

## Examination of Conscience

First, take a little time to pray quietly and read through the examination of conscience below.

Take as much time as necessary.

### Individual Examination of Conscience - 10 Commandments

**First Commandment:** “I am the Lord your God, you shall not have strange gods before Me.”

Have I...

- ✠ denied God?
- ✠ denied the existence of God?
- ✠ reserved or harboured hatred for God?
- ✠ been ashamed of or denied my faith in front of others?
- ✠ ridiculed the teachings or practices of the Church?
- ✠ disobeyed the commandments of God or the Church?
- ✠ refused to accept what God has revealed as true, or what the Catholic Church proclaims for belief?
- ✠ made of money, or any possession, a false god?
- ✠ neglected my prayers?
- ✠ neglected to nourish and protect my faith?
- ✠ neglected to reject 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 God's mercy? (Committing a sin in expectation of forgiveness, or asking for forgiveness without interior 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?
- ✠ used witchcraft, Wicca, or other Occult practices?
- ✠ engaged in superstitious practices such as horoscopes, fortune tellers, mediums?
- ✠ been involved in the occult or occult practices such as séances, Ouija board, worship of Satan?
- ✠ practiced various forms of superstition such as fortune tellers, mediums, Ouija boards, Tarot cards?
- ✠ formally attempted to leave the Catholic Church?
- ✠ hidden a serious sin or told a lie in Confession?

**Second Commandment:** “Do not take the name of the Lord in vain.”

Have I...

- ✠ used God's name carelessly, in anger, or in surprise?
- ✠ called down evil upon anyone or anything?
- ✠ used the name of God in cursing or blasphemy?
- ✠ failed to keep vows, promises, or resolutions that I have made to God? [specify in the confessional which one; the Priest has authority to remove the obligations of promises and resolutions if they are too rash or unjust]
- ✠ 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 the church building (e.g., talking immoderately in church before, during, after holy Mass)?
- ✚ 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: “Keep holy the Sabbath Day.”**

Have I...

- ✚ through my own fault, failed to come to Mass each Sunday and every Holy Day of Obligation?
- ✚ arrived at Mass late or leave early without good reason?
- ✚ habitually arrive late to and/or leave early from Mass?
- ✚ allowed myself to be distracted at Mass?
- ✚ neglected to set time aside each day for personal prayer to God?
- ✚ committed a sacrilege against the Blessed Sacrament (thrown Him away; brought Him home; treated Him carelessly, etc.)?
- ✚ received any sacrament while in the state of mortal sin?
- ✚ shop, labour, practice sports or do business unnecessarily on Sunday or other Holy Days of Obligation?
- ✚ not attended to taking my children to Mass?
- ✚ not provided proper instruction in the Faith to my children?
- ✚ knowingly eaten meat on a forbidden day or not fasted on a day of fasting?
- ✚ eaten or drunken within one hour of receiving Communion (other than medical need)?

### **Fourth Commandment: “Honour your father and mother.”**

Have I...

- ✚ disobeyed my parents or treated them with disrespect?
- ✚ been disrespectful, impolite, or discourteous toward my family?
- ✚ shown disregard for my parents wishes, displayed contempt of their demands, and/or disdained their very being?
- ✚ harboured hatred for my parents?
- ✚ brought shame on my parents?
- ✚ been helpful in and around my home?
- ✚ (if still in school) neglected my work or my studies?
- ✚ (if still in school) obeyed the reasonable demands of my teachers?
- ✚ (if still in school) disrespected my teachers?
- ✚ failed to study seriously and with diligence?
- ✚ missed an exam at school because of laziness?
- ✚ been disrespectful toward the elderly?
- ✚ Been disobedient to the civil law or to those in authority such as the police?
- ✚ disobeyed what my parents have reasonably asked of me?
- ✚ neglected the needs of my parents in their old age or in their time of need?
- ✚ failed to pray for the deceased members of my family . . . the Poor Souls of Purgatory included?
- ✚ (if I have children) neglected to give my children proper food, clothing, shelter, education, discipline and care (even after Confirmation)?
- ✚ (if I have children) provided for the religious education and formation of my children for as long as they are under my care?

- ✚ (if I have children) ensured that my children still under my care regularly frequent the sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion?
- ✚ (if I have children) educated my children in a way that corresponds to Catholic religious disciplines?
- ✚ (if I have children) provided my children with a positive, prudent and personalised education in the Catholic teaching on human sexuality?
- ✚ (if I have children) been to my children a good example of how to live the Catholic Faith?
- ✚ (if I have children) prayed with and for my children?

