

# Examination of Conscience

*Below is an Examination of Conscience for use before going to Reconciliation. Please click on the link on the right for a printable PDF version of the same Examination.*

## **The Ten Commandments**

### **I. I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD: YOU SHALL NOT HAVE STRANGE GODS BEFORE ME.**

Do I truly love God above all things, or are my real priorities elsewhere: money, material things, relationships, success, or selfish desires? Am I reverent in my speech and actions? Do I make fun of religion or of the Church? Do I give financial support to performers who blaspheme or commit sacrilege as a form of entertainment? Have I dabbled in the occult? Do I turn to God in prayer? Do I pray on a regular basis or is it only when I want something from God? Do I sincerely seek to be transformed by the will of God (see Romans 12:1-3), or do I merely practice my religion out of habit, or to maintain my social image, to satisfy my parents or friends, or to avoid being hassled? Am I fulfilling my duties as a parent to educate my child(ren) in the faith? Am I at all resentful of the demands my faith places upon me?

### **II. YOU SHALL NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD YOUR GOD IN VAIN.**

Do I show disrespect for God's name by misusing it, either to shock other people or in order to express frustration or anger? Do I, on the other hand, hesitate to use God's name in appropriate situations: in conversations with friends, relatives, fellow students, or co-workers? Do I try to deepen my understanding of the faith and take advantage of opportunities to grow in my faith? Do my own personal reflections, my reading, and my conversations with others, reflect a sincere desire to know and to follow Jesus, the Way, the Truth, and the Life?

### **III. REMEMBER TO KEEP HOLY THE LORD'S DAY.**

Do I come to Church to celebrate the Eucharist on Sundays and Holy Days? Do I neglect my Sunday Mass obligation because of laziness or because I give primary value to other weekend activities? Are my family members unable to attend Mass because of my neglect? Do I attend Mass only when it is convenient or when it will make me feel good? When I am at Mass, do I participate by praying and singing—or am I there as a spectator waiting to be entertained? Do I listen wholeheartedly to the Word of God and allow that Word to influence my life? Do I acknowledge the true presence of Christ in the Holy Eucharist and receive Holy Communion with respect and reverence? Have I received Holy Communion when I was not properly disposed to do so (not being in the state of grace, or not having fasted)? Have I received communion in a non-catholic community? Do I show disrespect when I come to church by dressing improperly, chewing gum, arriving late, or by talking during Mass?

### **IV. HONOR YOUR FATHER AND YOUR MOTHER.**

Do I contribute to the peace and happiness of my family? Am I rather a source of hurt and division for those who are closest to me? Parents: Am I generous and patient with my child(en)? Do we spend enough time with them and give them the attention they need? Do we set limits and make sure that they follow rules that will help them to grow up into responsible adults? Do we maintain a constant prayer life in our home? Would a stranger recognize our family as Christian by the way we treat one another at home? Children: Am I loving, respectful, and obedient toward my parents? Do I appreciate the many sacrifices they make for me? Do I say, "Thank you," and, "I love you," often enough? Do I do my chores without being asked, or do I wait until my mother or father becomes upset before I move away from what I am doing? Do I treat my brothers and sisters with love and respect? Do I share my time, attention, and belongings with them?

### **V. YOU SHALL NOT KILL.**

Have I done bodily harm to another person? Am I responsible for the death or injury of another person as a result of my willful choice or neglect? Have I ever placed my life or the life of another person in danger because of a reckless use of alcohol or drugs, especially by driving under the influence or by riding with someone else who was? Do I use my influence to protect the rights of others, especially those whose lives are threatened? Am I mindful of the rights of those who are unable to protect themselves or

whose cries for justice go unheard (see Luke 10:29-37)? Do racial prejudice or political ideology determine which persons are worthy of my respect and concern? Do I take my voting rights seriously and do I exercise my duty as a citizen to oppose grave offenses against life? Do I allow evil to continue because of my apathy or silence? Do I have a true concern for the plight of the homeless, the hungry, the sick, the alien and the refugee (cf. Mt. 25:31-46)? Do I put my concern into action—or do I give my attention to other matters?

#### **VI. YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.**

Do I respect the dignity of the human body and the sanctity of Christian marriage? Does my speech reflect that respect, or are coarse language and jokes a part of my conversations? Do I understand and appreciate the gift and purpose of my sexuality? Have I been faithful to my marriage, priestly, or religious vows? Do I seek to nourish myself in my lifetime commitment? Have I dishonored my body in any way—by fornication, impure actions either alone or with others, unworthy thought or suggestive conversation? Have I willfully separated the unitive and procreative aspects of marriage through recourse to contraception or in vitro fertilization? Have I encouraged others to sin by my failure to maintain good moral standards? Have I strengthened the commercial power of evil by purchasing or reading pornographic material, watching dirty movies, listening to music with degrading lyrics, or by renting pornographic video cassettes or cable television or computer on-line services?

#### **VII. YOU SHALL NOT STEAL.**

Do I respect the property of other people? Have I stolen or willfully damaged the property of others (example, vandalism)? Have I cheated at work or in school? Have I stolen copyrighted materials by electronic means? Have I engaged in unfair business practices? Have I closed my eyes to theft, cheating, or other injustices around me in order to avoid conflict with my friends or co-workers? Am I honest and hardworking in my job? Do I pay a fair wage to my employees? Am I mindful of my obligations to the hungry, the thirsty, the sick, the imprisoned, the naked, and the strangers in our midst (see Matthew 25:31-46)? Do I practice the works of justice, charity, and mercy (see James 2:14-26)? Do I share what I have with the poor? Can I be trusted? Have I ever cheated another person or institution? Do I support the life and mission of my parish by responsible stewardship, sharing my time, talent, and treasure? Do I participate in a life of Christian service and witness, or do I merely remain on the sidelines and complain about the flaws I can detect in others who are involved in the Church's mission.

#### **VIII. YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR.**

Have I lied to another person, even if it was to avoid a difficult situation or stay out of trouble? Have I gossiped about another person? Have I damaged the reputation of another person by my gossip, even if the facts I revealed were true? Do I contribute to the commercial success of those who make a career of destroying the reputation of others (examples: certain newspapers, tabloids, or television shows)? Do I respect the privacy of others? Do I defend the rights of those who are unjustly accused or who are the victims of gossip? Am I merely a conduit through which rumors pass—whether or not they are true?

#### **IX. YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S WIFE.**

Have I ever weakened or damaged my marriage commitment because of an interest in, or even obsession with another person? Do I respect others in their commitments and help them to remain true to their promises? Do I ever treat marriage casually in my conversations or attitudes? Do I engage in excessive or unjust criticism of my spouse? Do I insult and hurt my spouse by comparing him/her to others in an unflattering way? Am I grateful to God for the blessings that have come to me through my marriage? Have I ever done anything that made a mockery of my vows? Have I encouraged others to forsake their marriage vows (even if there was no romantic involvement on my part)?

#### **X. YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S GOODS.**

Am I satisfied with the blessings God has bestowed upon me and my family? Do I give attention and energy to my work or some recreation to the detriment of my family life? Am I jealous or resentful of others who are seemingly better-off than I? Do I try to prove that I am better than others by bragging about my possessions or by accumulating more things to show off to others? Do I appreciate my own good qualities, or do I constantly compare myself with other people and then give in to resentment and bitterness? Do I cope well with the problems that confront me in life? Do I maintain my Christian hope in spite of trials or difficulties? Do I truly seek first the Kingdom of God in my life and place my trust in Him (see Matthew 6: 19-34)? Do I reflect the peace, hope, and joy of a person redeemed and made holy by the blood of Christ?