

Examining Your Conscience

As we come to celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation, we examine our conscience to make sure we confess *all* our mortal sins. This is not a question of the quantity of our sins. Rather, the verbal confession of our sins serves as our external expression of the internal sorrow in our contrite hearts and our admittance that we need God's help to change.

To begin your examination of conscience, you should recollect how long it has been since your last confession. Three basic questions we can ask ourselves are:

1. Do I trust God to lead me or do I do things my own way?
2. Do I want to change?
3. What do I choose to do instead of spending time with God?

We can use the seven deadly sins to examine our conscience.

The Seven Deadly Sins
Catechism of the Catholic Church
paragraph 1866

1. **Pride**

- Do I share credit with God and others for the good things I do?
- Do I thank God for the gifts He has given me?
- Do I respect those with authority over me?

2. **Avarice (greed)**

- Do I put my *wants* before the *needs* of others?
- Do I try to build up wealth for myself or do I help the poor?

3. **Envy**

- Do I think ill of others because of what they have that I don't?
- Do I try to take for myself what belongs to others?

4. **Wrath (anger)**

- Do I hold on to my anger?
- How often do I have angry thoughts?
- Do I yell or attack people verbally or physically?

5. **Lust**

- Do I look at other people as a means to find pleasure for myself, ignoring the person?

- Do I look at illicit material, stimulating lust in my heart?
- Do I respect my own body as God's gift or seek things that please my body physically?

6. Gluttony

- Do I eat too much?
- Am I wasteful?
- Do I use things wisely, not using up our natural resources wastefully?

7. Sloth/Acedia (laziness that prevents openness to God)

- Do I fail to do reasonable things that are asked of me out of laziness?

Or we can ask ourselves what Commandments we have broken.

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20:1-17

Deuteronomy 5:6-21

Catechism of the Catholic Church 2052-2557

1. Worship Only Our One True God & Value Nothing Above Him

- Is God what is most important to me?
- Do I put material things before God?
- Am I more worried about what people think of me than what God thinks of me?
- Do I pray and listen to God?

2. Do Not Take the Name of the Lord in Vain

- Do I use the name of God to curse?
- Do I use God's name in anger?
- Do I swear an oath in God's name falsely?

3. Keep the Sabbath Holy

- Do I go to church every Sunday?
- Do I do work on Sunday unneedingly?
- Do I give thanks on the day of rest for God's blessings?

4. Honor Your Father and Mother

- For children—do we obey our parents?
- Do we help our parents in accord with our means?
- Do we let our parents know we care about them?

5. You Shall Not Kill

- Have I willingly taken the life of a person?
- Have I desired to cause physical harm to another person?
- Do I see my own life as a gift?
- Have I sought to harm myself?
- Do I knowingly promote unjust war?

6. You Shall Not Commit Adultery

- Do I reserve physical intercourse for marriage?
- Do I seek to self-gratify my own physical desires?
- Do I desire or have relations with a married person or outside my own marriage?

7. You Shall Not Steal

- Do I take items from stores or individuals without paying for them?
- Do I steal the ideas of others?
- Do I do a fair day's work for my pay?

8. You Shall Not Bear False Witness

- Do I lie about my own actions?
- Do I lie about others?
- Do I gossip?
- Do I tell the truth?

9. You Shall Not Covet Your Neighbor's Wife

- Do I desire or have physical relations with a married person?
- Do I honor my own marriage vows?

10. You Shall Not Covet Your Neighbor's Property

- Do I desire the property of my neighbor as my own?
- Am I jealous or envious of my neighbor?
- Seeing the whole world as my neighbor, do I use more than my share of the world's food and resources, leaving others without enough?

You can view two videos by Fr. Jeff about the Sacrament of Reconciliation at <http://www.renewaloffaith.org/reconciliation.html>.

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