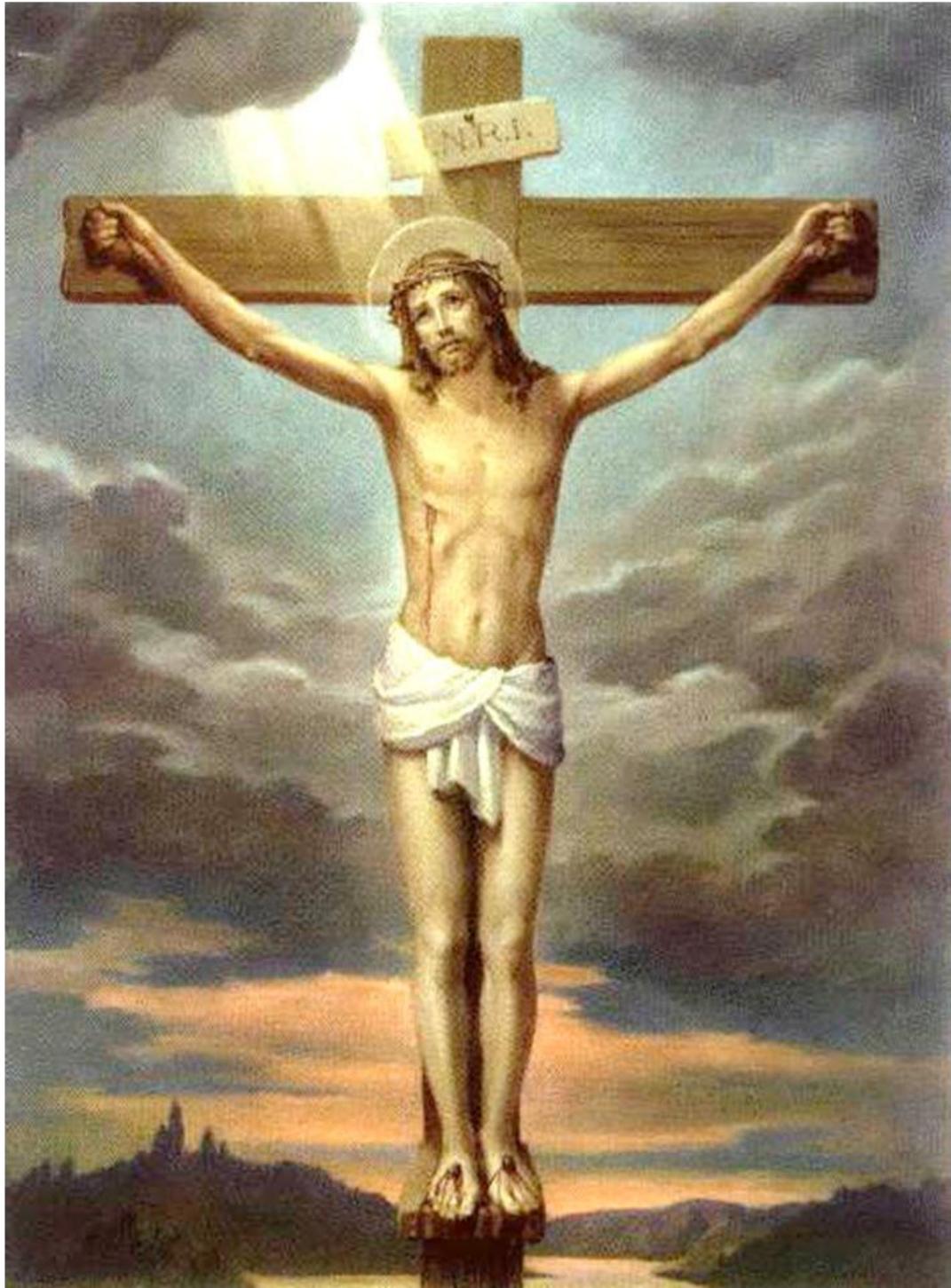


***How do I go to Confession?***



**First: Make a thorough examination of conscience. Sample examines are in this booklet for each of the four stages in life: children, “tweens”, teens, and adults.**

**A simple examination of conscience is made at the end of each day. After this, a prayer of thanksgiving to God for His grace in one’s life that day and an act of contrition (sorrow) is prayed.**

**Prior to receiving the sacrament, make a thorough examination of conscience.**

**The determination of what one needs to confess happens within the examination of conscience.**

**Upon arrival at the church, pray for the strength and courage to make a good confession, enlightened and strengthened by the Holy Spirit. One may wish at this time to do one more examination of conscience.**

