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 to avoid the situations that lead to sin.
5. Confess your sins to the priest.
6. Pray or perform the 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 not to 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 henceforth be forever untied 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 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 to 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. I have 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 confession 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 do not 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 may then ask you to pray an Act of Contrition.

Priest: “Go in peace.”

Respond: “Amen.”

- The priest may say: “Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.”

Priest: “Go in peace.”

Respond: “His mercy endures forever!”

After Confession, pray or perform your penance as soon as possible. It is a good practice to pray and extra prayer for your priest-confessor.

Guide to Confession

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

The Ten Commandments:

I: I am the Lord your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.

• Have I denied the existence of God?
• Does someone or something other than God influence my choices?
• 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?

II: You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain.

• Have I used the name of God in cursing or blasphemy?
• Have I failed to keep the vows or promises that I have made to God?
• Have I spoken about the Church, the saints, or sacred things with irreverence, hatred, or defiance?
• Have I watched television or movies, or listened to music that treated God, the Church, the saints, or sacred things irreverently?
• Have I been disrespectful in my behavior in Church?

III: Remember to keep holy the Lord’s 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 and/or leave early from Mass without a good reason?
• Have I fasted an hour before receiving Communion?
• Have I received a sacrament while in a state of mortal sin?
• Did I do unnecessary shopping and business on Sunday and the other Holy Days of Obligation?
• Do I do penance every Friday, if not abstaining from meat on Ash Wednesday and the Fridays of Lent?
• If I am 14 years of age or older, did I abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday?

VI: 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?

V: 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 bodily harm on another person?
• Have I afflicted another person with verbal or emotional abuse?
• Have I failed to forgive?
• Have I harbored hatred, anger, or resentment?
• Am I prejudiced or have I unjustly discriminated against others 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 drugs?
• Do I endanger my health by not eating right or exercising?
• Have I encouraged others to sin by giving scandal?

VII: You shall not steal.

• Have I deliberately taken something that does not belong to me?
• Am I prejudiced or have I unjustly discriminated against others because of their race, color, nationality, gender or religion?
• 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, talents, and money to support the poor, my parish, and the work of the Church?

VIII: You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

• Have I deceived another by lying?
• Did I perjure myself under oath?
• Am I guilty of passing gossip?
• Am I guilty of detraction, destroying a person’s reputation by telling others about his faults for no good reason?
• Am I guilty of slander or calumny, telling lies about another person in order to destroy his reputation?
• Am I guilty of libel, writing lies about another person in order to destroy his 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 done to a person’s reputation?
• Did I betray another’s confidence through speech?