**Fifth Commandment: “You shall not kill.”**

Have I...

- ✚ unjustly and intentionally killed a human being?
- ✚ been guilty, through negligence and/or lacking of intention, of the death of another?
- ✚ had an abortion or helped another to have an abortion?
- ✚ been involved in an abortion, directly or indirectly (through advice, encouragement, providing money, or facilitating it in any other way)?
- ✚ supported, promoted, or encouraged the practice of assisted suicide or mercy killing?
- ✚ mutilated my body or another’s body?
- ✚ attempted suicide or seriously considered thoughts of suicide?
- ✚ deliberately desired to kill an innocent human being?
- ✚ unjustly inflicted bodily harm on another person?
- ✚ unjustly threatened another person with bodily harm?
- ✚ acted violently by fighting or hitting others?
- ✚ had thoughts of hatred toward another?
- ✚ verbally or emotionally abused another person?
- ✚ gossiped, slandered, detracted, calumniated?
- ✚ hated another person, or wished him/her evil?
- ✚ been prejudiced, or unjustly discriminated against others because of their race, colour, 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?
- ✚ taken illegal drugs or abused prescription drugs?
- ✚ sold or given drugs to others to use for non-therapeutic purposes?
- ✚ used tobacco immoderately?
- ✚ neglected to take proper care of my body?
- ✚ eaten too much, or slept too much?
- ✚ consumed beer or other alcoholic beverages in excess?
- ✚ allowed myself to become intoxicated?
- ✚ been too concerned about my health or appearance?
- ✚ deliberately harboured unkind and revengeful thoughts about others?
- ✚ indulged in unjust anger?
- ✚ refused to control my temper?
- ✚ been hateful to, quarrelled with, or wilfully hurt someone?
- ✚ been unforgiving of others, especially when mercy or pardon was requested?
- ✚ sought revenge or hoped something bad would happen to someone?

- † taken revenge?
- † used harsh or abusive language toward another?
- † acted rudely, impolitely, or ridiculed others?
- † been cruel to animals?
- † treated animals cruelly, causing them to suffer or die needlessly?
- † delighted to see someone else get hurt or suffer?

**Sixth & Ninth Commandments: “Do not commit adultery. Do not covet your neighbors wife.”**

Have I...

- † desired or done impure things?
- † neglected to practice and grow in the virtue of chastity?
- † wilfully entertained impure thoughts?
- † taken pleasure in entertaining impure thoughts or desires?
- † given in to lust? (The desire for sexual pleasure unrelated to spousal love in marriage.)
- † read books that are immoral?
- † purchased, viewed, or made use of pornography?
- † watched or promoted movies and television that involve sex and nudity?
- † listened to music or jokes that are harmful to purity?
- † read impure material, listened to music with impure lyrics, or looked at impure images, whether in photos or on television or in movies or on the Internet?
- † aroused sexual desire in myself or another by impure kissing, embracing, or touching?
- † committed impure actions such as masturbation? (Deliberate stimulation of one's own sexual organs for sexual pleasure outside of the conjugal act.) (Catechism, 2366)
- † committed homosexual acts or other unnatural acts?
- † dressed immodestly or been too concerned with the way I look?
- † use vulgar language or tell or listen to impure jokes or stories?
- † committed adultery? (Sexual relations with someone who is married, or with someone other than my spouse.)
- † committed incest? (Sexual relations with a relative closer than the third degree or an in-law.)
- † committed fornication? (Sexual relations with someone of the opposite sex when the two are not married to one another or any others.)
- † engaged in homosexual activity? (Sexual activity with someone of the same sex)
- † committed rape?
- † engaged in sexual foreplay (e.g., “petting”, or excessive touching) reserved for marriage?
- † preyed upon children or youth for my sexual pleasure (pedophilia)?
- † engaged in unnatural sexual activities (anything that is not inherently natural to the sexual act; e.g., sex toys, even in the context of marriage)?
- † 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?
- † deliberately dressed immodestly?
- † used artificial contraception / birth control whether surgical, barrier, chemical or withdrawal methods?
- † refused to be open to conception, without just cause? (Catechism, 2368)
- † deprived my spouse of the marital right, without just cause?
- † claimed my own marital right without concern for my spouse?
- † deliberately caused male climax outside of normal sexual intercourse?

