

# *An Examination of Conscience to help you prepare to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation*

Why should we confess? Confession is a sacrament instituted by Jesus Christ in His love and mercy to offer sinners forgiveness for offenses committed against God. At the same time, sinners reconcile with the Church, because it is also wounded by our sins. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a sacrament of healing and a sacrament of conversion, returning us to the Father after our sin.

We use an examination of conscience to help call to mind our sins and failings during a period of quiet reflection before approaching the priest in Confession. It's important for an examination of conscience to be thorough. This will help you learn about things that you may not be aware of. It's also a chance to develop your conscience.

To make an examination of conscience:

- \*set aside some quiet time for reflection
- \*start by praying to the Holy Spirit, asking for help in making a good examination to prepare for Confession
- \*read through the terms on this list and honestly reflect on your behavior for each item
- \*this examination of conscience is based on the Ten Commandments

## ***First Commandment***

***I am the Lord your God. You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.***

Have I doubted in matters of faith? Murmured against God because of adversity? Despaired of His mercy? Have I believed in or consulted with fortune-tellers? Neglected my morning or evening prayers? Omitted my religious obligations because of human respect? Presumed upon God's mercy in committing sin? Loved someone or something more than God (money, power, sex, ambition, etc.)? been involved in the occult? Formally left the Catholic Church? Hidden a serious sin or told a lie in confession?

## ***Second Commandment***

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

Have I used the name of God or the saints with irreverence? Have I sworn (which means calling upon God to witness the truth of what I say) without a good reason, or falsely? Have I cursed (the calling down of some evil on a person, place, or thing)? Blasphemed (using insulting language to express contempt for God), the saints, or holy things?

## ***Third Commandment***

***Remember to keep holy the Lord's day.***

Did I miss Mass on Sunday or a Holy Day of Obligation? Have I done unnecessary servile work or been responsible for others doing it on these days? Set time aside each day for personal prayer to God? Habitually come late to and/or leave early from Mass without a good reason? Not attending to taking my children to Mass? Did I fast and abstain on the prescribed days?

### ***Fourth Commandment***

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

Have I been obedient to my parents and lawful superiors? Have I shown disrespect toward them? Have I deceived them? Have I been a good citizen by voting? Have I shown respect toward aged parents or in their time of need? Provided for the religious education and formation of my children for as long as they are under my care? Ensured that my children still under my care regularly frequent the sacraments of Penance and Holy Communion? Been to my children a good example of how to live the Catholic Faith?

### ***Fifth Commandment***

#### ***You shall not kill.***

Have I been the occasion of another's sin through my bad example in word or deed? Have I been guilty of fighting, anger, hatred, revenge, or drunkenness? Did I refuse to speak to others? To forgive them? Did I use provoking language? Been involved in an abortion, directly or indirectly (through advice, etc.)? seriously considered or attempted suicide? Unjustly inflicted bodily harm on another person? Verbally or emotionally abused another person? Been prejudiced, or unjustly discriminated against others because of their race, color, nationality, sex, or religion? Did I take illicit drugs?

### ***Sixth and Ninth Commandments***

#### ***You shall not commit adultery.***

#### ***You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.***

Did I take pleasure in impure thoughts or desires? Say impure things? Listen to impure conversations? Did I touch others or let other touch me in an impure manner? Commit an impure act alone or with others? Purchased, viewed, or made use of pornography? Committed adultery? Committed incest? Committed fornication (sexual relations with someone of the opposite sex when neither of us is married) Engaged in homosexual activity? Made uninvited or unwelcome sexual advances toward another?

### ***Seventh and Tenth Commandments***

#### ***You shall not steal.***

#### ***You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.***

Have I stolen anything? If so, of what value, and did I return the stolen goods? Have I been unjust in buying or selling? Have I damaged the property of others? Accepted or kept stolen goods? Paid my just debts as soon as possible? Has my daily work merited its paycheck? Have I desired to steal anything or to damage my neighbor's property? Practiced works of mercy? Squandered money in compulsive gambling? Make a false claim to an insurance company?

### ***Eighth Commandment***

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

Did I tell lies? Have I been guilty of rash judgment (believing something harmful to another's character without sufficient reason?) detraction (without a good reason, making known the hidden faults of another)? Betrayed another's confidence through speech? Slander or calumny (by lying, injuring the good name of another)? Perjured myself under oath? Gossiped?

## ***PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH***

***You shall attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation***

***You shall confess your sins at least once a year.***

***You shall humbly receive Jesus in Holy Communion at least during the Easter Season.***

***You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence.***

***You shall contribute to the support of the Church***

***You shall observe the laws of the Church concerning marriage.***