

Examination of Conscience

An *Examination of Conscience* can be a great help for all Catholics as we prepare for the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

To help you develop your Christian Examination of Conscience:

- Set aside some quiet time for reflection.
- Start by praying to the Holy Spirit, asking for help in making a good examination to prepare for Confession.
- Read through the items below and honestly reflect on your behavior for each item.

The Ten Commandments

First Commandment - *I am the LORD your God. You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.*

Have I...

- Disobeyed the commandments of God or the Church?
- Refused to accept what God has revealed as true, or what the Catholic Church proposes for belief?
- Denied the existence of God?
- Nourished and protected my faith?
- Rejected everything opposed to a sound faith?
- Deliberately misled others about doctrine or the faith?
- Rejected the Catholic faith, joined another Christian denomination, or joined or practiced another religion?
- Joined a group forbidden to Catholics (Masons, communists, etc.)?
- Despaired about my salvation or the forgiveness of my sins?
- Presumed on God's mercy? (Committing a sin in expectation of forgiveness, or asking for forgiveness without conversion and practicing virtue.)
- Loved someone or something more than God (money, power, sex, ambition, etc.)?
- Let someone or something influence my choices more than God?
- Engaged in superstitious practices? (Incl. horoscopes, fortune tellers, etc.)
- Been involved in the occult? (Seances, ouija board, worship of Satan, etc.)
- Hidden a serious sin or told a lie in confession?

Second Commandment - *You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.*

Have I...

- Used the name of God in cursing or blasphemy?
- Failed to keep vows or promises that I have made to God?
- Spoken about the Faith, the Church, the saints, or sacred things with irreverence, hatred or defiance?
- Watched television or movies, or listened to music that treated God, the Church, the saints, or sacred things irreverently?

- Used vulgar, suggestive or obscene speech?
- Belittled others in my speech?
- Behaved disrespectfully in Church?
- Misused places or things set apart for the worship of God?
- Committed perjury? (Breaking an oath or lying under oath.)
- Blamed God for my failings?

Third Commandment - Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.

Have I...

- Missed Mass on Sunday or Holy Days (through own fault w/o sufficient reason)?
- Committed a sacrilege against the Blessed Sacrament?
- Received a sacrament while in the state of mortal sin?
- Habitually come late to and/or leave early from Mass without a good reason?
- Not attend to taking my children to Mass?
- Knowingly eat meat on a forbidden day (or not fasting on a fast day)?
- Eat or drink within one hour of receiving Communion (other than medical need)?

Fourth Commandment - Honor your father and your mother.

Have I...

- (If still under my parents' care) Obeyed all that my parents reasonably asked of me?
- Neglected the needs of my parents in their old age or in their time of need?
- (If still in school) Obeyed the reasonable demands of my teachers?
- Neglected to give my children proper food, clothing, shelter, education, discipline and care (even after Confirmation)?
- Provided for the religious education and formation of my children for as long as they are under my care?
- Ensured that my children still under my care regularly frequent the sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion?
- Educated my children in a way that corresponds to my religious convictions?
- Provided my children with a positive, prudent and personalized education in the Catholic teaching on human sexuality?
- Been to my children a good example of how to live the Catholic Faith?
- Prayed with and for my children?
- Lived in humble obedience to those who legitimately exercise authority over me?
- Have I broken the law?
- Have I supported or voted for a politician whose positions are opposed to the teachings of Christ and the Catholic Church?

Fifth Commandment - *You shall not kill.*

Have I...

- Unjustly and intentionally killed a human being?
- Been involved in an abortion, directly or indirectly (through advice, etc.)?
- Seriously considered or attempted suicide?
- Supported, promoted or encouraged the practice of assisted suicide or mercy killing?
- Deliberately desired to kill an innocent human being?
- Unjustly inflicted bodily harm on another person?
- Unjustly threatened another person with bodily harm?
- Verbally or emotionally abused another person?
- Hated another person, or wished him evil?
- Been prejudiced, or unjustly discriminated against others because of their race, color, nationality, sex or religion?
- Joined a hate group?
- Purposely provoked another by teasing or nagging?
- Recklessly endangered my life or health, or that of another, by my actions?
- Driven recklessly or under the influence of alcohol or other drugs?
- Abused alcohol or other drugs?
- Sold or given drugs to others to use for non-therapeutic purposes?
- Used tobacco immoderately?
- Over-eaten?
- Encouraged others to sin by giving scandal?
- Helped another to commit a mortal sin (through advice, driving them somewhere, etc.)?
- Caused serious injury or death by criminal neglect?
- Indulged in serious anger?
- Refused to control my temper?
- Been mean to, quarreled with, or willfully hurt someone?
- Been unforgiving to others, when mercy or pardon was requested?
- Sought revenge or hoped something bad would happen to someone?
- Delighted to see someone else get hurt or suffer?
- Treated animals cruelly, causing them to suffer or die needlessly?

