Mass Times

Monday to Friday: 6:30 and 9:00 AM
Saturday: 8:00 AM  See the Bulletin for the Holy Day Schedule
Saturday Vigil: 4:30 and 7:00 PM
Sunday: 7:00, 9:00, 10:30 AM, 12:00 Noon and 5:00 PM
10:15 AM in the Holy Family Chapel

The Sacrament of Baptism is celebrated on the second, third and fourth Sundays of the month. The Pre-Baptism Class is held in the Church on the first Tuesday of the month at 7:00PM. Please contact the rectory for an appointment with a priest.
The Sacrament of Reconciliation is celebrated on Saturday from 12:30 to 1:30 PM or by appointment with a priest.
For the Sacrament of Matrimony contact the rectory for an appointment with a priest.
The Sacrament of the Sick is celebrated on the fourth Saturday of every month following the 8:00 AM Mass. To arrange a visit to a sick person by a priest, contact the rectory.
St. Barnabas the Apostle
Fifth Week of Lent

Monday, March 14
6:30 AM  Marilyn Veritzan
9:00 AM  Anna Terranova  James B. Spillane
Nicholas A. Lucas  Celeste Falco
Frances Ginty  Ann Bukata

Tuesday, March 15
6:30 AM  Alice Goldsmith
9:00 AM  Brian Dione

Wednesday, March 16
6:30 AM  Robert Young
9:00 AM  Theresa P. Bollinger

Thursday, March 17 St. Patrick
6:30 AM  James Clare
9:00 AM  Deceased Members of the Dalton Family

Friday, March 18
6:30 AM  Alfredo Moneta, Isabel Buonomo & Marie & Louis Monaco
9:00 AM  Esther Leahy

Saturday, March 19 St. Joseph
8:00 AM  Stephen Andrew Clifford

Fr. Charles  4:30 PM  Joseph Agostinacchio  Alex Rose
Raymond Vogts  Rosalie Galatioto
Margaret Quinn  William Christiansen
Fr. Francis  7:00 PM  Kathleen Uttendorfer

Sunday, March 20th Palm Sunday of the Passion of the Lord
Fr. Charles  7:00 AM  Nancy Stabile
Fr. Adrian  9:00 AM  Charles Martin
Fr. Charles  10:15 AM  For the People of Our Parish
Fr. Francis  10:30 AM  Adeline & Peter Villella, Jr.
Fr. Adrian  12:00 PM  Vincent Buonocore
Fr. Francis  5:00 PM  James Clare

We pray for our recently deceased
Mary Frances McNulty  Jess M. Casco
Alice Goldsmith  Marilyn Zahn Veritzan
Raymond Beier  James Hoare

Bread & Wine
The Eucharistic Bread & Wine is offered in friendship for Winnie Eschmann from the Fairway Ladies Golf Group.

Sanctuary Lamp
The Sanctuary Lamp Candle will be lit this week in friendship for Winnie Eschmann from the Fairway Ladies Golf Group.

Parish Mission Statement
Our parish is a vibrant and spirited Catholic Community. Through our Eucharistic worship and daily lives, we are strengthened by our liturgical and sacramental celebrations which are always at the heart of Catholicism. These solemn ceremonies help to shape the faith of children and adults alike. There are numerous opportunities for service that allow us to love one another as Christ commanded. May our Patron Saint, Saint Barnabas, whose name means Son of Encouragement, allow this community to be for you a faithful friend, a sturdy shelter and a treasure beyond price.
St. Barnabas
Three Tuesdays in March
7:00 PM—8:00 PM
Reflection & Prayer

Spring is coming!

