

# SAINT VINCENT DE PAUL EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

## DESIGNED FOR HIGH SCHOOL AND ADULTS

This is to help you prepare for your confession. While no one is required to go to confession [unless one has mortal sin], it is one of the sacraments Jesus gave to His Church and He desires that we make use of this way to have sins forgiven.

Go through this *examination* and see if you have committed any of these sins. Pray for courage to bring to God's mercy your sins and failings.

When ready, go to any one of the priests you choose, say,

**"Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been \_\_\_\_\_ (how long it has been) since my last confession."**

If you don't remember how long, simply tell the priest.

Then tell the priest your sins. We are obliged to confess all known mortal sins. Pray to conquer any fears you may have. God is waiting to forgive.

The priest cannot tell anyone what you have said. If you have any questions, feel free to ask the priest. He may ask you a question to help understand what you said.

### 1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.

Do I give God time every day in prayer especially in my morning and evening prayers?

Do I seek to love Him with my whole heart?

Have I been involved with superstitious practices or have I been involved with the occult?

Have I received Holy Communion in the state of mortal sin?

Have I deliberately told a lie in confession or have I knowingly withheld a mortal sin from the confessor?

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

Have I used God's name in vain; carelessly or without thought?

Have I been angry with God?

Have I wished evil upon any other person?

Have I insulted God, the Virgin Mary, a saint or holy image?

### 3. Remember; keep holy the Lord's Day.

Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation?

Have I tried to observe Sundays as a family day and a day of rest?

Do I do needless work on Sundays?

Do I allow distractions to capture my mind?

Do I dress properly for Mass and help my family get to Mass on time?

### 4. Honor your father and mother.

Have I been disrespectful towards my parents?

Have I neglected to help my parents in their needs?

Did I treat my parents with little affection or respect?

Did I put down my brothers and sisters?

Have I deliberately brought dissension into my family?

Have I shown affection to my parents?

Do I talk back to those who are in a position of authority over me (parents, teachers, clergy, etc.)?

Have I taken out my anger on my children?

Have I neglected my elderly parents?

Have I failed to bring my children to Mass?

Have I set bad example for my children by not living an active Catholic life?

### 5. You shall not kill.

Do I respect and defend all human life?

Have I physically harmed anyone?

Have I abused alcohol or

Do I properly care for own body by eating, exercising, getting enough sleep, etc?

Did I lead someone into sin?

Have I been angry or resentful?

Have I harbored hatred in my heart?

Am I a bully and push my weight around?

Have I judged others by the color of their skin or the accent of their voice?

Do I stand up for others even when unpopular?

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

Have I engaged in any sexual activity (overly passionate kissing, touching another's body in the wrong way, etc.) outside of marriage?  
Have I been guilty of masturbation?  
Have I sought to control my thoughts?  
Have I respected members of the opposite sex, or have I thought of others as objects?  
Have I used suggestive words or told jokes about sex, the opposite sex, or other actions that degrade sex?  
Do I seek to be chaste in my thoughts, words, and actions?  
Am I careful to dress modestly?  
Do I (we) use contraceptives to avoid pregnancy?  
Do I harbor sexual thoughts about someone other than my spouse?

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

Have I taken what is not mine?  
Have I returned or made restitution for what I have stolen?  
Do I waste time at work, school, or at home?  
Have I cheated (taking or giving answers) at school?  
Do I pay my debts promptly?  
Do I seek to share generously what I have with the Church and the poor?  
Have I taken advantage at my work by not giving my best or taken that which is not mine (time, materials, etc.)?

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

Have I lied? Have I gossiped?  
Have I spoken badly behind someone's back?  
Have I spread rumors?  
Am I sincere and honest in my dealings with others?  
Am I critical, negative, or uncharitable in my thoughts of others?  
Do I keep secret that which should be kept confidential?

## **9. You shall not desire your neighbor's wife.**

Have I consented to impure thoughts?  
Have I caused them by impure reading, movies, conversations, searching out sexual sites on the Internet, or curiosity?  
Have I looked at, purchased, or participated in pornography?  
Do I seek to control my imagination?  
Do I pray for a holy and pure heart for my spouse? [my boy/girl friend?]  
Do I pray at once to banish impure thoughts and temptations?

## **10. You shall not desire your neighbor's goods.**

Am I jealous of what other people have?  
Do I envy other people's families or possessions?  
Am I greedy or selfish?  
Do I work so much that I neglect my family?  
Do I share my gifts with the poor?  
Are material possessions too important to my life?  
Do I pester my parents to buy me what I don't need just because my friends have something?  
Do I trust that God will care for all of my material and my spiritual needs?

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After you have finished the priest may offer some advice on how to avoid the sins in the future.

Then he will give you a penance. Make sure you understand what he has said. Then you say one of the following prayers.

### **Act of Contrition**

**O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You, and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell; but most of all because they have offended You, my God, Who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of your grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.**

**Or**

**My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against You Whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend, with Your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In His name, my God, have mercy.**