

THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION

Examination of Conscience

I AM THE LORD YOUR GOD, YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS

- ◆ Do I make a god out of my work, my possessions, my impulses and desires or my own image in the eyes of others, so that these rule my life instead of God?
- ◆ Do I try to grow in knowledge of God by daily prayer, Scripture reading, and honest study of the Church's teachings?
- ◆ Have I ever dabbled in the occult or given credence to horoscopes, Ouija boards, channeling, tarot cards, superstition or fortune telling?
- ◆ Do I easily give up on God's grace and willingness to help me in times of distress?

YOU SHALL NOT TAKE THE NAME OF YOUR LORD IN VAIN

- ◆ Have I resorted to profane language by cursing and swearing?
- ◆ In conversations, have I assented to slander and jokes aimed at demeaning religion, the Church, or God's authority?

REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY, TO KEEP IT HOLY

- ◆ Have I allowed myself to be so dominated by my work or the activities of life that I don't go to Mass every Sunday?
- ◆ Do I prioritize coming to Mass every Sunday and Holy Day, or do I rationalize that "God won't mind if I miss now and then," or "Going to church once in a while is good enough— most people don't even go at all."
- ◆ In my prayer and attendance at Holy Mass, am I content with passive or ritualistic observance rather than devoting myself to true worship?
- ◆ Do I make the effort to actively engage my heart when I come to worship at Mass?

HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER

- ◆ As an adult, am I genuine with my parents in charity and truth to foster genuine relationships?
- ◆ Have I legitimately tried to work out problems with my parents according to the truth of the teachings of the Church?

YOU SHALL NOT KILL

- ◆ Have I harmed anyone with unjust anger toward them?
- ◆ Have I developed a habit of speaking and behaving toward my family or others which is abusive or demeaning?
- ◆ Do I secretly tolerate a culture where abortion is available and treated as a right even though life is the most basic right given by God?
- ◆ Have I ever advocated abortion, either through my opinions, in conversation, or by actively assisting someone in procuring one?
- ◆ Have I ever endangered myself or the life of another person by taking drugs or abusing alcohol?

YOU SHALL NOT COMMIT ADULTERY

- ◆ Have I misused the gift of my sexuality or others through sexual acts outside marriage with anyone of either sex, contraceptive acts within marriage, masturbation, giving my mind over to lustful thoughts, fantasies, or pornography?
- ◆ Am I respectful in dress and speech regarding human sexuality or do I enjoy lewd jokes and obscene discussions or stories?
- ◆ Do I promote a healthy and generous relationship with my spouse so that I may honor my marriage vows?

YOU SHALL NOT STEAL

- ◆ Have I taken anything that did not belong to me?
- ◆ Have I been dishonest in the payment of my taxes or in my business?
- ◆ Have I cheated my employer by wasting time and not doing a full day's work?
- ◆ Have I been extravagant in my manner of life, to the neglect of real needs of my family or of the poor?
- ◆ Have I been slothful and lazy in fulfilling my promises and commitments to God, myself, and others in my family or workplace?

YOU SHALL NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST YOUR NEIGHBOR

- ◆ Have I defamed someone's good name by taking part in gossip or slander?
- ◆ Have I injured the reputations of other people by speaking about their failures and sins with little desire or intention to help them?
- ◆ Have I condoned prejudice and ill-feeling towards members of the opposite sex or people of another nationality, race, religion or sexual orientation?
- ◆ Do I correct others when they are speaking unfairly or untruthfully about another?

YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S WIFE

- ◆ Have I sought the affections of another's spouse?
- ◆ Have I indulged in fantasies or infidelity against my spouse?
- ◆ Have I rejected my family in my heart, wishing to distance myself emotionally and personally from them for selfish or unjust reasons?

YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S GOODS

- ◆ Do I habitually compare myself with others in terms of wealth, status, and financial security?
- ◆ Am I jealous of the personal qualities of others or envious of their possessions or success?
- ◆ Do I keep my finances in order and exercise proper stewardship over what is mine?
- ◆ Do I support my Church according to my means and give generously to the poor?

DURING CONFESSION

After examining your conscience and telling God of your sorrow, go into the confessional. You may kneel at the screen or sit to talk face-to-face with the priest.

Begin your confession with the sign of the cross, "**In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. My last confession was _____ weeks (months, years) ago.**"

The priest may read a passage from holy Scripture.

Say the sins that you remember. Start with the one(s) that is most difficult to say. (In order to make a good confession the faithful must confess all mortal sins, according to kind and number.) After confessing all the sins you remember since your last good confession, you may conclude by saying, "**I am sorry for these and all the sins of my past life.**"

Listen to the words of the priest. He will assign you some penance. Doing the penance will diminish the temporal punishment due to sins already forgiven.

When invited, express some prayer of sorrow or Act of Contrition such as:

An Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended you and I detest all my sins, because I dread the loss of heaven and the pains of hell. But most of all because I have offended you, my God, who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve with the help of your grace, to confess my sins, to do penance and to amend my life. Amen.