Guest Speakers

March 1st: Sr. Joann Bonauro
‘Change Our Hearts’

March 8th: Ms. Leeann Graziose
‘Table of Plenty’

March 15th: Ms. Jan Jamroz
‘Blest are They’

St. Patrick’s Day
In Honor of St. Patrick Himself
St. Barnabas Church & The Bellmore Knights of Columbus
Present:

SEAS Gym
Saturday March 19, 5:30-9:30 PM
Following 4:30 Mass
Corned Beef & Cabbage
Beer, Wine & Soda

$25 per Adult and $5 per child
Up to 12 years, teenagers $10
Babysitting service available
for younger children
Bring the family to 4:30 Mass
Then enjoy some
Food, Dancing and Fun

For Reservations Please Contact
Austin Cannon Jr or Austin Cannon III or Thomas Ancona
516-221-7186 516-710-8256 516-849-7600

Please RSVP By Saturday March 12
Have you ever been in a heated argument with someone and couldn’t let the matter drop? You just had to continue making your point. Why? Because you had to have the last word.

Watching the Presidential Debates you see how the moderators struggle with trying to be fair in dealing with two or more opposing points of view. So much anger and ego. It is also obvious how important it is to have the last word. The last one to speak always seems to have the most lasting impact.

To have the last word is to be the final authority. Ask any coach, teacher, manager, politician, or parent and they will tell you that having the last word is necessary.

In today’s Gospel we see a woman caught in adultery - there she is in the middle of an angry crowd, dying with embarrassment. Pharisees stand around her in an accusing circle, trying to punish her. They also want to trap Jesus. ‘Moses had said that a woman caught in adultery should be put to death by stoning.’ If Jesus says ‘Let her go’ he is against the law of Moses. If he says ‘Stone her’, he will lose his reputation for mercy. Either way he couldn’t win.

So Jesus writes on the ground. Perhaps he was only doodling - but no doodler before or since ever cut so much ground from under indignant feet! He then straightened up and has the last word. “Let the one among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.” Wouldn’t you love to have been there to see the jaws dropping, to see the deflated looks on their faces and the defeat on their retreating backs?

Wouldn’t you love to be the one among you, he said, ‘Go away and from this moment sin no more’. Because Jesus has the last word, the last word among us is mercy and forgiveness. So we too are slow to judge and quick to forgive. We are generous instead of stingy. We welcome all into our midst with no strings attached.

Because Jesus has the last word, the last word among us is a light in the darkness, the salt of the earth. In other words, we can make a difference in this world. All too often we think that we can only do God's work by officially working in the Church - by singing in the choir, teaching religious education, volunteering in Social Ministry, giving our weekly offerings. But the most important work that we do is in the world Monday through Saturday. In our jobs, in our communities, in our families and neighborhoods, we can dare to go against the grain.

Jesus has the last word - not the boss or the neighbor or the latest popularity contest. Because he has the last word, we can tell the truth when everyone else can only lie.

Because he has the last word, we can strive to do our best when everyone else is just trying to get by.

Because he has the last word, we can go out of our way to help another, even when it might cost us.

Christ invites us to ask a most timely and timeless question. Who has the last word in our lives?
**The Week at a Glance**

**Sunday:**
Catholic Daughters Bake Sale following all morning Masses in the Holy Family Chapel Lobby.
- 8:00 AM Blood Drive, School Cafeteria
- 11:15 AM Easter Egg Hunt following The Family Mass
- 1:30 PM Baptisms, Church
- 7:30 PM Al-Anon Meeting, School Cafeteria

**Monday:**
- 8:00 PM Choir Rehearsal, Church
- 8:00 PM Charismatic Prayer Meeting, Holy Family Chapel

**Tuesday:**
- 1:30 PM Friendly Seniors, Holy Family Chapel
- 7:00 PM Lenten Reflection & Benediction “Blest are They”, Ms. Jan Jamroz, Church
- 7:00 PM Family Music Practice, Holy Family Chapel
- 7:30 PM Respect Life Meeting, Rectory Meeting Room

**Wednesday:**
- 7:00 PM RCIA Meeting, Convent Meeting Room
- 7:30 PM Al-Anon Meeting, Rectory Meeting Room
- 8:00 PM Choir Rehearsal, Church

