

Lesson 9: Confiteor

You wash your hands before you eat dinner, and you take off your dirty shoes when you walk into someone's house, don't you?

The book of Proverbs tells us that "Even the just man sins seven times a day" (Proverbs 24:16). That's why we need to confess our sins at the beginning of Mass, and we do that in the Confiteor. It is one of my all-time favorite prayers and is deeply powerful, sincere, searching, and human. We begin by stating, "I confess to Almighty God and to you my brothers and sisters that I have sinned ..."

That prayer screams "I am NOTHING! Please help me God! And everyone else help me too!" We pray it – we exclaim it! – at the beginning of Mass to prepare ourselves for what is about to take place, much as a humble and respectful guest removes his dirty shoes when he enters someone's beautiful home.