

Last chance today to de-  
posit names of non-Catholics,  
for whom you beg God's the...

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...gift of faith. Pray that all  
non-Catholics will return to  
unity of the one true faith.

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The General Confession

In response to inquiries about general confessions for graduates and for men entering the service, the following considerations on general confession are given:

1. A general confession is a review of previous confessions, good or bad.
2. A general confession is necessary whenever there has been a bad confession in the past which has never been confessed. In this case the penitent goes back to the last good confession he has made, repeats the intervening confessions and tells how often he has received the Sacraments sacrilegiously meanwhile.
3. Doubtful bad confessions need not be repeated because from a doubtful fact there cannot arise a certain obligation. For peace of conscience, however, it is advised to express your doubt to your confessor and follow his advice.
4. A general confession is useful and recommended whenever a person is about to undertake some new state of life, or wishes to make a serious change in his manner of life. Seniors quite commonly make a general confession before they leave school. Underclassmen who have been away from the sacraments for a long period of time because of addiction to serious sin, and who, like prodigal sons, want to come back to their Father's house where they belong--these penitents will find in a general confession a clean ~~cut~~ break with their guilty past.
5. How go about it? Begin with a prayer to the Holy Ghost for enlightenment on the present state of your conscience and for the grace of solid contrition, which includes firm purpose of amendment, and then make as good an examination of conscience as you can with the aid of a prayer book. . . . After you have made this examination and excited sorrow you are ready for confession. If you want the confessor to help you out, just say so. And if there is any one thing that has caused you worry and is still causing you worry, mention it. Say something like this: "Father, there is one thing in my life which has caused me considerable anxiety. I want that to be cleared up once and for all so that I'll never have to go back over it again." Tell him what it is.
6. If your general confession is not a necessary confession, you should first make a confession of sins committed since the last confession before embarking on a recital of past, forgiven sins. If your general confession is a necessary confession, you are bound to tell the number and kind, as approximately as you can, of mortal sins. Otherwise the number of mortal sins need not be mentioned, although they may be.
7. And remember this: You do not and can not make a bad confession as long as you are honestly trying to make a good one, provided in your contrition you are sorry for all the mortal sins of your life. If you have forgotten a sin in the past a general confession is not necessary. A sin omitted through no fault of your own, when it is recalled, must be mentioned in the next confession, although it has already been forgiven indirectly in a past confession.
8. Who should not make general confessions? The scrupulous. Because they will not be satisfied with one, or a hundred general confessions.
9. What should you do after a general confession? Thank God for the wonderful Sacrament of Penance and say your penance. And then keep in mind that the most powerful bulwark against mortal sin is the state of grace. No power on earth or under the earth can drive God out of your soul. But you can if you do not learn to say NO, if you neglect prayer and penance and the Sacraments.

(VOCATIONAL HOLY HOUR, 4:30-5:30. PRAY FOR DIVINE GUIDANCE)