

Examination of Conscience

Prior to confession, as well as each day in our life, we should compare our lives with the Ten Commandments. Only through sincere examination can we identify our faults and know what we must confess and where we must strive to live more as Christ would have us live. Consider the following:

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

- Do I give God time every day in prayer?
- Do I seek to love Him with my whole heart?
- Have I been involved with superstitious practices or have I been involved with the occult?
- Do I seek to surrender myself to God's Word as taught by the Church?
- Have I ever received Communion in a state of mortal sin?
- Have I ever deliberately told a lie in confession or have I withheld a mortal sin from the priest in confession?

[2] You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

- Have I used God's name in vain: lightly or carelessly?
- Have I been angry with God?
- Have I wished evil upon another person?
- Have I insulted a sacred person or abused a sacred object?

[3] Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

- Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation?
- Have I tried to observe Sunday as a family day and a day of rest?
- Do I do needless work on Sunday?

[4] Honor your Father and your Mother.

- Do I honor and obey my parents?
- Have I neglected my duties to my spouse and children?
- Have I given my family good religious example?
- Do I try to bring peace into my home life?
- Do I care for my aged and infirm relatives?

[5] You shall not kill.

- Have I had an abortion or encouraged anyone to have an abortion?
- Have I physically harmed anyone?
- Have I abused alcohol or drugs?
- Did I give scandal to anyone, thereby leading them into sin?
- Have I been angry or resentful?
- Have I harbored hatred in my heart?
- Have I mutilated myself through any form of sterilization?
- Have I encouraged or condoned sterilization?

[6] You shall not commit adultery.

- Have I been faithful to my marriage vows in thought and action?
- Have I engaged in any sexual activity outside of marriage?
- Have I used any method of contraception or artificial birth control in my marriage?
- Has each sexual act in my marriage been open to the transmission of new life?
- Have I been guilty of masturbation?
- Have I sought to control my thoughts?
- Have I respected all members of the opposite sex, or have I thought of other people as objects?
- Have I been guilty of any homosexual activity?
- Do I seek to be chaste in my thoughts, words and actions?
- Am I careful to dress modestly?

[7] You shall not steal.

- Have I stolen what is not mine?
- Have I returned or made restitution for what I have stolen?
- Do I waste time at work, school or at home?
- Do I gamble excessively, thereby denying my family of their needs?
- Do I pay my debts promptly?
- Do I seek to share what I have with the poor?

[8] You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

- Have I lied?
- Have I gossiped?
- Have I spoken behind someone else's back?
- Am I sincere in my dealings with others?
- Am I critical, negative or uncharitable in my thoughts of others?
- Do I keep secret what should be kept confidential?

[9] You shall not desire your neighbor's wife.

- Have I consented to impure thoughts?
- Have I caused them by impure reading, movies, conversations or curiosity?
- Do I seek to control my imagination?
- Do I pray at once to banish impure thoughts and temptations?

[10] You shall not desire your neighbor's goods.

- Am I jealous of what other people have?
- Do I envy the families or possessions of others?
- Am I greedy or selfish?
- Are material possessions the purpose of my life?
- Do I trust that God will care for all of my material and spiritual needs?