

How to Go to Confession for the First Time

1. Fr. Harris says: "In Jesus' name I welcome you; when was your last Confession?"
2. You say: **"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Bless me Father, for I have sinned. This is my first Confession."**
3. Father says: "And what are your sins?"
4. You confess your sins. For practice, you might list some made up sins.
5. After confessing your sins, you say: **"Please forgive me for all of these sins and any others I may have forgotten."**
6. Fr. Harris will give you your Penance. Remember it!
7. Fr. Harris will ask you to pray an Act of Contrition.

Act of Contrition:

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee. I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and pains of hell, 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 confess my sins, to do Penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

Please note: Fr. Harris will say the prayer of absolution WHILE you make your Act of Contrition. For practice, parents can recite the prayer of absolution to help their students practice. Only a priest can pray the prayer of absolution and absolve a person of his or her sins. Here is one prayer of absolution Fr. Harris may use:

"God, the Father of mercies, through the death and 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."

8. Fr. Harris then may say: "Go in peace and please pray for me."
9. You say: **"Thank you, Father."**
10. Leave the Confessional, then go and do your penance as soon as you can.