

## How to make your Confession – a simple guide

Regular Confession times at St Joseph's are **Saturday mornings, 10.30 – 11.30am** and **Saturday evening, 5.15 – 5.30pm**.

The Confessionals are located towards the front of the church, on either side of the Sanctuary. They are clearly marked.

When the priest is free to hear your Confession, you will see a green light outside the Confessional, and the door will be open. When engaged, the door is shut and the light is red. If you have to wait, take a place in one of the benches nearby (there may well be a queue of people already there).

When you enter the Confessional, you may either kneel and speak to the priest through the grille, or sit on the chair and talk with him face to face.

Begin by saying: ***"Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It is [state the length of time] since my last Confession"***.

Then tell the priest all of the sins you can remember, and the number of times committed. When you have finished confessing all your sins you can say: ***"I am sorry for all these sins and the sins of my past life"***.

Then wait while the priest gives you any necessary advice, and gives you a penance. After this you can say an Act of Contrition, for example: ***"O my God, because you are so good, I am very sorry that I have sinned against you, and by the help of your grace I will not sin again"***.

The priest then gives you Absolution: ***"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. Amen."***

Now leave the Confessional, and if possible, perform your penance before going home.

## A Simple Examination of Conscience

Spend a little time thinking about the two great commandments of Jesus. Don't leave this until the last moment, just before Confession. Try to find a quiet place and ask the Holy Spirit to help you. This short list is only a guide, but it may help you reflect on your own situation.

### 1. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart.

- Have I been loyal to the teachings of the Church?
- Have I betrayed my faith or put it at risk?
- Am I faithful to my daily prayers?
- Have I put my trust in superstition or the Occult?
- Have I blasphemed against God or used bad language?
- Have I told lies or broken my word?
- Did I deliberately miss Mass on any Sunday or Holy Day of Obligation?
- Have I received Holy Communion without proper reverence, care or thanksgiving?
- Did I fulfill my Easter duties?
- Have I ever withheld something I ought to have confessed?

### 2. You shall love your neighbour as yourself.

- Have I respected my parents and those in authority?
- Have I neglected my family responsibilities?
- Have I got drunk, been greedy, used drugs or pornography?
- Have I been lazy at work, in study or at home?
- Have I been impatient, angry to jealous?
- Have I been impure, by myself or with others?
- Have I taken part in or encouraged abortion, the destruction of human embryos, euthanasia or any other means of taking life?
- Have I used forms of birth control forbidden by the Church?
- Have I cheated, stolen or gambled beyond my means?
- Have I told lies to excuse myself or injure others?