



Adult Examination of Conscience Guide

Prayer before Confession

Come, Holy Spirit, *enlighten my mind that I may clearly see all my sins.*

Let me not be deceived by self-love, *but show me the true state of my conscience.*

Move my will to sincere sorrow; *help me to make a good confession.*

Holy Mother of God, *intercede for me that I may obtain the pardon of my sins.*

Amen.

Scripture quotes from Exodus 20:1-17 (Ten Commandments),
Revised Standard Version, Catholic Edition.

“I am the Lord your God...

You shall not have strange gods before me.”

- Do I give God time daily in prayer?
- Have I put other things (work, possessions, sports, hobbies, etc.) or other people before God?
- Have I doubted or denied my faith?
- Do I seek time to read God’s Word?
- Have I despaired of God’s grace or mercy?
- Am I angry with God because of illness or misfortune?
- Do I fail to love God, to make God first in my life, to thank Him, trust Him, love Him as He deserves?

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

- Have I used God’s name in vain: lightly, carelessly, by blasphemy?
- Have I used foul language or told demeaning jokes towards the Church or God?
- In conversation, have I passively listened to slander or to jokes demeaning to the Church or to God?

“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy.”

- Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation?
- Did I leave Mass early without a good reason?

- Have I received communion at least once a year?
- Did I receive communion in a state of serious sin?
- Have I been to confession in the last year?
- Have I allowed myself to become so dominated by my work or tasks that I have not set aside Sunday for spiritual and family activities?

“Honor your father and mother.”

- Do I honor and respect my parents?
- Do I blame my parents for my own shortcomings?
- Do I respect the dignity of my (and other) children?
- Do I lose my temper with my children or spouse?
- Have I failed in my duties with my children or spouse?
- Did I respect others with lawful authority?

“You shall not kill.”

- Do I give in to feelings of anger or jealousy?
- Do I keep hatred in my heart?
- Have I killed someone’s reputation with gossip or what I said?
- Have I struck anyone in anger, intending to injure the person?
- Did I fight; give a bad example, or cause scandal?
- Have I abused (e.g. overindulged) alcohol or drugs?
- Have I had or in any way permitted or encouraged abortion?

“You shall not commit adultery.”

- Have I consented to impure glances or give my mind over to lustful thoughts or fantasies?
- Did I look at pornography, impure material or videos?
- Am I guilty of impurity with myself or with others?
- Do I consent to using artificial contraceptive devices or methods?
- Did I dress or behave immodestly?
- Have I spoken or acted disrespectfully to my spouse or any person of the opposite sex?

“You shall not steal.”

- Have I taken what is not mine?
- Did I cheat or provide misleading information to creditors or taxes?
- Did I willfully not fulfill my obligations or waste time with my employer?

- Have I been extravagant in my manner of life, to the neglect of the poor at home and abroad?
- Have I willfully failed to return borrowed items in a timely manner?
- Did I knowingly violate copyrights or pirate computer software?

“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”

- Have I lied or gossiped or talked about someone behind their back?
- Did I always tell the truth?
- Am I critical, negative or uncharitable in my talk?
- Have I injured the reputation of others by speaking about their failures and sins with little desire or intention to help them?
- Have I condoned prejudice or hatred toward people of other nationalities, races or religions?
- Did I violate the confidence of another without a good reason?

“You shall not desire your neighbor’s wife.”

- Have I consented to impure thoughts towards another person?
- Did I encourage impure stares, curiosity or impure conversations?
- Have I rejected my spouse or family in my heart, wishing to distance myself emotionally and personally from them?
- Did I tell or listen to impure or vulgar jokes or stories?
- Did I willfully place myself in an occasion which could lead to sin?

“You shall not desire your neighbor’s goods.”

- Am I jealous of what other people have?
- Am I envious of others because I don’t have what they have?
- Do I habitually compare myself with others?
- Did I not trust that God will provide my material and spiritual needs?
- Is my heart set on earthly possessions?

Scripture Reflection Ezekiel 36:26-27

– see also Romans 8:1-11.

*“A new heart I will give you,
and I will take out of your flesh
the heart of stone and give you a heart of flesh.
And I will put my spirit within you,
and cause you to walk in my statutes
and be careful to observe my ordinances.”*

Rubric of Confession

Make the sign of the cross, saying: **In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, Amen.**

And then say:

“Forgive me Father for I have sinned it has been __ days (weeks, months or years) since my last confession.

These are my sins...”

Tell the priest your sins.

When you are finished, tell the priest in these or similar words:

“I am sorry for my sins and ask Jesus to forgive me of these sins as well as any I may have forgotten to confess.”

The priest will briefly discuss the effects of your sins and will offer advice and encouragement on leading a better Christian life. He will assign you a penance and ask you to make an Act of Contrition – pray the following:

Act of Contrition.

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you.

I detest all my sins because of your just punishments, but most of all because they offend you, My God, who are all good and deserving of all my love.

I firmly resolve,

with the help of your grace,

to sin no more and to avoid the occasions of sin.

Amen.

Following the Act of Contrition the priest pronounces the formulary of absolution: *I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.* He will then dismiss you by saying a variation of “go in peace.”

Reply: **“Thanks be to God.”**

Complete the penance the priest assigned as soon as possible as the absolution is not complete until you do so.