**Thursday:**
No Religious Education Classes today
- 7:00 PM Bible Study, Rectory Meeting Room

**Friday:**
- 9:30 AM St. Patrick’s Day & St. Joseph’s Day Celebration, Holy Family Chapel
- 1:30 PM Stations of the Cross, Church

**Saturday:**
- 8:00 AM Anointing of the Sick, Church
- 12:30 PM Reconciliation, Church
- 5:30 PM St. Patrick’s Day Dance, School

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**Financial Reports**

**Weekend Collections**

<table>
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**2016 Catholic Ministries Appeal**

- Goal Amount: $ 107,900
- Total Pledged: $ 57,528
- Total Received: $ 32,392
- Total # of Donors: 286

**Second Collections**
The second collections will now be taken up after communion.

**Second Collection This Weekend**
Maintenance & Repair of our Parish.

**Year End Contribution**
Call the Rectory to receive a contribution statement for 2015.
**St. Barnabas Social Ministry**

**Easter Baskets**

Social Ministry will begin preparing Easter Food Baskets for many members of our community during the next few weeks. Your help is a sure and visible way to share the Good News of Jesus’ Resurrection and celebrate His Gift of New Life.

Our baskets get packed with the usual items:
- Canned Hams
- Instant Potatoes
- Canned Soups & Vegetables
- Canned Fruit
- Pancake Mix & Syrup
- Cookies
- Coffee & Tea
- And of course...Easter Candy!

If you can help, please bring these items to church or leave them at the rectory. Food cards are also a tremendous help to our families. God bless you for the generous love you always show to those in need!

**St. Vincent de Paul**

Help is available for low income families and the needy who have trouble paying their electric bills. You can contact PSE&G Long Island Advocacy at 454-4331. For more information call our parish social ministry at 785-6243. This week please pray for the poor and needy of the parish. Thank you.

**Volunteer Drivers Wanted for Veterans**

Nassau County will provide vehicles to transport residents to and from the Northport VA, East Meadow, Valley Stream and Hicksville Clinics. The hours needed are Monday through Friday from 8:00 AM - 4:00 PM. Contact the Veteran’s Service Agency at 572-6526.

**Eagle Scout Project**

Altar server and youth group member Thomas Ham is a member of Boy Scout Troop 285 and is currently working on his Eagle Scout project. Thomas’ project is to renovate the St. Barnabas Youth Group Room situated in St. Elizabeth Ann Seton School. He is an active member of the Parish as well as the youth ministry program. His plan is to buy shelving for storage, replace the rug and the seating area (couches), purchase an entertainment center with television and a DVD player. The approximate cost of this project is $1,650. Thomas is asking for donations of money and materials. If you can help, please send checks payable to “Troop 285” and in the memo section note, “Thomas Ham Eagle Scout Project” to 332 Frederick Ave., Bellmore, NY 11710. Contact Thomas at 804-0012 or email thoham285@outlook.com with questions or donations.

**Bake Sale Today**

The Catholic Daughters of the Americas have a bake sale today Sunday, March 13th, following the 9:00 AM, 10:15 AM, 10:30 AM and 12 Noon Masses in the lobby of the Holy Family Chapel. Support is appreciated.

**Blood Drive - Today**

The Bellmore Knights are sponsoring a blood drive today from 8:00 AM - 2:00 PM in the South Cafeteria of the school.

**Widows & Widowers**

Meeting Tuesday, March 15th at 12:30 PM for lunch at Paddy’s Loft located at 1286 Hicksville Road in Massapequa. Cost is $28 and reservations are required. Call Dolores Meadows at 826-2512 and forward payment to her at 2671 Cedar St. Seaford, 11783.

