

Examination of Conscience

All sin either wounds or destroys some aspect of a relationship: your relationship with God, your relationship with others, and/or your relationship with yourself. Before going to Confession, take time to pray about these areas of your life. *Whatever your sins*, know that Christ is waiting to heal your wounds and restore you to holiness.

Relationship with God

Is there something or someone in your life that you depend on more than God?

Have you compartmentalized your relationship with God (worshipping on Sunday but then forgetting Him the rest of the week)?

Do you bow down to false gods like image and materialism?

Is your focus on yourself or on God and others?

Do you make time to pray every day? Do you listen when you pray?

Do you go to Mass every Sunday and try to pay attention while you are there?

Have you avoided the occasions of sin: places, programs, friends that are not good for you?

Have you been consistent in seeking God's forgiveness when you have sinned?

Relationship with others

Have you been selfish and ignored the needs of others?

Are you willing to serve others? Do you look for opportunities to do so?

Do you gossip or use words to damage another's reputation?

Have you been afraid to give witness to your faith because of what someone else might think or say?

Are you willing to forgive others or do you hold grudges?

Are you respectful in your words (jokes, comments, etc.)?

Have you ever treated another person as an object for your own pleasure?

Do your relationships help or hinder your Christian life?

Relationship with yourself

Have you ever sinned through pride, ignoring or resenting the fact that you are not God? Have you forgotten your need for a Savior?

Do you love yourself the way God made you or do you sometimes envy the gifts of others?

Have you been a person of integrity, being faithful to your Christian identity always (esp. when it is not convenient)?

Do you use the talents that God has given you to give Him glory and to bring goodness to others?

Are you grateful for the gifts you have received from God and from others?

Do you participate in behaviors that are self-destructive?

Have you been chaste in your thoughts and behaviors with yourself and with others?

Have you looked at pornography or other objectifying images on the internet or somewhere else?

Have you abused substances (alcohol or drugs)?

Have you ever done something you regret while under the influence of alcohol or drugs?

Do you habitually examine your life to see where change may be needed?

Steps to Confession

- 1) Spend time in prayer examining your conscience. It may help to write down a list of your sins.
- 2) Go to a priest and confess. Be honest and complete (God already knows. He just wants to heal you!).
- 3) After you confess, the priest will give you counsel as well as a penance (prayers or actions to be done after your confession).
- 4) Pray an Act of Contrition in the presence of the priest (the priest will help you if necessary).
- 5) Receive absolution from the priest (the sins you have confessed are FULLY forgiven here).
- 6) Do whatever penance the priest assigns.

Remember, there is no sin that has ever been committed that is greater than the mercy and love of Jesus. Come to confession with courage because Jesus loves you. Leave your sins with Him, and receive His love that is stronger than even death. You are loved!