

# Examination of Conscience

In order to help you experience the healing power of Christ through the Sacrament of Penance, we offer this examination of Conscience so that you may make a good confession. In order to prepare properly for this sacrament it is necessary to invoke the help of the Holy Spirit so that you are able to properly recall your sins and be moved to repentance. Having examined your conscience, it is necessary to verbally confess to the priest the type of sin and the number of times you have committed it. For example, "I missed Sunday Mass three times, etc." Do not be afraid if you cannot recall the exact number of times you've committed a particular sin. Have great confidence in the mercy of the Lord!

*When a man goes down on his knees in the confessional because he has sinned, at that very moment he adds to his own dignity as a man. No matter how heavily his sins weigh on his conscience, no matter how seriously they have diminished his dignity, the very act of turning again to God is a manifestation of the special dignity of man, his spiritual grandeur...the grandeur of the personal meeting between man and God in the inner truth of conscience.*  
Saint John Paul II

## The Ten Commandments

Upon entering the confessional, you should begin your confession by saying: "Bless me Father, for I have sinned.

It has been (how many weeks, months, years) since my last confession.

These are my sins: (At this point you tell the priest your sins to the best of your ability and confess the number of times of each of your sins.)

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

- Do I seek to love God with my whole heart and soul? Does He truly hold the first place in my life?
- Have I been involved with the occult or superstitious practices? (Ex. Tarot cards, Ouija boards, séances, etc.)
- Have I ever received Holy Communion in the state of mortal sin?
- Have I told a lie in confession or deliberately withheld confessing a sin because of shame, etc.?
- Have I prayed every day? Am I attentive to my prayer life or do I just see it as a burden?
- Am I grateful to God for the gifts He has given me or do I just take them for granted?

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

- Have I abused God's name in cursing?
- Have I called upon God to witness to something which I knew to be untrue?
- Have I used the Holy Name or the names of the Virgin Mary or any of the Saints lightly or carelessly?

### **3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.**

- Have I missed Mass deliberately on Sunday, the Lord's Day, or on Holy Days of obligation?
- Do I try to keep Sunday as a day of rest or do I do unnecessary shopping, working, etc.?

### **4. Honor your father and mother.**

- Do I honor and respect my parents? Do I care for them in their old age?
- Have I neglected my family responsibilities to spouse and children?
- Is my family life centered around Christ and His teachings?

**5. You shall not kill.**

- Have I murdered or physically harmed anyone?
- Have I had an abortion or encouraged anyone to have an abortion?
  - Have I gotten drunk? Have I used drugs?
  - Have I mutilated myself through sterilization?
  - Have I encouraged others to have themselves sterilized?
- Have I harbored hatred, anger, or resentment in my heart towards anyone?
- Have I been guilty of reckless driving that endangers myself, passengers or others?
  - Have I been rude and arrogant toward others?
- Have I thought myself better than others because of race, color or religion?
  - Have I been guilty of racial slurs?
- Have I used abusive or degrading language toward a family member or “neighbor”?

**6. You shall not commit adultery.**

**9. You shall not desire your neighbor’s wife.**

- Have I consented to and entertained lustful thoughts?
- Do I seek to control my imagination when tempted against chastity?
- Have I viewed pornography or tried to introduce it into my marital relationship?
  - Have I committed adultery?
  - Have I engaged in premarital sex? What act?
    - Have I masturbated?
    - Have I engaged in homosexual behavior?
  - Have I used any form of contraception in my marriage?
- Do I see other people as objects for my own satisfaction?

**7. You shall not steal.**

- Have I taken what is not mine?
- Destroyed property belonging to someone else? Knowingly accepted stolen goods?
  - Have I cheated an employer or employee?
  - Do I seek to share what I have with the poor?
  - Have I financially supported the work of the Church?

**8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

- Have I lied, gossiped or spoken behind anyone’s back?
  - Have I ruined anyone’s good name?
- Do I reveal information that should be kept confidential?

**10. You shall not desire your neighbor’s goods.**

- Am I envious of the possessions of others?
- Am I resentful and bitter over my position in 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 fear the pains of hell. But most of all because they offended Thee, my God, Who art 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.