

**Form of Confession
and an Act of
Spiritual Communion**



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The Way of Penitence

“Confession is good for the soul.” So runs the ancient proverb, the crystallized verdict of human experience.

Just as the first step in bodily healing is to relieve tension and discharge poisons, so the spirit of man must have relief by telling his troubles to someone. The final “Someone” is always God. But most of us find that a sympathetic human listener helps us to tell God.

Therefore the Church, while providing a confessional moment in all her regular services, also says through her priest:

“If there be any of you who by this (general) means cannot quiet his own conscience, but requireth further comfort or counsel, let him come to me, or to some other Minister of God’s Word, and open his grief.” (*From an exhortation after the Communion Office, Book of Common Prayer, page 88.*)

The Church in ordaining her priests says in Christ’s Name to them: “Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven.”

Upon the next page we give for those who desire to use it the main part of a more formal and yet very intimate type of confession. Being private and strictly confidential, it is not in the Prayer Book, but has been used from ancient

times. For the sick room, this form is shortened here.

This form of confession requires privacy whether in a church, home, hospital, or other place. It is usually best to arrange with the clergy in advance for this service, but any priest is ready and willing to hear a confession on the spur of the moment if there is emergency.

The Act always begins with a Blessing, for which the penitent asks.

Chaplain. The Lord be in thy heart and upon thy lips, so thou mayest worthily confess all thy sins, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen.

Penitent. I confess to God Almighty; the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; that I have sinned very much in thought, word, and deed, by my own fault. And especially I remember these sins;

(There are several variants of the above. The penitent then states the specific sins he can remember, and should end with the following:)

Penitent. For these and all my other sins, which I cannot now remember, I am very sorry, I promise to do better, I beg God to forgive me; and you, Chaplain, to give me penance, advice and absolution.

After the uninterrupted confession, the chaplain may find it helpful to question the penitent, so that advice about possible reparation, or

restitution, or how to face the future more successfully may be given.

Then some form of penance is given. This is not a penalty but some useful act which aids the penitent to make outward embodiment of his contrite purpose. Then the chaplain gives the Absolution in these words with the sign of the Cross:

ABSOLUTION. ¶ *The assurance of God's forgiveness.*

Chaplain. Almighty God, our heavenly Father, who of his great mercy hath promised forgiveness of sins to all those who with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto him; Have mercy upon you; pardon and deliver you from all your sins; confirm and strengthen you in all goodness; and bring you to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Then, always, the Blessing:

Chaplain. The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be upon thee and remain with thee always. Amen.

Go (*or* Abide) in peace; the Lord hath put away all thy sins.



Spiritual Communion

¶ *If on any Sunday or other Day of Obligation (see Tables and Rules for the Movable and Immovable Feasts in the front part of the Prayer Book), you are prevented from making your Communion, make an act of Spiritual Communion, after the following manner:*

¶ *Kneel down, and say:*

In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, Amen.

¶ *Then read the Collect for the day, the Epistle, and the Holy Gospel.*

¶ *Rise and say the Nicene Creed.*

I believe in one God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, And of all things visible and invisible:

And in one Lord Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son of God; Begotten of His Father before all worlds, God of God, Light of Light, Very God of very God; Begotten, not made; Being of one substance with the Father; By whom all things were made: Who for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and was incarnate by the Holy Ghost of the Virgin Mary, and was made man: And was crucified also for us under Pontius Pilate; He suffered and was buried: And the third day He rose again according to the Scriptures: And ascended into heaven, And sitteth on the right hand of the Father: And he shall come again, with glory, to judge both the quick and the dead; Whose kingdom shall have no end.

And I believe in the Holy Ghost, The Lord, and Giver of Life, Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son; Who with the Father and the Son together is worshipped and glorified; Who spake by the Prophets: And I believe one Catholic and Apostolic Church: I acknowledge one Baptism for the remission of sins: And I look for the Resurrection of the dead: And the Life of the world to come. Amen.

¶ *Kneel and read the Confession*

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men; We acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness, Which we, from time to time, most grievously have committed, By thought, word, and deed, Against Thy Divine Majesty, Provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us. We do earnestly repent, And are heartily sorry for these our misdoings: The remembrance of them is grievous unto us; The burden of them is intolerable. Have mercy upon us, Have mercy upon us, most merciful Father; For Thy Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake, Forgive us all that is past; And grant that we may ever hereafter Serve and please Thee In newness of life, To the honour and glory of Thy Name, Through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

¶ *Then say:*

The Almighty and merciful Lord, grant me pardon and absolution of all my sins. Amen.

¶ *Read the Comfortable Words, Preface, and Sanctus.*

Hear what comfortable words our Saviour Christ saith unto all who truly turn to Him.

Come unto Me, all ye that travail and are heavy laden, and I will refresh you. *St. Matt.* xi. 28.

So God loved the world, that He gave His only-begotten Son, to the end that all that believe in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life. *St. John* iii. 16.

Hear also what Saint Paul saith.

This is a true saying, and worthy of all men to be received, That Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners. *I Tim.* i. 15.

Hear also what Saint John saith.

If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and He is the Propitiation for our sins. *I St. John* ii. 1, 2.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify Thy glorious Name; evermore praising Thee, and saying,

HOLY, HOLY, HOLY, Lord God of hosts, Heaven and earth are full of Thy glory: Glory be to Thee, O Lord Most High. Amen.

¶ *Then say:*

In union, O Lord, with the faithful at every altar of Thy Church, where the Holy Eucharist is now being celebrated, I desire to offer Thee praise and thanksgiving. I present to Thee my

soul and body with the earnest wish that I may always be united to Thee, And since I can not now receive Thee sacramentally, I beseech Thee to come spiritually into my heart. I unite myself to Thee, and embrace Thee with all the affections of my soul. Let nothing ever separate Thee from me. May I live and die in Thy love. Amen.

¶ *Spend a few moments in meditation upon the fact that God so loved you that He sent His Only-Begotten Son into the world for you. Recite the Lord's Prayer and afterward say:*

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Ghost, be with me always. Amen.

