

THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE

First examine your conscience well, then tell the priest the specific kind of sins you have committed and, to the best of your ability, how many times you have committed them since your last good confession. You are obliged to confess only mortal sins, since you can obtain forgiveness for your venial sins by sacrifices, acts of charity and receiving Holy Communion.

If you are in doubt about whether a sin is mortal or venial, mention your doubt to the confessor.

For a *sin* to be *mortal*, three conditions must together be met: "Mortal sin is sin whose object is grave matter and which is also committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent." (CCC 1857)

Avoid generalizations and tell the priest the circumstances in which the sin was committed.

Remember also, confession of venial sins is very helpful for avoiding sin and advancing toward Heaven.

Always tell the priest your state of life: married or single, priest or religious, under religious vows or promises. Tell the priest the last time you went to confession.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

FIRST COMMANDMENT

"I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before Me." (Ex 20:2,3)

- Did I doubt or deny that God exists?
- Did I refuse to believe what God has revealed to us?
- Did I believe in fortune telling, horoscopes, dreams, reincarnation, good-luck charms, tarot cards, palmistry, Ouija boards, séances, mediums, wicca, witchcraft, the occult or the like?
- Did I deny that I was Catholic?
- Did I leave the Catholic Faith?

- Have I denied any teachings of the Catholic Faith?
- Did I take part in any non-catholic worship? Received protestant 'eucharist'?
- Did I give time to God each day in prayer?
- Did I love God with my whole heart?
- Did I have a divided heart?
- Did I despair of or presume on God's mercy?
- Did I have false gods in my life that I gave greater attention to than God, like money, profession, drugs, TV, fame, pleasure, property, etc.?

SECOND COMMANDMENT

"You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain." (Ex 20:7)

- Did I blaspheme or insult God?
- Did I take God's name carelessly or uselessly?
- Did I curse, or break an oath or vow?
- Did I get angry with God?
- Did I show reverence to God's Holy Name?
- Do I reverence the Holy Name of Jesus?
- Did I blaspheme God, the Church, Mary, the saints, or sacred things?

THIRD COMMANDMENT

"Remember that you keep holy the Sabbath Day." (Ex 20:8)

- Did I miss Mass (Sunday or a Holy Day of Obligation) through my own fault?
- Did I come to Mass on time? Leave early?
- Did I fully participate in Holy Mass?
- Do I keep the fast before Holy Mass?
- Did I do work on Sunday that was not necessary?
- Did I set aside Sunday as a day of rest and a family day? Did I shop on Sundays?
- Did I show reverence in the presence of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament?

FOURTH COMMANDMENT

"Honor your father and your mother." (Ex 20:12)

- Did I disobey or disrespect my parents or legitimate superiors? Did I deliberately hurt my parents?
- Did I neglect my duties to my husband, wife, children or parents?
- Did I neglect to give good religious example to my family?
- Did I fail to actively take an interest in the religious education and formation of my children?
- Did I fail to educate myself on the true teachings of the Church?
- Did I give scandal by what I said or did, especially to the young? Did I not treat my children with love and respect?
- Did I cause anyone to leave the faith?
- Did I cause tension and fights in my family?
- Did I care for my aged and infirm relatives?
- Have I encouraged my children to consider a vocation to the priesthood or religious life?
- Have I scandalized my children by inappropriate behavior?
- Have I disciplined my children with charity and prudence?
- Have I permitted immodesty in my family?

FIFTH COMMANDMENT

"You shall not kill." (Ex 20:13)

- Did I kill or physically injure anyone?
- Did I have an abortion, or advise someone else to have an abortion? (One who procures an abortion is automatically excommunicated, as is anyone who is involved in an abortion (Canon 1398). The excommunication will be lifted in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.)
- Did I participate in any way in the grave sin of abortion? Silence, voting, or financial support to organizations that promote abortion.

- Did I use or cause my spouse to use the so-called 'morning after' pill?
- Did I attempt suicide? Did I entertain thoughts of suicide?
- Did I take part in or approve of "mercy killing" (euthanasia)?
- Did I get angry, impatient, envious, unkind, prideful, revengeful, jealous, hateful toward another, lazy?
- Did I abuse drugs, drinking alcohol to excess?
- Was I gluttonous?
- Did I fight or quarreling?
- Did I abuse my children?
- Have I borne hatred or withheld forgiveness?
- Have I taken pleasure in other's misfortune?
- Have I been jealous or envious of anyone?
- Have I mutilated or harmed my body in anyway? Do I take care for my health?
- Did I lead anyone to sin by bad example or direct encouragement?