AT THE END OF CONFESSION

Listen to the words of absolution, the sacramental forgiveness of the Church through the priest.

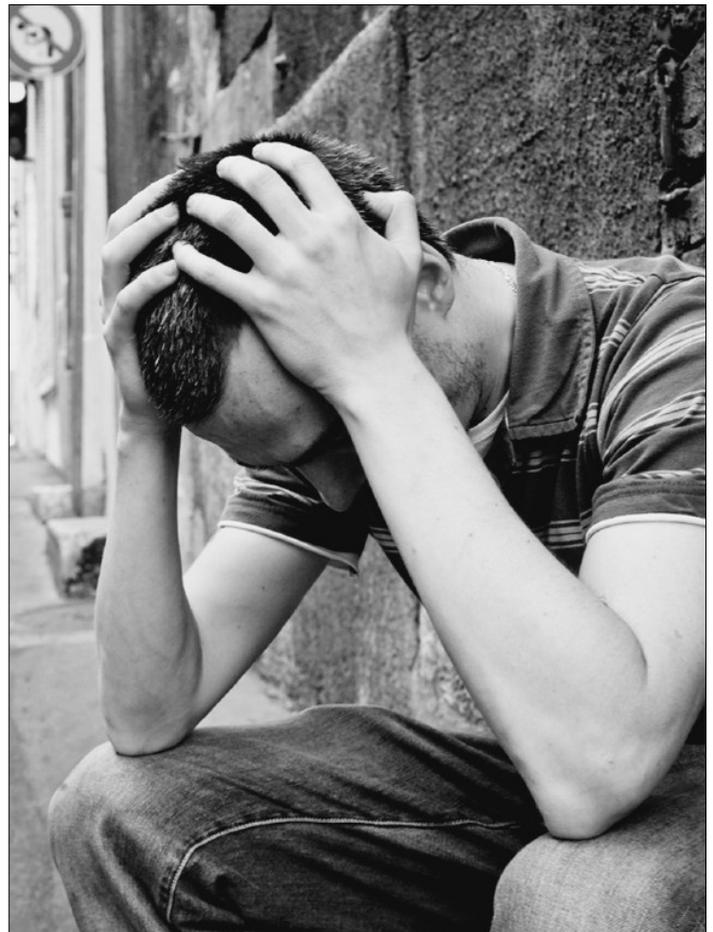
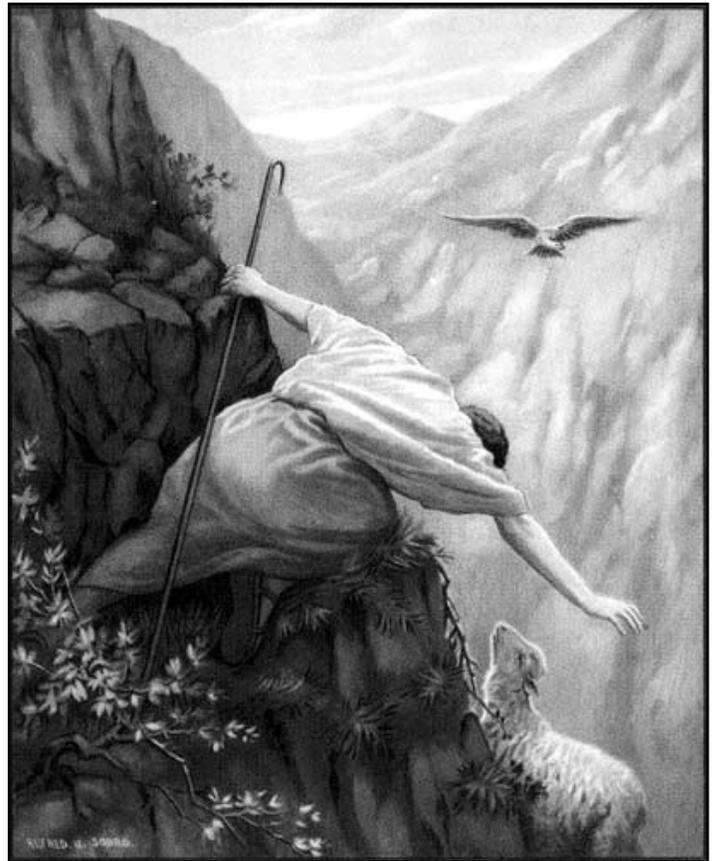
As you listen to the words of forgiveness you may make the sign of the cross with the priest. If he closes by saying, "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good," answer, "For His mercy endures forever."

AFTER CONFESSION

Give thanks to God for forgiving you again. If you recall some serious sin you forgot to tell, rest assured that it has been forgiven with the others, but be sure to confess it in your next Confession.

Do your assigned Penance.

Resolve to return to the Sacrament of Reconciliation often. We Catholics are fortunate to have the Sacrament of Reconciliation. It is the ordinary way for us to have our sins forgiven. This sacrament is a powerful help to get rid of our weaknesses, grow in holiness, and lead a balanced and virtuous life.



YOUR FAILURES DO NOT DEFINE YOU!