- ✚ sterilized my sex organs for contraceptive purposes?
- ✚ participated in immoral techniques such as in vitro fertilization or artificial insemination?

**Seventh and Tenth Commandments:** “You shall not steal. Do not covet your neighbor’s goods.”

Have I...

- ✚ stolen or taken something that doesn't belong to me against the reasonable will of the owner
- ✚ taken anything that was not my own?
- ✚ damaged private or public property or defaced it by vandalism?
- ✚ been guilty of shop-lifting?
- ✚ accepted or bought stolen property or helped someone to steal?
- ✚ bribed someone?
- ✚ gambled excessively?
- ✚ borrowed something without the owner’s permission?
- ✚ failed to make good on a debt?
- ✚ failed to return something I borrowed?
- ✚ waste money or spend it extravagantly?
- ✚ harboured greed for money or worldly possessions?
- ✚ envied others on account of their possessions?
- ✚ wasted goods or food?
- ✚ cheated on tests or schoolwork?
- ✚ cheated in games or sports?
- ✚ cheated on taxes or in business?
- ✚ neglected to live in a spirit of Gospel poverty and simplicity?
- ✚ neglected to give generously to others in need?
- ✚ not 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?
- ✚ allowed myself to be conformed to a consumer mentality (buy, throw away, waste, spend)?
- ✚ neglected to practice the corporal works of mercy?
- ✚ deliberately defaced, destroyed or lost another's property?
- ✚ squandered money in compulsive gambling?
- ✚ make a false claim to an insurance company?
- ✚ failed to pay employees a just wage, or failed to give a full day's work for a full day's pay?
- ✚ failed to honor my part of a contract?
- ✚ overcharged 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 deliberately?
- ✚ knowingly and wilfully deceived another?
- ✚ perjured myself under oath?
- ✚ sworn to do something sinful or illegal?
- ✚ slandered others by attributing to them sins they did not commit or of which I had no evidence?
- ✚ 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. Libel is in substance different from slander because the written word has a longer "life" of damage)
- ✚ 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, deed, or in writing?
- ✚ gossiped about others or listened to gossip?
- ✚ told a secret I was asked to keep?
- ✚ betrayed someone's trust?
- ✚ criticised anyone uncharitably?
- ✚ made rash judgments and harboured false suspicions about others?
- ✚ deliberately misled or deceived anyone?
- ✚ refused to forgive someone or held a grudge against him or her?
- ✚ failed to apologize or make amends to someone I offended?

#### **Other considerations**

- ✚ Am I greedy or selfish or do I indulge in self-pity?
- ✚ Am I proud or vain or do I show off?
- ✚ Am I superficial and worldly?
- ✚ Do I desire to be praised by exaggerating my success?
- ✚ Am I touchy and hypersensitive?
- ✚ Do I magnify the least oversight or thoughtlessness into an insult or deliberate slight?
- ✚ Have I been boastful?
- ✚ Have I been arrogant with others?
- ✚ Have I obstinately defended actions which are sinful, either my own or other's?
- ✚ Am I rebellious?
- ✚ Have I spent useless time planted before the TV when I could be doing more constructive things?
- ✚ Am I envious of someone's possessions and do I inordinately desire them to be my own?
- ✚ Do I take delight in the misfortunes of others?

#### **Individual Examination of Conscience - 7 Deadly Sins**

**Pride:** "Pride is an untrue opinion of ourselves, an untrue idea of what we are not."

- ✚ Have I a superior attitude in thinking, or speaking or acting?
- ✚ Am I snobbish?
- ✚ Have I offensive, haughty ways of acting or carrying myself?
- ✚ Do I hold myself above others?
- ✚ Do I demand recognition?
- ✚ Do I desire to be always first?
- ✚ Do I seek advice?
- ✚ Am I ready to accept advice?
- ✚ Am I in any sense a "bully"?
- ✚ Am I inclined to be "bossy"?
- ✚ Do I speak ill of others?
- ✚ Have I lied about others?

- † Do I make known the faults of others?
- † Do I seek to place the blame on others, excusing myself?
- † Is there anyone to whom I refuse to speak?
- † Is there anyone to whom I have not spoken for a long time?
- † Am I prone to argue?
- † Am I offensive in my arguments?
- † Have I a superior “know-it-all attitude” in arguments?
- † Am I self-conscious?
- † Am I sensitive?
- † Am I easily wounded?

