

⚡ EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE ⚡

*"To those who have been far away from the sacrament of Reconciliation and forgiving love
I make this appeal: **come back to this source of grace**; do not be afraid!*

*Christ Himself is waiting for you. He will heal you,
and you will be at peace with God."*

- HOMILY OF SAINT JOHN PAUL II -

Before confession, recall your sins since your last confession. Consider what, with full knowledge and consent, you have done against God's commandments. What follows is a brief examination of conscience based on the Ten Commandments and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*:

1. "YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND HIM ONLY SHALL YOU SERVE."
God summons us to believe in Him, to hope in Him, and to love Him above all else. Have I seriously doubted my faith or put myself in danger of losing my faith through reading questionable material, or engaging in superstitious or occult practices? Have I persisted in sin rather than trying to overcome it? Have I neglected opportunities to learn more about my faith? Have I neglected my prayer to God? Was I careless or willfully distracted in my prayer? Have I substituted for God the "gods" of money, prestige, pleasure, etc.?

2. "YOU SHALL NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD IN VAIN."
The Lord enjoins respect for His name. Have I spoken the name of God in a disrespectful way? Have I used profanity or taken a false oath?

3. "REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY."
The Sabbath, which represented the completion of the first creation, has been replaced by Sunday which recalls the new creation inaugurated by the Resurrection of Christ. Have I missed Mass on Sundays or holydays of obligation through my own fault, without any serious reason? Have I been unnecessarily late for Mass or left early without serious reason? Have I been inattentive or lacking in devotion at Mass? Did I keep the fast and abstinence on the prescribed days? Have I allowed unnecessary work to interfere with the worship, rest and family life that God has ordained for Sunday?

4. "HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER"
God has willed that, after Him, we should honor our parents and those whom He has vested with authority for our good. Have I disobeyed or been disrespectful to my parents? Have I disobeyed or been disrespectful to my lawful superiors? Have I neglected my parents, especially as they advance in age?

5. " YOU SHALL NOT KILL."
Every human life, from the moment of conception until death, is sacred because the human person has been willed for its own sake in the image and likeness of God. Have I nurtured hatred or a desire for revenge toward anyone? Have I been impatient with anyone? Have I refused to forgive someone who has sought forgiveness? Have I tried to physically injure anyone? Have I been too harsh in the discipline of my children? Have I ever had an abortion, or advocated abortion, either in words or actions? Have I recklessly endangered the health or life of myself or others through illicit drugs or abuse of alcohol, or dangerous speeding, etc.?

6. "YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY."

God has ordained that the sexual union be a fundamental expression of married love, and that it never be artificially closed to new life. Have I sought sexual pleasure outside of marriage, through indecent pictures, books, movies, conversations, or through willfully impure thoughts or actions? Have I been guilty of masturbation, pre-marital sex, or adultery? Have I used contraceptive measures to deprive the marriage act of its natural, God-given openness to life?

7. " YOU SHALL NOT STEAL."

God calls us to the practice of justice and charity in the administration of earthly goods and the fruits of men's labor. Have I stolen or damaged another's property? Have I made reparation for the damage I have done? Have I been lazy or neglectful in my work or dishonest in my business relations? Have I caused financial hardship because of my gambling?

8. "YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR."

God calls us to the virtue of truthfulness which consists in uprightness in human action and speech. Have I lied? Have I judged others rashly? Have I gossiped or unnecessarily shared the faults of others, and in doing so damaged their reputation? Have I revealed secrets that should have been kept confidential?

9. "YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S WIFE."

Purity of heart will enable us to see God: it enables us even now to see things according to God. Have I sought the affections of another's spouse? Have I failed to uphold the dignity of my spouse in all circumstances? Have I contemplated infidelity to my spouse?

10. "YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S GOODS."

The baptized person combats envy through goodwill, humility, and abandonment to the providence of God. Have I allowed myself to be jealous of others, of their personal qualities, success, material possessions, or financial status? Have I neglected good stewardship with my finances and my time and energy, failing to share them with the Church and with those in need?

The resolution to avoid committing these sins in the future is a sure sign that your sorrow is authentic.

God's grace, in cooperation with the intention to rectify your life, known as contrition, will give you the strength to overcome temptation in the future.

During confession, after making the sign of the cross, the penitent will usually begin: "*Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned, it has been _____ since my last confession.*" The penitent may also say their state in life: "*I am a married mother,*" or "*I am a single man,*" etc. And then the penitent states his/her sins: "*These are my sins...*"

~ACT OF CONTRITION~

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee,
and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishments,
but most of all because they offend Thee, my God,
Who art all-good and deserving of all my love.
I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace,
to sin no more and to avoid the near occasion of sin.

Amen.