

Examination of Conscience

The First Commandment

- Did I perform my duties toward God reluctantly or grudgingly?
- Did I neglect my prayer life? Did I recite my usual prayers?
- Did I receive Holy Communion in the state of mortal sin or without the necessary preparation?
- Did I violate the one-hour Eucharistic fast?
- Did I fail to mention some grave sin in my previous confessions?
- Did I seriously believe in something superstitious or engage in a superstitious practice (palm-reading or fortune telling for instance)?
- Did I seriously doubt a matter of Faith?
- Did I put my faith in danger — without a good reason — by accessing the Internet; reading a book, pamphlet, or magazine; or viewing movies, television programmes or video games that contains material contrary to Catholic Faith or morals?
- Did I endanger my Faith by joining or attending meetings or organisations opposed to the Catholic Faith (non-Catholic services, the Communist Party, Freemasonry, “new age” cults, yoga, or other religious)? Did I take part in one of its activities?
- Have I committed the sin of sacrilege (profanation of a sacred person, place or thing)?

The Second Commandment

- Did I fail to try my best to fulfil the promises and resolutions that I made to God?
- Did I take the name of God in vain? Did I make use of God’s name mockingly,

jokingly, angrily, or in any other irreverent manner?

- Have I been a sponsor in Baptism or participate actively in other ceremonies outside the Catholic Church?
- Did I tell a lie under oath?
- Did I break (private or public) vows?

The Third Commandment

- Did I miss a Mass on a Sunday or a Holy Day of Obligation¹?
- Did I fail to dress appropriately for Mass?
- Have I, without sufficient reason arrived at Mass so late (or left early) that I failed to fulfil the Sunday or Holy Day or Obligation?
- Did I allow myself to be distracted during Mass by not paying attention, looking around out of curiosity, etc.?
- Did I cause another to be distracted?
- Have I performed any work or business activity that would inhibit the worship due to God, the joy proper to the Lord’s Day, or the appropriate relaxation of mind and body, on a Sunday or a Holy Day of Obligation?
- Did I fail to generously help the Church in her necessities to the extent that I am able?
- Did I fail to fast or abstain on a day prescribed by the Church?

The Fourth Commandment

(For Parents)

- Have I neglected to teach my children their prayers, send them to church, or give them a Christian education?
- Have I given them a bad example?
- Have I neglected to watch over my children, to monitor their companions, the books they read, the movies and TV shows they watch, the games they play, or their use of the Internet?
- Have I failed to see to it that my child made First Confession and First Communion?

¹ In Australia the Holy Days of Obligation are all Sundays, Christmas and the Assumption.

- Have I failed to see to it that my children have received the Sacrament of Confirmation?

(For Children)

- Was I disobedient towards my parents or others in authority?
- Did I neglect to help my parents when my help was needed?
- Did I treat my parents with little affection or respect?
- Did I react proudly when I was corrected by my parents?
- Did I have a disordered desire for independence?
- Did I do my chores?

The Fifth Commandment

- Did I easily get angry or lose my temper?
- Was I envious or jealous of others?
- Did I injure or take the life of anyone? Was I ever reckless in driving?
- Was I an occasion of sin for others by way of conversation; the telling of jokes religiously, racially, or sexually offensive; my way of dressing; inviting somebody to attend certain shows; recommending inappropriate or immoral Web site on the Internet; leading harmful books or magazines; helping someone to steal, etc.? Did I give scandal to others? Did I try to repair the damage done by the scandal I gave?
- Did I lead others to sin? What sin or sins were involved?
- Did I fail to maintain a healthy lifestyle to the detriment or the neglect of my physical health? Did I attempt to take my life?
- Have I mutilated myself or another?
- Did I get drunk or use prohibited drugs?
- Did I eat or drink more than a sufficient amount allowing myself to get carried away by gluttony?
- Did I participate in any form of physical violence?
- Did I consent to or actively take part in direct sterilisation (tubal ligation, vasectomy, etc.)? Do I realise that this will have a permanent effect on my

married life and that I will have to answer to God for its consequences?

