am sorry for my sins with all my heart, and I detest them.  
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,  
I have sinned against you, whom I should love above all things.  
I firmly intend, with your help,  
to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever  
leads me to sin.  
Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.  
In his name, my God, have mercy.

8. **Receive Absolution**

The priest prays to God to forgive your sins. He says:

God, the Father of mercies,  
through the death and the resurrection of his 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 of the Son, and of the Holy  
Spirit.<sup>1</sup>

(CCC, number 1449)

The priest blesses you, and you make the Sign of the Cross.

9. **Leave**

The priest may give you a final blessing. You say "Amen" and leave.

10. **Do Your Penance!**

Don't forget to do the penance the priest assigned to you. Do it as soon as possible!

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Endnote Cited in a Quotation from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Second Edition.

1. *Ordo paenitentiae* 46: formula of absolution