**SAMPLE EXAMINES:**

**An Examination of Conscience for Children using The Lord’s Prayer**

**Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name.**

*Do I think about God every day?*

*Do I say my prayers?*

*Do I pay attention and participate at Mass?*

**Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.**

*Am I kind to others?*

*Do I do what Jesus wants me to do?*

*Do I share with others?*

*Am I helpful to my family?*

*Do I show respect to my teachers and classmates?*

**Give us this day our daily bread**

*Do I remember to say thank you?*

*Am I sometimes greedy?*

*Do I appreciate the good things I have in my life?*

*Do I think of ways to help those who have no food?*

*Do I take things that don't belong to me?*

**Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.**

*Do I say I’m sorry when I have been wrong?*

*Do I forgive and forget when someone does something bad to me?*

*Do I help solve problems between my friends or do I cause more trouble?*

*Do I say bad things about people who have hurt me?*

## **Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil**

*Do I play fairly in sports and games?*

*Do I cheat in school?*

*Do I tell the truth?*

*Do I set a good example by my kindness?*

*Do I let other kids tempt me to do things I know I shouldn't do?*

*Do I obey my parents?*

## **An Examination of Conscience for "Tweens" Using the 10 Commandments**

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

*Have I wanted more things, making things more important than God?*

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

*When I make promises, do I take them seriously?*

*Do I use God's name carelessly or in anger?*

### **3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day**

*Did I stay home from church when I could have gone with my family?*

*Have I tried to get a ride to church for mass if I needed one?*

*Have I remembered to pray regularly?*

### **4. Honor your father and your mother**

*Do I obey my parents?*

*Have I done my chores without complaining?*

*Have I been disrespectful to teachers or coaches?*

### **5. You shall not kill**

*Do I keep my patience or do I lose my temper?*

*Do I hold grudges and try to get even with others?*

*Have I been unfair to others, especially those who are different than I am?*

*Have I refused to forgive someone else?*

*Have I caused another person to sin?*

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

*Have I forgotten to show respect for the bodies of others as well as myself?*

*Do I avoid harmful things like drugs, tobacco and alcohol?*

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

*Have I taken something that belongs to someone else?*

*Have I "forgotten" to return something that I borrowed?*

*Have I used money responsibly?*

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

*Do I play fairly or do I ever cheat at school or games?*

*Have I been honest, truthful and fair or have I lied?*

*Have I hurt someone by what I have said or done?*

*Have I copied someone else's homework?*

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

*Have I been jealous of friends that someone else has?*

*Have I tried to be kind to others?*

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

*Have I been jealous of the things that my friends have?*

*Have I nagged my parents into buying things because my friends have them?*

*Have I helped others when they needed help?*

## **An Examination of Conscience for Teens**

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

*Do you worship the false gods of status, consumerism or peer approval?*

*Do you ignore or avoid old friends in order to be part of the popular crowd? Do you make unreasonable demands on your parents for clothes or money?*

*Do you give support to your peers when they tell racial or ethnic jokes? Do you show indifference toward the poor and think of them as losers by social standards?*

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

*Do you use language that you would never speak in front of your grandmother?*

*Is your language a reflection of a low opinion of others and insults?*

### **3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day**

*Do you skip mass because few of your friends go to church or because you feel that the gift of God's presence should be as entertaining as MTV?*

### **4. Honor your father and your mother**

*Do you thank your parents for what they do for you?*

*Do you offer to help around the house?*

*Do you value your family members as much as you do your friends?*

### **5. You shall not kill**

*Do you value your life and that of others?*

*Do you drink and drive or travel with those who do?*

*Do you experiment with drugs and show no regard to their effect on your grades, your self-respect or your relationships?*

*Have you ever hit your girlfriend or boyfriend?*

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

*Do you use other people for your own selfish pleasure?*

*Do you lie to get others to act against their values?*

*Do you see sex as a way to be popular or to rebel against your parents?*

*Do you engage in acts of self-pleasure?*

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

*Do you cheat on tests or homework?*

*Do you ever shoplift or take things that don't belong to you?*

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

*Do you gossip or pass on rumors that hurt other people?*

*Can you be trusted to keep a confidence?*

*Do you lie to protect your own ego, even if someone will be hurt?*

**9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife**

*Are you envious of others? Do you resent their popularity or success?*

*Do you feel you have to put others down in order to feel better about yourself?*

**10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods**

*Do you resent your parents when they tell you they cannot afford to buy the things that you feel you need to keep up with your friends?*

*Do you ever ask your parents what their financial worries are?*

**Examination of Conscience for Adults**

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

Am I ignorant of my catechism (Act of Contrition, Apostle's Creed, Ten Commandments, Seven Sacraments, the Our Father)?

Have I willfully doubted or denied any of the teachings of the Church (heresy)?

Am I a member of any anti-Catholic or any secret society?

Have I knowingly read any anti-Catholic literature?

Have I practiced any superstitions (horoscopes, fortune tellers, etc.)?

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

Have I used God's name in vain by way of profanity?

Have I murmured or complained against God (blasphemy)?

Have I maligned priests or others consecrated to God?

Have I sworn by God's name (oath) either falsely or rashly?

