

# The Sacrament of **RECONCILIATION**



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## EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

**B**EFORE we can receive the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we must first of all admit that we are sinners. We must be like the young man in the Parable of the Prodigal Son and look at what we have done and see what is right and what is wrong. This is called an examination of conscience.

We should actually do an examination of conscience every day before we go to bed. This way, we can keep track of the ways we are living God's love and the ways we are failing to live God love. If we wait too long to do our examination of conscience, we will not be able to remember everything that we have done and we will end up just guessing.

Then, when we are getting ready to ask for God's forgiveness in the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we combine all of the work that we have already done every evening. We try to remember whether we have done certain types of sins often, or sometimes, or maybe only once.

When we confess our sins, we should make sure to tell the priest how often we are doing something.

## SOME ADVICE FOR OUR CONFESSION

**S**OMETIMES when we go to Confession, we can get nervous. That is why we should have our prayers written down with us until we are absolutely sure that we have memorized them. Otherwise, we might forget them.

We might even think about writing down our sins if we find that we forget them when we are talking to the priest.

Sometimes, after our Confession, we remember that we forgot to confess one of our sins. That does not make a difference, because all of our sins are forgiven as long as we honestly tried to confess them all.

Our confessor might ask us a few questions about what we have done. He will often give us some advice on how we can avoid making the same mistakes again. Remember, by going to Confession we are promising God that we will try not to sin again.

The confessor will also give us a penance. This penance is a way of canceling some of the selfishness that is in our hearts because of the sins that we have committed. It is always good to do this penance as soon as possible.



After receiving absolution and having our sins forgiven, we leave with a glad heart. We hasten to do our penance and thank God for His great goodness to us.