

A Contemporary Guide for Examining Your Conscience

In broad outline and spirit this examination follows the form suggested by the revised Rite of Penance.

My Relationship to God *"You shall love the Lord your God with your whole heart."*

1. Is my whole life directed toward loving God and seeking his kingdom and plan for humanity? Or are personal greed and the things of this world my basic object of devotion?
2. Do I accept with my whole heart the revelation of God's love through Jesus and do I respond fully to the call of his Spirit in my life?
3. Do I pray sufficiently each day and seek to have a continuous spirit of prayer? Do I turn to God in good times and bad and in times of temptation? Do I listen with an open and humble heart and am I ready to accept the inner conversion to which he invites me? Do I praise and thank him for his gifts?
4. Do I worship God as an active member of the faith community Christ founded, the Church? Am I conscious of and responsive to the Body of Christ, local and universal? Do I participate fully in the Mass each Sunday and in the whole sacramental life of the Church? Do I accept Church teaching and authority in a spirit of faith and cooperation?
5. Do I take steps to deepen and increase my understanding of the faith? Do I profess and live it courageously?
6. Have I shown reverence for God in my speech and in my attitude toward religious symbols? Have I elevated things like money, status, superstition or occult practices to the level of false gods?

My Relationship to Others *"Love one another as I have loved you."*

1. Do I truly love my neighbors—as myself? Do I aid or obstruct their progress toward God and fuller life? Have I used or exploited others for my own selfish interests?
2. Am I caring toward my family? Do I show fidelity, patience, reverence and love to my spouse, children, parents, brothers, sisters? Have I shown good example? Fulfilled my respective role?
3. Do I deal honestly and truthfully with others? Have I harmed anyone by deceit, rash judgment, detraction, calumny or broken agreements? Have I worked honestly, upheld contracts, paid fair wages?
4. Have my relations to others been faithful and chaste? Have I sexually exploited or demeaned another? Am I guilty of such violations of chastity as adultery, fornication, or conversation that is indecent or cheapens human dignity?
5. Have I hated others, shown prejudice or discrimination toward them? Have I stolen or damaged the property of others? Have I returned or paid for stolen or damaged goods? Do I share what God has given me with those in need?
6. Have I injured the life, limb or reputation of others? Have I upheld and protected the right to life at all

levels? Have I procured or cooperated in abortion or not revered the human dignity of the aged, the retarded, deformed or mentally ill? Am I violent? Do I strive to reduce violence around me?

7. Do I bring the good news of the gospel to others? Do I promote Christian values and the life of the Church on all levels of human society? Do I work and pray for Christian unity? Do I try to heal the wounds of the Church or do I inflame them? Do I support and involve myself in the Christian community or parish to which I belong?
8. Do I obey legitimate authority? Do I exercise leadership and authority in a spirit of Christian service?
9. Do I work for the betterment of human society? Do I try to be informed and actively concerned about social and political issues that affect the common good whether on the local, national or global level.
10. According to my role in life, do I seek to eliminate from the world whatever keeps my brothers and sisters from the full human development intended by their creator: poverty, disease, hunger, injustice, discrimination, oppressive laws and structures, unequal distribution of world resources? Am I—is my country—wasteful or using up an unjust amount of the world's resources (food, fuel, minerals, etc.)? Do I support according to my means and abilities, organizations which work for social improvement?

My Personal Growth in Christ *"Be perfect as your Father is perfect."*

1. Is Christ and his way of living the basic goal of my life? What inclinations and attitudes within me are hindrances to my growth and development as God's son or daughter? Am I too self-centered? Do I work on controlling dangerous attitudes like pride, arrogance, jealousy, avarice, lust, intemperance, self-sufficiency, prejudice? Do I explore my motives and overall pattern of conduct? Do I make full use of my talents and gifts?
2. Do I try to keep a cheerful, positive disposition? Do I give into depression and self-pity? Do I put myself down? Do I let unfounded fears limit my potential and personal freedom? Have I let fear prevent me from following my conscience? Do I seek counseling, spiritual direction and other aids to personal growth, when needed? Do I take care of my health? Overeat, over-drink, take harmful drugs?
3. Do I have a wholesome attitude toward my own sexuality? Have I wilfully indulged in thoughts, actions, reading, entertainment that are contrary to the dignity and proper meaning of sex?
4. Do I take time for my spiritual growth? Do I have a wholesome spirit of penance and self-denial as taught by Jesus? Do I observe the days of penance established by the Church? Is personal renewal and on-going inner conversion a priority in my life? Am I open to change and the call to fuller life prompted by God's Spirit in my heart?