



## **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.