

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Before the Sacrament of Penance, each individual should ask himself these questions:

What is my attitude to the Sacrament of Penance? Do I sincerely want to be set free from sin, to turn again to God, to begin a new life, and to enter into a deeper friendship with God? Do I look on it as a burden to be undertaken as seldom as possible? Did I forget to mention, or deliberately conceal, any grave sins in past confessions? Did I perform the penance I was given? Did I make reparation to others for an injury?

Each individual should examine his/her life in the light of God's Word:

The Lord says: "You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart."

Do I believe that God truly loves me? Have I spent time talking to God each day? Am I willing to have others know that I am a follower of Jesus?

Do I show respect for God's name and for all that is holy? Do I curse or swear? Why?

Have I participated in Mass on every Sunday and holy day? If I missed Mass, came late, or left early, was it for an important reason or because I did not want to be there? Have I really tried to pray and sing at Mass? Or did I do things to distract myself and others?

Have I thanked God for his goodness to me? Have I told God I was sorry when I sinned? Do I truly try to live as a son or daughter of God and a friend of Jesus? Do I ask the Holy Spirit to help me?

The Lord says: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Have I been obedient and respectful to my parents and others who care for me? Have I loved and prayed for them?

Have I tried to bring peace and joy to my family by helping with the work? By being kind to others? By controlling my feelings? By being pleasant to have around? Have I talked back to my parents?

[For students] Have I obeyed and respected my teachers and others in authority? Paid attention in class? Studied and done my assignments? Been Christian in my behavior on the playground, the bus, in the gym, the library, other public places?

When I was a leader, did I try to do what I thought was best for everyone? If someone told me to do something wrong, was I strong enough to refuse? Have I taken care of the gift of my life and the lives of others? Have I hurt myself with the use of drugs, or alcohol? Have I hurt anyone by fighting, by playing jokes? By calling them names? By any unkind words? Have I mocked or made fun of others? Put them down? If I became angry or jealous, did I handle my feelings in a positive way?

Have I encouraged or led others to sin? Have I accepted the responsibility for my own actions? Have I forgiven anyone who hurt me?

Have I asked forgiveness when I hurt someone? Have I used the gifts of mind, spirit, and body that God has given me to bring happiness to others and glory to God?

Have I shown respect for my body and the bodies of others? Have I told stories, used crude language, read magazines, looked at pictures, or watched movies that lack respect for the human body? Do I enjoy and prolong daydreams about such pictures or stories? Have I touched the private parts of my body or another's body in the wrong way?

Do I respect the act of sex as a part of God's beautiful plan of life which is to be protected by the love of married people? Am I open to learning God's plan for sex, or do I think it is all right to do whatever I feel like doing?

Have I tried to take care of my things? Things that belong to others? Things in public places? Have I been careful not to waste God's gifts so that others can use them too? Am I satisfied with what I have, or would I like to take what belongs to others?

Have I taken anything that is not mine? Have I returned things I borrowed? Have I damaged anything that belongs to someone else? Did I pay for or repair the damage?

Have I always spoken the truth? Have I been kind in talking about other people? Have I guarded the good reputation of others as I would want them to guard mine? Have I kept secrets and promises?

Do I choose good friends? Those who will help me be the person God calls me to be? Am I willing to be friendly to everyone? Or do I belong to a closed group of friends?

Do I do what I can to help those who are poorer than I am?

Have I omitted doing good things when I could and should have done them?

Is something else I did bothering me?

Is Jesus pleased with my behavior? Am I the person He expects me to be?