

When you cannot go to Confession...

From Pope Francis:

"Do what the Catechism says. It is very clear: If you cannot find a priest to confess to, speak directly with God, your father, and tell him the truth. Say, 'Lord, I did this, this, this. Forgive me,' and ask for pardon with all your heart." Make an act of contrition, the pope said, and promise God, "I will go to confession afterward, but forgive me now.' And immediately you will return to a state of grace with God."

The Catechism of the Catholic Church:

"When it arises from a love by which God is loved above all else, contrition is called 'perfect' — contrition of charity. Such contrition remits venial sins; it also obtains forgiveness of mortal sins if it includes the firm resolution to have recourse to sacramental confession as soon as possible."

From the Archdiocese of Toronto:

The only ordinary way of attaining forgiveness for sins is participating in individual and integral confession and absolution. Nevertheless, if a person is unable to make an appointment with a priest for the Sacrament during the current pandemic, it will suffice for the moment to pray the Act of Contrition as best as one can intending it truthfully, and to commit to participating in the Sacrament of Reconciliation as soon as possible when conditions allow.

Steps to Perfect Contrition

1. Examine your conscience by reflection on your sins.
2. Be remorseful & sorry for one's sins out of Love for God and resolve to not commit them again.
3. Pray an Act of Contrition Prayer again, out of Love for God.
4. Make a FIRM commitment to go to confession as soon as it becomes possible

Traditional Act of Contrition Prayer:

Oh My God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You and detest all my sins because of Your just punishments, but most of all because they offend You my God, who are all-good and deserving of my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to sin no more, and to avoid the near occasion of sin.