

PRAYERS BEFORE CONFESSION

(to be prayed on your own before approaching the priest)

Trisagion Prayers

Holy God, Holy Mighty, Holy Immortal: have mercy on us.

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Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

All-holy Trinity, have mercy on us. Lord, cleanse us from our sins. Master, pardon our iniquities. Holy God, visit and heal our infirmities for Thy Name's sake. Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy, Lord, have mercy.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; both now and ever, and unto ages of ages. Amen.

Our Father, Who art in Heaven, hallowed be Thy Name. Thy kingdom come; Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory: of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; now and ever, and unto ages of ages, Amen.

Psalm 50

Have mercy on me, O God, according to Thy Great Mercy; and according to the multitude of Thy compassions blot out my transgression. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I know mine iniquity, and my sin is ever before me. Against Thee only have I sinned and done this evil before Thee, that Thou mightiest be justified in Thy words, and prevail when Thou art judged. For behold, I was conceived in iniquities, and in sins did my mother bear me. For behold, Thou hast loved truth; the hidden and secret things of Thy wisdom hast Thou made manifest unto me. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be made clean; Thou shalt wash me, and I shall be made whiter than snow. Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness; the bones that be humbled, they shall rejoice. Turn Thy face away from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence, and take not Thy Holy Spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation, and with Thy governing Spirit establish me. I shall teach transgressors Thy ways, and the ungodly shall turn back unto Thee. Deliver me from blood-guiltiness, O God, Thou God of my salvation; my tongue shall rejoice in Thy righteousness. O Lord, Thou shalt open my lips, and my mouth shall declare Thy praise. For if Thou hadst desired sacrifice, I had given it; with whole-burnt offerings Thou shalt not be pleased. A sacrifice unto God is a broken spirit; a heart that is broken and humbled God will not despise. Do good, O Lord, in Thy good pleasure unto Zion, and let the walls of Jerusalem be built up. Then shalt Thou be pleased with a sacrifice of righteousness, with oblation and whole-burnt offerings. Then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

THE ORDER OF CONFESSION

The Penitent stands with the Priest before the icon of Christ at the confessional table (or as directed by the Priest), makes two metanoias, and prays:

PENITENT: I have sinned, O Lord, forgive me. O God be merciful to me a sinner.

The Penitent makes a third metanoia and kisses the cross of our Lord and God and Savior Jesus Christ. The Penitent then stands or kneels before the icon of Christ at the confessional table (or as directed by the Priest), and prays:

PENITENT: O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, I confess to Thee all the hidden and open sins of my heart and mind, which I have committed unto this present day; wherefore I beg of Thee, the Righteous and Compassionate Judge, remission of sins and grace to sin no more.

PRIEST: My spiritual child, inasmuch as thou hast come to Christ, be not ashamed; for thou speakest not unto me, but unto Christ, before whom thou standest.

The Priest then places the end of his Stole (epitrachelion) upon the head of the Penitent. The Penitent now confesses the sins of which he is aware after diligent self-examination. Upon concluding confession, the Penitent says:

PENITENT: For these and all other sins which I cannot now remember, I am heartily sorry, I firmly purpose amendment, and humbly ask pardon of God; and of thee, Father, I ask for penance, advice and absolution.

The Priest may question the Penitent as necessary.

PRIEST: My spiritual child, who has confessed to my most humble self: I, humble and a sinner, have not power on earth to forgive sins, but God alone. But through that divinely-spoken word which came to the Apostles after the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ saying, "Whosoever sins you remit, they are remitted, and whosoever sins you retain, they are retained," we, too, are emboldened to say: Whatsoever thou hast said to my most humble self, and whatsoever thou hast not succeeded in saying, through ignorance or forgetfulness, whatever it may be, God forgive thee in this present life and that which is to come.

The Priest places his right hand upon the Stole (epitrachelion), making the Sign of the Cross over the head of the Penitent, and pronounces the Absolution:

PRIEST: God it was who forgave David through Nathan the Prophet, when he confessed his sins, and Peter weeping bitterly for his denial, and the sinful woman in tears at his feet, and the Publican, and the Prodigal Son: May that same God forgive thee all things, through me a sinner, both in this present world, and in that which is to come, and set thee uncondemned before his dread Judgement Seat. And now, having no further care for the sins which thou hast declared, depart in peace.

The Penitent kisses the cross on the epitrachelion of the Priest and dries his eyes on the epitrachelion.

PRIEST: May Christ, our true God, through the intercessions of his most Holy Mother, and of all the Saints, have mercy on us and save us, for as much as he is God and loveth mankind. Amen.

PENITENT: O almighty and merciful God, I truly thank thee for the forgiveness of my sins; bless me O Lord, and help me always, that I may ever do that which is pleasing to thee, and sin no more. Amen.