**Attention EM’s**

Ministers of the Eucharist are needed for our Easter Sunday Masses. Sign up in the sacristy or the rectory.
We Pray for the Sick
Nicoletta Russo, Meghan Alice Roach, Debbie Cain, Stephen Rich, Patrick Hoyne, Rosemary Grandwilliams, Barbara Cannon, George Donohue, Lillian Rocco, Pat Simone, Don Davis, Louis Romano, Kristin O’ Halloran, Patricia Merget, Mildred Scalesi, Rita Lemma, Mary Grimes, Donald Grimes, Jacob Daniel Haubeil, Damon Capobianco, Eugene Ryan, Carol Chiasera, Francis G. Noonan, Terri-Ann Clarke, Charlie Riiska, Natalie Martin, Patrick Clarke, Kevin Keegan, Jason Todhunter, John Nalick, Dolores Young, Corinne Capozzi, Barbara O’Neil, Diane LaBianca, Theresa Anselmo, John C. Hannan Sr., Clarence Anspake, Dr. Lawton Manderson, Terrie Manderson, George Stockerl, James P. Corliss, Jr., Vic Caliguiri, Lottie Smakowski, Dominick Schiavone, Nicole & Baby Ella McKernan, Raffaele Esposito, Joseph Fiumefredo

Thank you for your service
SOCS Charles Metrango

Remember your loved ones, living and deceased, at Easter by having Easter flowers on the altar in their honor. The offering is $15. To arrange for this, fill out this form and drop it off at the rectory or in the collection basket.

Easter flowers in memory of:

_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________
_____________________________________________
Fun Run
A timed, officially sanctioned 5K running race and a ‘fun run’ of 1 mile for non-competitive runners and kids will take place on Saturday, March 19th. The opening Liturgy begins at 7:30 AM, the “fun run” begins at 8:30 AM and the 5k begins at 9:00 AM. The 5k registration cost is $30, under 14 yrs old the cost is $20 and for Catholic School Teachers the cost is $10. The fun run registration cost is $15. The run is hosted by St. Joseph School, 450 Franklin Ave., Garden City. For more information or to register visit https://runsignup.com/Race/NY/GardenCity/StJosephSchoolSpirit5K.

Golden Wedding Jubilee Celebrations
Couples that have been married fifty years or more will be honored at liturgies on Sunday, April 10th at the Church of St. Lawrence the Martyr in Sayville and on Sunday, April 24th at the Church of Maria Regina in Seaford. Both liturgies will begin at 2:30 PM. Couples may register for ONE liturgy. Registration forms and complete instructions can be obtained at the rectory. Registration must be received by March 25th for the April 10th liturgy and by April 8th for the April 24th liturgy. If you have any questions call 678-5800 ext. 207.

The Long Island Catholic Magazine
In the March edition you will read about how women who have had an abortion are experiencing God’s mercy through special retreats conducted by the Sisters of Life here in our own diocese. Bishop Murphy reflects on the process for selecting a new shepherd. Read about ways to celebrate the Easter Triduum with your family and so much more. Please support the monthly magazine of the Diocese of Rockville Centre - Subscribe today. One year of 10 issues for $20. Sign up today online at licatholic.org or call 1-800-443-2155.

4th Annual Women’s Conference
The Voice of Catholic Women Reflecting on The Message of Pope Francis will be held Saturday, March 19th from 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM at the Seminary of the Immaculate Conception. Guest speakers are Carol Dunning, Esq., Dr. Joann Heaney-Hunter, and Elizabeth M. Keihm. Join us for presentations, conversation with other women, and a festive luncheon. The offering is $25. For more information visit the website www.drvc-faith.org.

Life Center Chinese Auction
Support the Life Center on Sunday, April 10th; 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM at Our Lady of Grace Parish, Fr. Patrick Shanahan Hall, 666 Albin Ave., West Babylon. Admission is $13 or 2 for $25 and includes Pasta Dinner/Beer, Wine, Soda. Auction tickets sold separately. Tickets available at the door. Call 798-9100 for tickets and information.

