

STEPS TO A GOOD APOLOGY

1. LISTEN TO YOUR GUILT or to the PERSON WHO IS HURTING.

—Guilt is your helper! A well-formed conscience will let you know when you need to apologize to someone (and confess to God).

—If a friend comes to you with an account of how you have hurt him/her, then an apology is appropriate.

2. PRAY FOR GUIDANCE FROM THE HOLY SPIRIT.

—Ask specifically what it is that you ought to apologize for.

3. ADMIT YOU WERE WRONG.

—Don't talk about the other person's wrongdoing. Focus just on your part.

4. ADMIT *WHY* WHAT YOU DID WAS WRONG.

—A useful formula: "I was wrong when I _____, because _____."

5. LET THE HURT PERSON SHARE HOW HE/SHE FEELS.

—You might ask, "Would you like to tell me how my actions made you feel?"

—Listen with compassion, not defensiveness. Comfort any hurt that comes up.

6. ASK FOR FORGIVENESS FOR YOUR WRONG ACTIONS.

—Give the person space and time to forgive; he/she might not be ready to say "I forgive you" right away.

7. OFFER REPARATION.

—You might ask, "What can I do to make this right?" or "How can I show you that I'm really sorry I hurt you?"