

An examination of conscience

“If you love me, you will keep my commandments”
~ John 14: 15



Examination of Conscience and Preparation for the Sacrament of Reconciliation

I. Adore God Alone

- Have I denied in public that I was a Catholic/Christian?
- Have I hidden from my duties as a Catholic to avoid ridicule?
- Have I neglected prayer over a long period of time or grown lazy in the attendance of Mass?
- Have I, at times, simply put other things ahead of God in adoration? (i.e. have I adored rock stars, models, athletes, etc.)
- Have I placed faith and focused upon superstition (astrology, palm reading, sorcery, white and black magic, wiccan, tarot cards, Ouija boards, etc.), rather than focusing upon and having faith in God?
- Have I taken part in any form of Satanic worship or used Satanic signs or symbols?

II. Keep God's Name Holy

- Have I used God's name irreverently, either in anger or in jest?
- Did I curse others; deliberately wish evil on them or ask God to bring misfortune upon them?
- Have I deliberately called upon God to witness the truth of what I knew was a lie? (e.g. "I swear to God!")
- Have I deliberately cursed or ridiculed God, the Church, Mary, the saints, or sacred places or things (including improper jokes).
- Have I laughed at jokes or films that treat God's name irreverently?

III Keep the Lord's Day Holy

- Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sunday or a holy day of obligation without good reason? (i.e. a soccer game, or sports event, laziness, playing video games, out too late the night before, etc.).
- Have I engaged in unnecessary work on the day that the Lord has claimed as His own? Have I asked and expected others to do the same?

IV. Respect and obey lawful authority.

- Have I refused to obey those who have authority over me?
- Have I neglected to love my parents? Have I refused to care for them properly in sickness, advanced age and helplessness?

V. Respect Others, Body and Soul (and self)

- Have I been directly or indirectly responsible for the death of another or serious injury to others by evil intent, neglect or recklessness?
- Have I tried to hurt/injure myself, not respecting the life that God has given me?
- Have I sought, caused or in any way been involved in having an abortion?
- Have I hated others? Refused to speak to them out of spite? Rejoiced at their misfortunes and mishaps? Rejected the apologies of those who have offended me?
- Do I play fairly on the playing fields and in the gyms? Have I cheated to win?
- Have I sown hatred to other groups of people because of race, nationality, etc.?
- Have I told jokes that ridicule other ethnic groups? Have I used hate speech and used verbal putdowns?
- Have I been impatient or unloving in words or actions because others irritated me? Have I been stubborn in my own views and critical of other people without charity?
- Have I seriously endangered my own life and the lives of others by disregarding traffic regulations, by driving under the influence of liquor/alcohol?
- Have I been the source of scandal to others? (causing others to sin)
- Have I used illegal drugs or abused alcohol?
- Do I love myself as God loves me (different than conceit); do I properly care for my physical, emotional and spiritual health?

VI and IX Respect the Sacredness of Sexuality

- Have I committed fornication? (sexual relations in which neither party is married).

- Have I misused my sexuality in a selfish manner (masturbation)?
- Have I willfully consented to impure thoughts?
- Have I engaged in physical affection that is more appropriate within the safe confines of marriage?
- If married or unmarried, have I used artificial contraception or been sterilized?
- Have I engaged in impure conversation, belittling someone else through my words?
- Have I read books or gone to places of entertainment which I knew to be obscene and immoral? Intentionally viewed pornography?
- Have I exposed others to grave sin by immodest gestures, actions, inappropriate dancing or immodest dress?
- Have I neglected to treat my boyfriend or girlfriend in a respectful manner?
- Have I told lewd or 'dirty' jokes?

VII and X Respect the Property of Others

- Have I stolen anything from another? (It is good to mention what was stolen, how much, the worth, etc.)
- Did I fail to return money I have stolen?
- Did I purchase or accept as gift goods which I knew to be stolen?
- Did I 'pirate' software or other computer systems, etc. (i.e. Did I steal anything through the computer?)
- Did I willfully damage another person's property? Committed an act of vandalism?
- Have I kept something I found even when the owner could easily be located?
- Have I accepted or offered a bribe?
- Have I, as an employee, neglected the work I was hired to do?
- Have I committed my just share to the support of the Church?
- Am I careful with my money/a good steward of my money?

VIII. Respect the Truth and Good Name of Others

- Have I lied?
- Have I lied in a prior confession and withheld sins from the priest on purpose.
- Have I been guilty of lying under oath? (perjury).
- Have I injured another's reputation by lying (calumny) or by talking without necessity about the sins of others that are not commonly known?
- Did I make sufficient effort to restore the good name of the one whose reputation I damaged?
- Have I engaged in gossip or been otherwise uncharitable in speech?
- Have I violated another's privacy by reading his/her mail or journal without permission?
- Have I been guilty of rash judgment, mentally attributed evil to a person without sufficient reason? Have I discriminated against a group based upon race?
- Have I withheld information from those who had a right to it?

The Seven Capital or Mortal Sins:

1. Pride -- The beginning of all sin. Being arrogant, boastful, etc.
2. Covetousness -- Greed for money or material possessions. Through riches man can acquire the means of committing many sins (St. Thomas). "Then, after desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, gives birth to death." James 1:15
Lust -- Lust is the desire of sexual pleasure outside of the sacrament of matrimony.
3. Anger -- The sin 'anger' (or wrath) is a passion that consumes a person and make him/her seek vengeance against others.
4. Gluttony -- Gluttony is the inordinate desire for eating and/or drinking.
5. Envy -- Envy is sorrow over another one's good fortune (wishing ill on someone else).
6. Sloth -- Sloth is boredom, laziness, a coldness, a disgust with spiritual things or the things of God. The sin of sloth makes us self-centered and selfish.

Receiving the Sacrament of Confession / Reconciliation

Ask Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament to help you make a good confession

How do I “go to confession”?

1. Walk into the confessional and either kneel behind the screen or sit facing the priest.
2. Make the sign of the cross, saying “Bless me Father, for I have sinned.”
3. Tell the priest how long it has been since you last went to Confession.
4. Tell the priest what sins you have committed and how many times you have committed them, to the best of your knowledge. Be honest and forthright.
5. When you are done confessing your sins you can tell the priest, “That is all I remember, Father.”
6. If the priest asks you any questions, try to answer him honestly.
7. When the priest gives you a “penance,” try to remember exactly what it is he asks you to do.
7. Say the “Act of Contrition”:

The Act of Contrition

Oh my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you and I detest all my sins because of your just punishment, but most of all because they offend you, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of your grace to sin no more and to avoid occasions and situations that might lead me to sin. Amen.

9. The priest will then absolve (forgive) you of your sin
10. When the priest blesses you (at the end of the prayer), make the Sign of the Cross.
11. Leave the confessional and do your penance as soon as you return to your pew.
12. Enjoy the forgiveness of God and give thanks for God’s mercy and love! 😊