St. Andrew the Apostle Pascha Bake Sale
Saturday, March 19th, visit St. Andrew the Apostle at 275 Ellison Ave. in Westbury from 9:00 AM - 4:00 PM. The bake sale features Slavic Foods, ethnic baked goods, basket raffles and boutiques. For further information call Fr. Tyler Strand at (631) 759-6083.

Help Wanted
Part-time Housekeeper position is available at St. William the Abbot Rectory, Seaford. Duties include general housekeeping and laundry. Please contact Msgr. Robert Hayden at information@stwilliam.org or call 785-1266.

Naloxone Training Program
On Thursday, March 31st, from 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM at Brookside School, 1260 Meadowbrook Road, North Merrick, learn overdose facts and statistics, recognize the signs and symptoms of Opioid abuse and how to identify & prevent an overdose. Learn how to administer the antidote Narcan. Registration is required: http://goo.gl/forms/Tok0GGlz9W.

Bereavement Counseling and Support
Curé of Ars will hold a 7 week session on Wednesday evenings from 7:00 PM - 9:00 PM in the Rectory Lower Level on April 13th, 20th, 27th, May 4th, 11th, 18th. A closing Mass will take place on Thursday, May 26th in Msgr. Leonard Hall. Register in advance by calling 623-1400 est. 175.
Palm Sunday, March 20th - Children will participate in the entrance procession at the 10:15 Family Mass. Palms will be blessed and distributed after Mass.

Holy Thursday Service for Children, Thursday, March 24th, 3:00 PM in the Holy Family Chapel
Please join us for this moving service where children will reenact the Last Supper. Children ages 3 and up are invited to participate as followers of Jesus. Practice will be held on Tuesday, March 22nd at 6:00 PM in the Holy Family Chapel.
If you are interested in participating please contact stbarnabasfamilyliturgy@gmail.com or sign up after the 10:15 Family Mass.

Easter Sunday, March 27th - Following the 10:15 Family Mass small bottles of holy water will be available to take home.

Paper hearts will be available for children to color and complete, filling in how they will open their heart to Jesus during Lent. Each Sunday at the 10:15 AM Family Mass, children can present their completed hearts in the Offertory Procession. These hearts will then be placed on the cross with hopes of being transformed for Easter.
Congratulations to all our Second Trimester Honor Roll Recipients:

1st Honors
Rebecca Acosta, Christopher Antimisiaris, Timothy Barrett, Matthew Blanchard, Mason Cain, Michael Cawley, Samantha Cordeiro, Arthur Erskine, Amileah Fahmy, Sabrina Fahmy, Connor Harrison, Luciano LaGattuta, Sean Laughlin, Lola Lechleider, Sophia Mazza, Noelle Messick, Mia Quinones, Gabriella Quinones, John Paul Rincon, Amanda Ramsden, Karena Rizzo, John Terry, Brian Venneri, Sean Wilcox & Brianne Zaremba

2nd Honors
Hi Everyone,

Last week at our Youth Ministry meeting, we focused on The Works of Mercy. It was great to talk about what mercy means in our life in this Jubilee Year of Mercy! We challenged ourselves to focus on one of the works of Mercy as we journey through the rest of Lent.

Today’s Gospel asks us to look at ourselves. Sometimes it is easy to see what others can and should do better. I know I can do that myself! In the Gospel today Jesus reminds us that while it’s not okay to sin, we can’t judge others who do. Here’s the catch—one of the Spiritual works of Mercy is admonish the sinner. So what Jesus reminds us is the difference between admonishing and judging. As we discussed in Youth Ministry, the difference is love. God calls us to act with love. The people in the Gospel story did not act with anything but judgment.

We do have to stand up for our beliefs in a culture that doesn’t understand them and is quick to judge us, and we need to be strong about that. Have a blessed week!

Peggy

Holy Hour /Dodgeball!! Next Friday - March 18th - meet at St. Barnabas and travel to St. Ignatius. Let me know if you’re interested so we know we have rides! Open to everyone 8th grade and older!!