Have I broken any private vow?

**3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's day**

Have I missed Mass on Sundays or holydays through my own fault?

Have I been late for Mass through my own negligence?

Have I done unnecessary servile work (physical labor) or shopping on Sunday?

Have I been inattentive at Mass or otherwise failed in reverence for the Most Blessed Sacrament?

**4. Honor your father and your mother**

Have I been disrespectful to my parents or neglected them?

Have I failed in obedience or reverence to others in authority?

Have I mistreated my wife or children?

Have I been disobedient or disrespectful to my husband?

Regarding my children:

Have I neglected their material needs?

Have I failed to care for their early Baptism or their proper religious instruction?

Have I allowed them to neglect their religious duties?

Have I otherwise failed to discipline them?

Have I given them bad example?  
Have I interfered with their freedom to marry or follow a religious vocation?

**5. You shall not kill; 8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor**

Have I quarreled with any one?  
Have I cursed anyone or otherwise wished evil on him?  
Have I taken pleasure in anyone's misfortune?  
Is there anyone to whom I refuse to speak or be reconciled?  
Have I lied about anyone (calumny)?  
Have I rashly judged anyone of a serious sin?  
Have I engaged in gossip (detraction) or spread scandal?  
Have I lent an ear to scandal about my neighbor?  
Have I been jealous or envious of anyone?

**6. You shall not commit adultery; 9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife**

Have I denied my spouse his or her marriage rights?  
Have I practiced birth control?  
Have I abused my marriage rights in any other way?  
Have I committed adultery or fornication?  
Have I touched or embraced another impurely?  
Have I sinned with others of the same sex?  
Have I committed acts of impurity with myself or harbored lustful desires?  
Have I indulged in other impure thoughts?  
Have I failed to dress modestly?  
Have I done anything to provoke or occasion impure thoughts in others?  
Have I read indecent literature or looked at indecent pictures?  
Have I watched suggestive films or programs?  
Have I permitted my children or others under my charge to do these things?  
Have I used indecent language or told indecent stories?  
Have I willingly listened to such stories?  
Have I boasted of my sins?  
Have I sinned against chastity in any other way?

**7. You shall not steal; 10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods**

Have I stolen anything?  
Have I damaged anyone's property through my own fault?  
Have I cheated or defrauded other?  
Have I refused or neglected to pay any debts?  
Have I neglected my duties or been slothful in my work?  
Have I refused or neglected to help anyone in urgent necessity?  
Have I failed to make restitution?

**OTHER SINS**

Have I knowingly caused others to sin?  
Have I cooperated in the sins of others?  
Have I sinned by gluttony?  
Have I become intoxicated?

Have I used narcotics?  
Have I been motivated by avarice?  
Have I indulged in boasting or vainglory?  
Have I received Holy Communion or another sacrament in the state of mortal sin?  
Is there any other sin I need to confess?  
Have I ever failed to confess a serious sin or disguised it?  
Have I been guilty of irreverence for this sacrament by failing to examine my conscience carefully?  
Have I failed to perform the penance given me by the confessor or disobeyed any of his directions?  
Have I neglected the Easter duty of receiving Holy Communion?  
Have I failed to confess my sins as I become aware of them?  
Have I any HABITS of serious sin to confess first (impurity, drunkenness, etc.)?

### **Prayer Before Confession**

*O Lord, grant me light to see myself as Thou dost see me and the grace to be truly and efficaciously contrite for my sins.  
O Mary, help me to make a good confession.*

**Enter the Confessional, then, either kneel or sit and begin:  
In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.  
The Priest will pray: Amen.**

**The Priest will pray:  
May God, who has enlightened every heart,  
help you to know your sins and trust in His mercy.**

**Respond: Amen.**

**You begin by saying, “Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been” ... (days, weeks, months...) “since my last confession”. These are my sins...**

**You then confess your sins in kind (the sins themselves) and number of times you have committed each sin (if numerous please approximate or tell the priest numerous times). Please follow this. It helps the priest help you. It guides him in giving you an appropriate penance. The Priest may ask questions to help clarify the situation or sins confessed if necessary to help him assign a reasonable and helpful penance.**

**The Priest will assign an appropriate penance.**

**The Priest will ask the Penitent to pray an Act of Contrition, which you must do *audibly*. (This is a suggested Act of Contrition):**

**“O my God, I am heartily sorry, and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell, but most of all, because they offend you, my God, who art all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.**

**The Priest will pray the prayer of absolution.**

**As the Priest is saying “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit”, you should make the Sign of the Cross, thus receiving the blessing and absolution. Then respond, “Amen”.**

**The Priest will say, “Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good.”**

**You respond, “For His mercy endures forever. Amen.”**

**The Priest concludes by saying, “The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in peace.”**

**You respond, “Thanks be to God.”**

**You now go and do the assigned penance and pray a prayer of thanksgiving to God.**

*Thanks to:*

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