- Did I consent to, advise, or actively take part in an abortion? Was I aware that the Church punishes with automatic excommunication (*latæ sententiæ*) those who *procure and achieve* abortion? Do I realise that this is a very grave crime?
- Did I cause harm to anyone with my words or actions?
- Did I desire revenge or harbour enmity, hatred, or ill-feelings when someone offended me?
- Did I ask pardon whenever I offended anyone?
- Did I insult or offensively tease others?
- Did I quarrel with one of my brothers or sisters?

The Sixth and Ninth Commandments

- Did I wilfully entertain impure thoughts?
- Did I consent to evil desires against the virtue of purity, even though I may not have carried them out? Were there any circumstances that aggravated the sin: affinity (relationship by marriage), consanguinity (blood relationship), either the married state or the consecration to God of a person involved?
- Did I engage in impure conversations? Did I start them?
- Did I look for fun in forms of entertainment that placed me in proximate occasions of sins, such as certain dances, movies, shows, books, or on the Internet with immoral contents? Did I frequent houses of ill-repute or keep bad company?
- Did I realise that I might already have been committing a sin, such as sharing a room with a person I find sexually attractive, or being alone with such a person in circumstances that could lead to sin?
- Did I fail to take care of those details of modesty and decency that are the safeguards of purity?
- Did I fail before going to a show or reading a book, to find out its moral implications, so as not to put myself in

immediate danger of sinning and in order to avoid distorting my conscience?

- Did I wilfully look at an indecent picture or cast an immodest look upon myself or another? Did I wilfully desire to commit such a sin?
- Did I lead others to sins of impurity or immodesty? What sins?
- Did I commit an impure act? By myself, through masturbation (which is objectively a mortal sin)? With someone else? How many times? With someone of the same or opposite sex? Was there any circumstance of relationship (such as affinity) that could have given the sin special gravity?
- Do I have friendships that are habitual occasions of sexual sins? Am I prepared to end them?
- In courtship, in true love my fundamental reason for wanting to be with the other person? Do I live the constant and cheerful sacrifice of not putting the person I love in danger of sinning? Do I degrade human love by confusing it with selfishness or mere pleasure?
- Did I engage in act such as “petting,” “necking,” passionate kisses, or prolonged embraces?

(For married people)

- Did I, without serious reason, deprive my spouse of the marital right? Did I claim my own rights in a way which showed no concern for my spouse’s state of mind or health? Did I betray conjugal fidelity in desire or in deed?
- Did I take “the pill” or use any other artificial birth control device before or after new life had already been conceived?
- Did I without grave reason, with intention of avoiding conception, making use of marriage on only those days when offspring would not likely be engendered?²
- Did I suggest to another person the use of birth control pills or another artificial method of preventing pregnancy (like condoms)?

- Did I have a hand in contributing to the *contraceptive mentality* by my advice, jokes, or attitudes?

The Seventh and Tenth Commandments

- Did I steal? What object did I steal? How much money, or how much was the object worth? Did I give it back, or at least have the intention of doing so? Did I knowingly accept stolen goods or services (cable television, Internet access) without payment?
- Have I done or caused damage to another person’s property? To what extent?
- Did I harm anyone by deception, fraud, or coercion in business contracts or transactions?
- Did I unnecessarily spend beyond my means? Do I spend too much money because of vanity or caprice?
- Do I give alms according to my capacity?
- Was I envious of my neighbour’s goods?
- Did I neglect to pay my debts?
- Did I knowingly accept stolen goods?
- Did I desire to steal?
- Did I give in to laziness or love of comfort rather than diligently work or study?
- Was I greedy? Do I have an excessively materialistic view of life?

The Eight Commandment

- Did I tell lies? Did I repair any damage that may have resulted as consequence of this?
- Have I unjustly or rashly accused others?
- Did I sin by detraction, that is, by telling the faults of another person without necessity?
- Did I sin by calumny, that is by telling derogatory lies about another person?
- Did I engage in gossip, backbiting, or tale-telling?
- Did I reveal a secret without due cause?

² A conscious intention never to have children in a marriage, renders the marriage invalid.