If you are a teen or an adult who might enjoy working with our middle schoolers, maybe you would like to be a part of our Core team! Email Peggy for information!! We need you!

stbarnabasyouthministry@gmail.com

There are a few sweatshirts, jackets and miscellaneous items that are in our lost and found in the Religious Education Room in the school building. Please check when you bring your child to religious education class.

All Level 7 families will receive a letter explaining the Level 7 Welcome Ceremony that will be taking place during ALL Masses on Saturday, April 16th and Sunday, April 17th.

Important Dates

Confirmation will be held on Monday, May 23rd - parents/students should have received a letter with the time of their Mass as well as the rehearsal information.

Thursday, March 17th – Reminder No classes – please note they were not scheduled for the 17th.

NO CLASSES – March 21st through 31st – Easter Recess. Classes resume on Monday April 4th!

Monday, April 4th – Level 2 Parent meeting – The Eucharist - 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM.

Tuesday, April 5th – Level 1 Parent meeting- Conscience Formation – 10:00 AM and 7:00 PM.
Saturday, April 9th– Level 3 Reconciliation – 11:00 AM

Please remember to check the Religious Education grade level calendars as well as the website to keep informed of class dates, as well as when classes are not in session, homework assignments, and requirements.
Holy Week is most definitely a very sacred time of the year, for it is now that we will commemorate and remember the last week of Jesus' life on this earth. These are the days leading up to the great Easter Feast. The Lenten season of sacrifice and self-denial is about to come to an end, but this coming week is extremely important for all Christians. The greatest focus of the week is the Passion (suffering) and Resurrection of Jesus Christ and the events that led up to it.

Historical documents tell us that as early as the fourth century the Church celebrated this "Great Week" with a feeling of profound sanctity. It begins with Palm Sunday, which marks Jesus' triumphant entry into Jerusalem. The central feature of the service proper to this day, as it was in the earliest times, is the procession of palms. The palms are blessed and are then borne in procession to the church, where an entry is made with a certain amount of ceremony, after which the Mass is celebrated. The other notable and very ancient feature of the present Palm Sunday service is the reading of the Gospel of the Passion by three readers.

Especially important for Catholics is the Easter Triduum. This is the three days just before Easter.

On Holy Thursday, we reenact the Lord's Last Supper, which He shared with His apostles on the night He was betrayed and arrested. This is one of the most beautiful liturgies of the entire liturgical year. At the Mass, the priest will wash the feet of twelve people, just as Jesus did. Also on this night, priests all over the world will renew their sacred vows. This is because, at the Last Supper, Jesus not only instituted the Mass (Eucharist) but also the ministerial priesthood.

On Good Friday, the day of the crucifixion and death of our Lord, we have the veneration of the Cross. A service is held at three o'clock in the afternoon (the hour He is believed to have died) and another later in the evening. We go forward and kiss the Cross in order to show honor and respect for Christ's sacrifice for our sake. There is no consecration of the Eucharist on this day, and the Communion we receive will be from the night before, which has been reserved in the tabernacle. Holy Saturday is a vigil. We keep watch for the expectant rising of Our Savior. This was the day He went down into the netherworld in order to bring back up with Him into heaven those who had died before His coming. Up to this time, the gates to heaven were closed and no one could go there because of the original sin of Adam. Jesus changed all that. By paying the price for our sins on the Cross, He gained for us our eternal salvation, and heaven was opened once more. Also on this night, persons who have spent months of preparation will be received through Baptism and Confirmation into the Catholic Church for the first time. It is a joyous occasion. Those who engage wholeheartedly in living the entire paschal cycle (Lent, Triduum and Easter's Fifty Days) discover that it can change them forever. This is especially so of the Triduum which, standing at the heart of the Easter season, is an intense immersion in the mystery of what it is to be Christian. During these days, we suffer with Christ so that we might rise with Him at His Resurrection. Holy Week is a time to clear our schedules of unnecessary activities. Our minds and hearts should be fixed on Jesus and what He did for us. Let us bear the Cross so that may be worthy of wearing the crown He wore.
Confessions:
Monday, March 21st, 3:00 PM - 9:00 PM
Good Friday, March 25th at 4:15 PM
Holy Saturday, March 26th, 10:00 AM - 12 Noon