SIXTH & NINTH COMMANDMENT

"You shall not commit adultery." (Ex 20:14)
"You shall not covet your neighbor's wife." (Ex 20:17)

Note: In the area of deliberate sexual sins listed below, all are mortal sins if there is sufficient reflection and full consent of the will. "No fornicators, idolaters, or adulterers, no sodomites,... will inherit the kingdom of God." (1 Cor 6:9-10) "Anyone who looks lustfully at a woman has already committed adultery with her in his thoughts." (Mt 5:28)

- Did I willfully entertain impure thoughts or desires?
- Did I use impure or suggestive words? Tell impure stories? Listen to them?
- Did I deliberately look at impure TV, videos, plays, pictures or movies? Or deliberately read impure materials?
- Did I view pornography on the Internet or other medium?
- Did I commit impure acts by myself (masturbation)?

- Did I commit impure acts with another - fornication (premarital sex), adultery (sex with a married person)? Other impure actions?
- Did I touch another person impurely?
- Have I neglected to control my imagination?
- Did I pray to banish impure thoughts?
- Have I been an occasion of sin for others by acting provocatively or dressing immodestly?
- Have I used or forced my spouse to use any form of artificial contraception (Pills, devices, withdrawal, sterilization)?
- Did I marry or advise anyone to marry outside the Church?
- Did I avoid the occasions of impurity?
- Did I try to control my thoughts?
- Did I engage in homosexual activity?
- Did I respect all members of the opposite sex, or have I thought of other people as objects?
- Did I abuse my marriage rights?
- Did I condone sexual immorality in others?
- Have I boasted about my sexual sins?

SEVENTH & TENTH COMMANDMENTS
"You shall not steal." (Ex 20:15)
"You shall not covet your neighbor's goods."
(Ex 20:17)

- Did I steal, cheat, help or encourage others to steal or keep stolen goods? Have I made restitution for stolen goods?
- Did I deliberately destroy property of others?
- Did I pirate materials: videos, software, music?
- Did I receive stolen goods?
- Did I fulfill my contracts; give or accept bribes; pay my bills; rashly gamble or speculate; deprive my family of the necessities of life?
- Did I waste time at work, school or at home?
- Did I envy other people's families or possessions? Was I greedy?
- Did I make material possessions the purpose of my life? Am I detached from the things?
- Did I give a full day's work for a full day's pay?

- Did I give a fair wage to my employees?

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT
"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." (Ex 20:16)

- Did I lie? Did I deliberately deceive others, or injure others by lies?
- Have I lied about anybody (calumny)?
- Have my lies caused spiritual or material harm to others?
- Have I made rash judgments about others?
- Do I engage in uncharitable talk or idle conversations?
- Have I injured others by revealing true hidden faults (detraction)?
- Have I encourage the spread of scandal?
- Have I unduly flattered others?
- Did I commit perjury?
- Did I gossip or reveal others' faults or sins?
- Did I fail to keep secret what should be confidential?
- Did I plagiarize or been academically dishonest?

OTHER SINS

- Did I fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday?
- Did I eat meat on the Fridays of Lent or Ash Wednesday?
- Did I fail to receive Holy Communion during Eastertime?
- Did I go to Holy Communion in a state of mortal sin?
- Did I receive Holy Communion without fasting (water and medicine permitted) for one hour from food and drink?
- Did I make a bad confession?
- Did I fail to contribute to the support of the Church?

- Sins which cry to heaven for Vengeance: Murder; Sodomy; Oppression of the Poor; Defrauding the Laborer.

GUIDE TO HOW TO GO TO CONFESSION

"Bless me Father for I have sinned, it has been since my last confession and here are my sins."—

Confess your sins (*regarding mortal sins we must confess the type of sin and how often committed*).

Father will be given some advice and a penance.

Pray the Act of Contrition

"O, My God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you, and I detest all my sins because of your just punishments; but most of all, because they offend thee, 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."

Receive absolution (Father will say):

"God the Father of mercies, through the death and resurrection of His Son has reconciled the world to Himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins; through the ministry of the Church, may God give you pardon and peace, and I absolve you from your sins, in the name of † the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit." (*Bless yourself*)
"Amen."

(Father may say)

"May the Passion of our Lord Jesus Christ, the intercession of the Blessed Virgin Mary and of all the saints, whatever good you do and suffering you endure heal your sins, help you to grow in holiness, and reward you with eternal life. Go in peace."

"Thanks be to God."

OUR LADY OF MOUNT CARMEL
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Examination of Conscience
 &
 Guide to Confession

CONFESSION TIMES

Thursdays - 5:15-6:15pm
 Saturdays - 3:15-4:15pm