Sixth & Ninth Commandments *You shall not commit adultery & You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.*

Have I...

- Practiced the virtue of chastity?
- Given in to lust?
- Used an artificial means of birth control?
- Participated in immoral techniques for in vitro fertilization or artificial insemination?
- Sterilized my sex organs for contraceptive purposes?
- Deprived my spouse of the marital right, without just cause?
- Claimed my own marital right without concern for my spouse?
- Willfully entertained impure thoughts?
- Purchased, viewed, or made use of pornography?
- Watched movies and television that involve sex and nudity?
- Listened to music or jokes that are harmful to purity?

- Committed adultery?
- Committed incest?
- Committed fornication? (Sexual relations with someone of the opposite sex when neither of us is married.)
- Engaged in homosexual activity?
- Committed rape?
- Masturbated?
- Engaged in sexual foreplay prior to marriage?
- Preyed upon children or youth for my sexual pleasure?
- Engaged in unnatural sexual activities?
- Engaged in prostitution, or paid for the services of a prostitute?
- Seduced someone, or allowed myself to be seduced?
- Made uninvited and unwelcome sexual advances toward another?
- Purposely dressed immodestly?

Seventh & Tenth Commandments - *You shall not steal & You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.*

Have I...

- Stolen?
- Envied others on account of their possessions?
- Tried to live in a spirit of Gospel poverty and simplicity?
- Given generously to others in need?
- Considered that God has provided me with money so that I might use it to benefit others, as well as for my own legitimate needs?
- Freed myself from a consumer mentality?
- Deliberately defaced, destroyed or lost another's property?
- Cheated on a test, taxes, sports, games, or in business?
- Squandered money in compulsive gambling?
- Make a false claim to an insurance company?
- Paid my employees a living wage, or failed to give a full day's work for a full day's pay?
- Failed to honor my part of a contract?
- Failed to make good on a debt?
- Overcharge someone, especially to take advantage of another's hardship or ignorance?
- Misused natural resources?

Eighth Commandment - *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.*

Have I...

- Lied?
 - Knowingly and willfully deceived another?
 - Perjured myself under oath?
 - Gossiped?
 - Committed detraction? (Destroying a person's reputation by telling others about his faults for no good reason.)
 - Committed slander or calumny? (Telling lies about another person in order to destroy his reputation.)
 - Committed libel? (Writing lies about another person in order to destroy his reputation.)
 - Been guilty of rash judgment? (Assuming the worst of another person based on circumstantial evidence.)
 - Failed to make reparation for a lie I told, or for harm done to a person's reputation?
 - Failed to speak out in defense of the Catholic Faith, the Church, or of another person?
 - Betrayed another's confidence through speech?
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The Precepts of the Church

1st - *You shall attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.*

2nd - *You shall confess your sins at least once a year.*

- Made a good Confession of my mortal sins least once a year?
- Purposely omitted telling my mortal sins in my last Confession?
- Performed the penance I was given?
- Made reparation for any harm I have done to others?

3rd - *You shall humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion at least during the Easter season.*

- Fulfilled my Easter duty to receive Holy Communion at least once between the First Sunday of Lent and Trinity Sunday?
- Received Holy Communion while in the state of mortal sin?
- Fasted an hour before receiving Holy Communion?
- Received Holy Communion more than twice in one day?

4th - *You shall keep holy the Holy days of Obligation.*

5th - *You shall observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence.*

- Done penance every Friday, if not abstaining from meat, then some other form of penance?
- Abstained from meat on Ash Wednesday and the Fridays of Lent (if I am 14 years of age or older)?
- Fasted on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (if I am between the ages of 18 and 59)?
- Spent time in prayer, doing spiritual and corporal works of mercy, and practicing self-denial?

6th - *You shall contribute to the support of the Church.*

- Contributed a just amount of my time, talents and money to support my parish and the work of the Church?

7th - *You shall observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage.*

- Been living in a valid and licit marriage according to the laws of the Catholic Church?
- Abandoned my spouse and family by separation or divorce?
- Kept company with someone whom I cannot marry in the Catholic Church?
- Given scandal by living with a member of the opposite sex without the benefit of a marriage blessed by the Catholic Church?
- Entered into marriage with more than one person at the same time?