

\*\* AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE \*\*

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While there is no strict form for making an examination of conscience, a thorough examination should touch on all those things implied in the Commandments of God and the Precepts of the Church. The following is one which I've often recommended to those who have been away from confession for a long time, and is suitable for anyone wishing to make a complete confession.

When did I last go to confession? Did I confess everything to the priest? Did I conceal any sin from him? Was I truly sorry for my sins, and did I do my penance? Did I ever receive Holy Communion knowing that I should have gone to confession first?

Do I set aside time every day to pray to God? Do I always thank God for the food I receive by saying grace at every meal, even when I eat alone? Have I ever questioned the authority of the Church, or denied my Catholic faith to others?

Have I taken the Lord's name in vain? If so, how many times? Have I ever sworn an oath over something trivial? Do I keep my promises? Have I ever spoken disrespectfully of Christ, his Church, the Saints, or ridiculed devotion to them? Have I ever spoken disrespectfully of a priest? Have I ever willfully missed Mass on Sunday or Holydays? If so, how many times and for what reasons? Have I done unnecessary work on Sunday? Am I often late to Mass? If so, why? Am I attentive in church, and pray the Mass with devotion?

Have I accepted responsibility for my children's religious instruction? Have I taught them their prayers and prayed with them? Do I see to it that they get to Mass and confession, and fulfill their religious obligations? Do I give scandal to my children by not fulfilling my religious obligations? Do I exercise concern over the company they keep, or the shows that they watch on television? Have I ever quarreled with my spouse in front of my children? Have I physically injured another? Have I endangered my life or the lives of others by the use of drugs, drink, or excessive speed when driving? Have I been drunk? If so, how many times? Have I ever wished harm on another? Have I, by my words or actions, ever led another into an occasion of sin?

Have I had sex outside of marriage, or committed adultery, or committed any impure act with myself or with others? If so, how many times? Did I expose myself to occasions of impurity by reading impure magazines or watching impure programs on television? Do I dress modestly, and teach my children to do the same? Have I used the Internet as an occasion of sin.

Have I stolen anything? If so, how much was it worth, and did I give it back? Have I ever cheated anyone? If so, what restitution can I make? Do I pay all my debts

promptly? Do I envy the property of others?

Have I lied? Have I gossiped about others behind their backs? Do I keep secrets that are entrusted to me? Have I ever done anything to hurt the reputation of another; and, if so, what will I do to repair the damage? Do I pass judgment on others, or suspect them falsely?

Do I confess my sins frequently to a priest, or do I try to pretend that God will forgive me without the help of a priest? Did I fulfill my Easter duty by receiving Holy Communion worthily during the Easter Season? Have I ever received Holy Communion when I was not worthy? Do I perform some act of penance every Friday as required by the Church? Did I fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday? Do I regularly perform acts of penance to mortify my body? Do I belong to the Masons or any other society forbidden by the Church?

Do I act with charity toward everyone I meet? Do I give to the poor? Do I contribute my fair share to the support of the Church? Do I place the needs of others before my own? When I am tempted to sin, do I pray asking God for strength?