**Envy:** “Envy is a sadness which we feel, on account of the good that happens to our neighbour.”

- † Do I feel sad at the prosperity of others?
- † Do I envy the success of others in games or athletics?
- † Do I rejoice at the failures of others?
- † Do I envy the riches of others?

**Sloth:** “Sloth is a kind of cowardice and disgust, which makes us neglect and omit our duties, rather than to discipline ourselves.”

- † Have I an inordinate love of rest, neglecting my duties?
- † Do I act lazily?
- † Am I too fond of rest?
- † Do I take lazy positions in answering prayers?
- † Do I kneel in a lounging way?
- † Do I delight in idle conversation?
- † Do I fail to be fervent in the service of God?

**Lust:** “Lust is the love of the pleasures that are contrary to purity.”

- † Have I desired or done impure things?
- † Have I taken pleasure in entertaining impure thoughts or desires?
- † Have I read impure material, listened to music with impure lyrics, or looked at impure images, whether in photos or on television or in movies or on the Internet?
- † Have I aroused sexual desire in myself or another by impure kissing, embracing, or touching?
- † Have I committed impure actions alone, ie, masturbation?
- † Do I dress immodestly or am I too concerned with the way I look?
- † Do I use vulgar language or tell or listen to impure jokes or stories?
- † Have I given into desires of adultery even in my imagination?

**Covetousness:** “Covetousness is a disordered love of the goods of this world.”

- † Do I dispose of my money properly or selfishly?
- † Do I discharge my duties in justice to my fellow man?
- † Do I discharge my duties in justice to the Church?

**Gluttony:** “Gluttony is a disordered love of eating and drinking.”

- † Do I eat to live or live to eat?
- † Do I drink to excess?
- † Do I get drunk?
- † Do I misuse prescription drugs?
- † Do I use illegal drugs?
- † Have I allowed myself to become addicted to alcohol and/or drugs?

**Anger:** “An emotion of the soul, which leads us violently to repel whatever hurts or displeases us.”

- † Am I prone to anger?
- † Does practically any little thing arouse my temper?
- † Am I what is generally termed “a sore-head”?
- † Do I fail to repress the first signs of anger?
- † Do I fail to get along well with everybody?
- † Do I ponder over slights or injuries and even presume them?
- † Do I rejoice at the misfortunes of others?
- † Do I think of means of revenge? Of “getting even”?
- † Am I of an argumentative disposition?
- † Have I a spirit of contradiction?
- † Am I given to ridicule of persons, places, or things?
- † Am I hard to get along with?
- † Do I carry grudges, remain “on the outs” with anyone?
- † Do I talk about the faults of others?
- † Do I reveal the faults or defects of others?
- † Do I reveal the faults of others from the wrong motive?

**The Precepts of the Church**

**First Precept of the Church:** You shall attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation and rest from servile labour.

(see Third Commandment above)

**Second Precept of the Church:** You shall confess your sins (to a Priest) at least once a year.

Have I...

- † made a good Confession of my mortal sins at least once a year?
- † purposely omitted telling my mortal sins in my last Confession?
- † neglected to perform the penance I was given?
- † neglected to make reparation for any harm I have done to others?

**Third Precept of the Church:** You shall humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion at least once during the Easter season.

Have I...

- † neglected to fulfil 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?
- ✠ failed to fast for at least one hour before receiving Holy Communion?
- ✠ received Holy Communion more than twice in one day?

**Fourth Precept of the Church:** You shall observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church.

Have I...

- ✠ neglected to do penance every Friday of the year, if not abstaining from meat?
- ✠ neglected to abstain from meat on Ash Wednesday and the Fridays of Lent (if I am 14 years of age and/or older)?
- ✠ neglected to fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday (if I am between the ages of 18 and 59)?
- ✠ participated in diversions on days of penance (e.g., attended crawfish boils and fish fries, ballgames, movies, shopping on Ash Wednesday & Good Friday)?
- ✠ neglected to spend time in prayer, do spiritual and corporal works of mercy, and practice self-denial?

**Fifth Precept of the Church:** You shall contribute to the support of the Church.

Have I...

- ✠ neglected to contribute a just amount of my time, talents and money to support my parish and the work of the Church?
- ✠ neglected to support the Church by not trying to become a saint or by not striving to make sincere progress each day in sanctity?