



**RECONCILIATION** for  
**TEENS**

*Why tell your sins to a priest?!*

Priests can forgive our sins because Jesus has given them that authority through the grace of Holy Orders. With that power, priests can hear and forgive our sins by acting through Christ. Jesus gave the Church the Sacrament of Reconciliation, also known as Penance or Confession, to allow us to have an intimate conversation with our God through the priest.

Modern society has lost a sense of sin. As Catholic followers of Christ, we must make an effort to recognize sin in our daily actions, words and omissions. An *examination of conscience* helps us do just that. To make a good examination of conscience and to live a life in right relationship with God, His laws, and the happiness He desires for us, it is also critical for each of us to develop a well-formed conscience.

### **Examination of Conscience**

An examination of conscience is a review of one's past thoughts, words and actions for the purpose of discerning their conformity with or unconformity with the moral law. In other words, an examination of conscience helps you identify the moments in your life when you've pleased God with your virtue—the good things you've done or said—or when you have fallen into sin. If you examine your conscience in order to uncover and reflect on your sins, you can then bring those uncovered sins before God in the Sacrament of Confession and ask for His forgiveness...

#### **You shall have no other gods besides the Lord your God.**

- Do I love God above all things? Is He number one in my life or do I put myself before God?
- Do I put sports or other things above God?
- Do I pray often? Have I neglected my friendship with God by neglecting prayer?
- Have I been involved with occult or superstitious practices, i.e., fortune telling?
- Have I ever received Holy Communion in the state of mortal sin?

#### **You shall not take the Lord your God's name in vain.**

- Have I been angry with God?
- Have I ever lied after "swearing to God" that I am telling the truth?
- Have I ever used God's name out of anger, that is, as a curse?

#### **Keep the Sabbath day holy.**

- Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation?
- Have I tried to observe Sunday as a family day and a day of rest?
- Do I resent having to attend Mass, wishing I were somewhere else, or thinking of all the things that I could be doing rather than spending time with Our Lord?
- Have I been irreverent or disrespectful while at Mass?

#### **Honor your father and your mother so that you may live long and flourish.**

- Do I disobey my parents?
- Do I fail to respect them?
- Am I ashamed of them?
- Do I let them know I love them?
- Do I lie to them?
- Do I disrespect or disobey teachers, coaches, or other adults?
- Do I lie to my teachers?

**You shall not kill.**

- Do I harm myself deliberately or by not taking care of myself?
- Have I murdered anyone's reputation by deliberately spreading rumors or keeping rumors alive by passing them on?
- Do I harbor anger against anyone? Hold a grudge?
- Have I cursed anyone?

**You shall not commit adultery.**

- Have I ever watched pornography either on the Internet or through some other media?
- Have I ever freely and deliberately entertained impure thoughts?
- Have I committed impure acts with myself or with others?
- Do I respect others' bodies in the way I act and speak?
- Am I modest in dress?

**You shall not steal.**

- Do I steal from my parents?
- Do I steal from friends or strangers?
- Do I copy schoolwork and claim it as my own?
- Have I stolen any property from a store?
- Do I seek to share what I have with the poor and needy?

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

- Am I a liar?
- Do I deliberately make known the faults of others?
- Am I guilty of slander, that is, spreading lies about someone?
- Do I gossip about others?
- Do I reveal information that should be confidential?
- Am I "two-faced", that is, have I been a certain kind of person to some people, but a completely different kind of person to others?

**You shall not envy your neighbor's wife and goods.**

- Am I jealous of others?
- Do I wish that others be deprived of the goods or talents that are theirs?
- Am I a resentful person?
- Do I put down others?
- Do I constantly compare my lifestyle to that of my friends?

-Examination of Conscience provided by *CERC*