

## Q&A

*Q: Fr. Alex, when should my child start coming for Confession?*

Making a Confession is an important part of being an Orthodox Christian. I've been asked by many parents about this, and I've heard many opinions about it from priests. I recommend coming on the earlier side—even as young as 7 years-old or so. For these Confessions with younger ones, I would help them say a few simple prayers, and then sit down with them and have a good talk about how they're doing—how they're getting on with their parents, siblings, teachers and friends. I'd talk to them about how important it is to say prayers in the morning, at meals and at bedtime—why we need to talk to God a lot, be good to our friends, and listen to our parents. I'd also try and help them talk to God about what makes them happy and sad. So the purpose of this would not be to necessarily “hear sins,” but to simply get them comfortable—at a young age—with talking to their priest. This type of positive early “Confession” can have a strong effect on how these little ones interact with their priests throughout life. It can actually be one of the defining, early activities that keeps them close to Church!