Morning Prayer
9:00 AM Holy Thursday, Good Friday & Holy Saturday

Stations of the Cross
Good Friday at 12 Noon

Holy Thursday, March 24th,
Children’s Service at 3:00 PM
Mass of the Lord’s Supper at 7:30 PM

Good Friday, March 25th,
Service at 3:00 PM
Seven Last Words at 7:30 PM

Holy Saturday, March 26th,
Easter Vigil Mass 7:30 PM

6 QUESTIONS TO BRING YOU CLOSER TO JESUS CHRIST

WHO IS JESUS CHRIST?

WHY DO I NEED A SAVIOR?

WHAT CAN I LEARN FROM HIM?

HOW CAN I PERSONALLY FOLLOW JESUS CHRIST?

WHAT CAN HELP ME DRAW CLOSER TO THE SAVIOR?

HOW CAN I SHARE MY WITNESS AND LOVE FOR THE SAVIOR?
CONFESSIONS

On Monday, March 21, Monday of Holy Week, every parish in the Diocese of Rockville Centre will have priests available for confession for a large part of the day. The goal is to have as many people as possible celebrate the sacrament, perhaps especially those who have been away from Confession for a long time.

Why not take advantage of this opportunity? Especially if you have not been to Confession in 5 or 10 or 20 years, this is a great opportunity. We promise you a warm welcome! We promise you an experience of joy! We promise you that you will have an encounter with Jesus that will leave you feeling the best that you have felt in a long, long time!

Here are some basic steps for you to follow. Don’t get worried too much about the “how to,” though; the priest will be very willing to help you if you explain to him that you are nervous or unfamiliar with the rite.

1. Prepare ahead of time. Make sure you spend some time examining your conscience, prayerfully recalling your sins and preparing what you want to tell the priest. Think about specific actions, general patterns, and attitudes. Ask for the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

2. Go to the priest. You can go anonymously behind a screen or curtain, or you can go face-to-face. If it’s helpful, begin by making the Sign of the Cross and saying, “Bless me Father, for I have sinned.” Then tell the priest how long it has been since your last confession.

3. Listen to Scripture. The priest may read a short passage from the Bible, to remind you of God’s mercy, or he may ask you to read something he provides for you. This reminds us that the main thing we do in the sacrament is to proclaim God’s mercy and forgiveness.

4. Confess your sins. Listen carefully for spiritual guidance he might offer. Tell the priest your sins. Be as direct and succinct as possible, but give him enough information so he can offer some words of spiritual guidance and encouragement. Take to heart the way the priest is trying to help you.

5. Receive your penance. The priest will recommend some action, a penance, for you to do to indicate your sorrow and your conversion. It might be to say a prayer, it might be to do some act of self-denial, or it might be to do some act of charity or service toward someone else. If it sounds too difficult to accomplish or if you have any questions, do not hesitate to talk it over with him.

6. Pray an Act of Contrition. The priest will ask you to say a prayer of contrition (sorrow) out loud. You may express your sorrow and your intention to avoid sin in the future in your own words, or you may use the words of a formal Act of Contrition, either one given to you to read by the priest, or one that you have brought or memorized. Here is one suggested form: My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy.

7. Receive absolution. Here is the best part! The priest prays the prayer of absolution, proclaiming God’s forgiveness of your sins. Reflect on these beautiful and powerful words said by the priest: God, the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.

8. Conclude by praising God. The priest may say something like, “Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good,” and you may respond, “His mercy endures forever.”