

Examination of Conscience for Adults

“In the life of the body a man is sometimes sick, and unless he takes medicine, he will die. Even so in the spiritual life a man is sick on account of sin. For that reason he needs medicine so that he may be restored to health; and this grace is bestowed in the Sacrament of Penance.” -St. Thomas Aquinas

Prayer Before Examen/Confession

Come Holy Spirit into my soul. Enlighten my mind that I may know the sins I ought to confess, and grant me your grace to confess them fully, humbly and with contrite heart. Help me to firmly resolve not to commit them again. O Blessed Virgin, Mother of my Redeemer, mirror of innocence and sanctity, and refuge of penitent sinners, intercede for me through the Passion of Your Son, that I may obtain the grace to make a good confession. All you blessed Angels and Saints of God, pray for me, a most miserable sinner, that I may repent from my evil ways, that my heart may henceforth be forever united with yours in eternal love. Amen.

Preliminary Notes

*Besides confessing the SIN ITSELF, we must also recollect, as far as possible, the NUMBER of times we have committed them, telling also (and only) those circumstances which at times may either make a venial sin mortal or a mortal sin notably worse. **Mortal sins** are those 1) of grave matter 2) committed with full knowledge and 3) freely consented too.*

✘ **First Commandment:** *I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.*

- Do I strive to love God with my whole heart, mind and soul?
- Have I loved someone or something more than God (money, power, sex, ambition, possessions, etc.)?
- Do I spend time each day in prayer?
- Do I nourish and protect my faith?
- Have I publically denied a truth of the faith out of concern for the opinion of others?
- Have I received the Eucharist in a state of mortal sin?
- Have I committed the sin of presumption, committing a sin while intending to confess it later?
- Have I willfully doubted or denied any of the teachings of the Church (heresy)?
- Have I despaired of my salvation or God's mercy?
- Have I knowingly read any anti-Catholic literature?
- Have I practiced any superstitions/occult and/or put faith in them (horoscopes, fortune tellers, divinization, crystals, Ouija boards, tarot cards, séances, witchcraft, Charlie Charlie, etc.)?

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

- Have I used God's name in vain by way of profanity?
- Have I murmured or complained against God (blasphemy)?
- Have I spoken about the sacred with irreverence (the Faith, the Church and clergy, the saints)?
- Have I sworn by God's name either falsely or rashly?
- Have I broken any private vow?
- Have I used vulgar, obscene or suggestive speech?

✘ **Third Commandment:** *Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.*

- Have I missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days through my own fault or without a serious reason (illness, care of someone who is ill, etc.)?
- Have I caused my kids to miss Mass?
- Have I been late for Mass through my own negligence? Have I left early?
- Have I been inattentive at Mass or otherwise failed in reverence for the Most Blessed Sacrament?
- Have I done unnecessary servile work (physical labor) or shopping on Sunday? If an employer, have I required employees to work on Sundays in non-essential occupations?

✘ **Fourth Commandment:** *Honor your father and your mother.*

- Have I been disrespectful to, mistreated or neglected my parents? My spouse?
- Regarding my children:
 - Have I neglected their material needs?
 - Have I failed their proper religious instruction?
 - Have I allowed them to neglect their religious duties, especially the Sacraments of the Eucharist and Penance?
 - Have I given them a bad example?
- Have I failed in obedience or respect to those in authority?
- Have I supported politicians because they are opposed to the teachings of Christ and His Church?

✘ **Fifth Commandment:** *You shall not kill.*

- Have I unjustly and intentionally killed anyone?
- Have I had an abortion, or assisted with, cooperated in or encouraged one?
- Have I considered or attempted suicide? Or mutilated or harmed my own body?

Have I supported, promoted or assisted in the suicide of another, including “mercy killings”?

Have I inflicted unjust bodily harm on another? Have I unjustly threatened another person with such?

Have I verbally or emotionally abused another?

Have I wished evil upon another?

Have I been prejudiced or discriminated against another?

Have I recklessly endangered my health or life or that of another?

Have I abused alcohol or drugs?

Have I been gluttonous or otherwise neglected my health?

Have I encouraged others to sin by giving scandal?

Have I helped another commit a mortal sin?

Have I caused injury or death by criminal neglect?

Have I indulged in serious anger or resentment?

Have I refused to forgive another?

✘ **Sixth & Ninth Commandments:** *You shall not commit adultery. / You shall not desire your neighbor's wife.*

Have I been faithful to my marriage vows in thought and action?

Have I committed adultery (sex outside of marriage) or fornication (sex before marriage)?

Have I used artificial contraception/birth control or been sterilized for this purpose, or encouraged others to do so? Have I used IVF?

Have I engaged in prostitution or with prostitutes?

Have I touched another impurely?

Have I masturbated?

Have I indulged in pornographic magazines, movies or internet websites? Have I watched movies that contain impure scenes for this purpose?

Have I harbored lustful desires and thoughts?

Am I chaste in my demonstrations of affection as proper to my state of life?

Have I failed to dress modestly? Have I done anything to provoke or occasion impure thoughts in others?

Have I used indecent language or told indecent stories or jokes? Have I willingly listened to such stories?

Have I boasted of my sins against these Commandments?

Was I married outside the Church without the blessing of the Church?

Have I permitted my children or others under my charge to do any of these things?

/ You shall not desire your neighbor's goods.

Have I stolen anything? Have I neglected restitution?

Have I damaged or destroyed anyone's property intentionally?

Have I cheated or defrauded another? On a test, taxes, sports, games or in business?

Have I squandered money by excessive gambling?

Have I refused or neglected to pay any debts?

Have I neglected my duties or been slothful?

Have I given generously to those in need? Am I greedy or selfish? Does my life revolve around material possessions?

Have I envied others because of their possessions? Am I jealous of others because of what they have?

Do I trust that God will care for all of my material and spiritual needs?

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

Have I quarreled with any one?

Have I cursed anyone or otherwise wished evil on another?

Have I taken pleasure in anyone's misfortune?

Have I lied? Lied about another (calumny)?

Have I rashly judged anyone in serious matters?

Have I engaged in gossip or spread scandal/the sins of another (detraction)? Have I been a talebearer?

Have I lent an ear to scandal about my neighbor?

Have I tried to make reparation for a bad reputation I caused or contributed to, or I lie I told, as far as is possible?

Do I keep secret what should be kept confidential?

✘ **Precepts of the Church**

Have I neglected the Easter duty of receiving Holy Communion or failed to confess my sins at least once a year?

Have I ever failed to confess a serious sin or tried disguised it? Have I lied during Confession?

Have I been guilty of irreverence for this Sacrament by failing to examine my conscience carefully?

Have I failed to perform the penance given me?

Have I observed the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence?

Have I contributed to the support of the Church and Her work? Of my time, talent and treasure?

Have I observed the laws of the Church concerning marriage?

“O God, be merciful to me, a sinner.”

(Luke 18:13)