

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Prayer before making an Examination of Conscience

Father in Heaven, I come into your presence as a sinner. But I sincerely seek your forgiveness, because I know that by my sinfulness I have failed in my responsibilities to you and my neighbor. I ask the special help of you, Oh Holy Spirit, to enlighten me as I attempt to recall to mind my sins. Bestow your gifts upon me, so I can fearlessly identify the sins of which I am guilty. But do not allow me to lose hope. Enable me to turn my life completely over to you so I can receive the strength to remain faithful to you, because that is truly what I desire to do. Lord Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.

I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.

- Do I give God time every day in prayer?
- Is He truly the priority in my life?
- Do I turn to God in good times and bad, and in times of temptation?
- Do I listen to God with an open heart, and am I ready to accept the inner conversion to which He invites me?
- Do I try to surrender myself to God's Word as taught by the Church?
- Have I received Holy Communion in the state of mortal sin?
- Have I been involved with superstition or the occult?
- Have I been ashamed of my faith in the presence of others?
- Have I associated with persons or frequented places that endangered my faith?
- Have I used available means of learning more about my faith, either privately or in groups?

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

- Have I used God's name disrespectfully?
- Have I spoken of God or holy things or persons blasphemously?
- Have I been angry with God?
- Have I wished evil upon any other person?
- Have I failed to realize that God's Name is a sacred sign of His Person?
- Have I used my gift of speech in a sinful way?

Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.

- Have I failed to attend Mass on Sunday or Holydays without a sufficient reason?
- Have I tried to observe Sunday as a family day and a day of rest?
- Did I do needless work on Sunday that could have been done on another day?
- Do I habitually come late to Mass or leave early unnecessarily?
- Have I been disrespectful or distracting to others during Mass?
- Have I failed to listen attentively to the Word of God during Mass?
- Have I tried to do some extra things spiritually on Sunday in order to make it truly the Lord's Day?

Honor your Father and your Mother.

- Do I respect and obey my parents and other authorities?
- Have I caused grief to my parents through my own selfishness?
- Have I failed to help my parents when they needed my help?
- Have I failed to pray for my parents and have Masses offered for them when they were deceased?
- Have I given my children good religious example?
- Have I neglected my duties to my spouse and children?
- Have I seen to it that our family prays together?
- Have I obeyed legitimate authority and given it due respect?
- If I am in a position of authority, do I use this for my own advantage instead of for the good of others?

You shall not kill.

- Have I physically harmed anyone?
- Have I abused alcohol or drugs or food?
- Have I been angry and resentful?
- Have I had an abortion or encouraged someone to have an abortion or helped make it possible for someone to have one?
- Have I harbored hatred in my heart?
- Have I refused to forgive someone for a wrong done to me?
- Have I undergone sterilization or encouraged or condoned it?
- Have I endangered someone's life unnecessarily?
- Have I shown aversion or contempt toward someone?
- Have I refused to show the ordinary signs of friendship to relatives and friends?
- Have I ridiculed or insulted others?
- Have I led others into sin?
- Have I attempted suicide or given it serious thought?
- Have I been lazy and too much given to leisure?
- Have I failed to fast or perform other acts of self-denial in reparation for my sins and the sins of others?

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You shall not commit adultery.

- Have I been faithful to my marriage vows in thought and in action?
- Have I engaged in any sexual activity outside of marriage?
- Have I used any method of artificial contraception?
- Have I committed an impure act with myself or with others of the opposite or same sex?
- Have I willfully been the occasion of sin to another by immodest action or dress or speech?
- Am I keeping company with someone whom I cannot lawfully marry or permitting myself to fall in love with such a person?
- Do I sincerely try to be chaste in my thoughts, words and actions?
- Have I kept company with persons or frequented places that are a source of temptation to me?

You shall not steal.

Have I stolen what is not mine?

- Have I returned or made restitution for what I have stolen?
- Have I damaged someone else's property or interests?
- Have I charged unreasonably high prices to others?
- Have I been guilty of shoplifting?
- Do I waste time at work, school or at home?
- Do I gamble excessively, thereby denying my family of their needs?
- Do I pay my debts promptly?
- Have I failed to tithe of my possessions?
- Have I been guilty of vandalism?
- Have I cheated in class, stealing information from others?
- Have I given a full day's work for a full day's pay?
- Have I failed to give a just wage to my employees?

How to make a good confession

Begin your confession with the sign of the cross. ***"In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit."***

"Forgive me Father for I have sinned. My last confession was _____ weeks (months, years) ago."

Say the sins that you remember. In order to make a good confession the faithful must confess all mortal sins. After confessing all the sins you remember since your last good confession, conclude by saying, ***"I am sorry for these sins and for any sins I may have forgotten."***

Listen to the words of the priest. He will assign you some penance. Doing the penance will diminish the temporal punishment due to sins already forgiven. When invited, express some prayer of sorrow or Act of Contrition.

Listen to the words of absolution, the sacramental forgiveness of the Church through the ordained priest. As you listen to the words of forgiveness you may make the sign of the cross with the priest. If he closes by saying, "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good," answer, ***"For His mercy endures forever."***

After Confession give thanks to God for forgiving you again. If you recall some serious sin you forgot to tell, rest assured that it has been forgiven with the others, but be sure to confess it in your next Confession. Do your assigned Penance. Resolve to return to the Sacrament of Reconciliation often. We Catholics are fortunate to have the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It is the ordinary way for us to have our sins forgiven. This sacrament is a powerful help to get rid of our weaknesses, grow in holiness, and lead a balanced and virtuous life.

Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee; and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all because they offend Thee my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

- Have I lied?
- Have I gossiped?
- Have I unjustly injured the reputation of another?
- Am I sincere in my dealings with others?
- Am I critical, negative or uncharitable in my thoughts of others?
- Have I listened with pleasure when others were being detracted?
- Have I rashly misjudged others or falsely suspected them?
- Do I keep secret what should be kept confidential?

You shall not desire your neighbor's wife.

- Have I consented to impure thoughts?
- Have I caused them by impure reading, movies, television, entertainment or conversation?
- Do I strive to control my imagination?
- Do I pray at once to banish impure thoughts and temptations?
- Have I enjoyed desires for someone other than my spouse?

You shall not desire your neighbor's goods.

- Am I jealous of what other people have?
- Do I envy the families or possessions of others?
- Am I greedy or selfish?
- Are material possessions the main goal of my life?
- Am I always seeking ways to make more money?
- Do I trust that God will care for all of my material and spiritual needs?

**Saint Peter's Confessions: Saturday - 4:00 to 5:00 pm
and 7:00 to 7:30 pm or by appointment**