

Love Of Neighbor (Negative Obligations)

Besides the positive duties of fraternal charity, such as alms-giving, correction, forgiveness, etc., there are many sins to be avoided in the practice of the same virtue, and these may be listed under the head of its negative obligations.

Every human being has it in his power not only to help his neighbor, but also to hurt him. This latter may take the form of temporal harm, as it does in the same hatred, slander, detraction, and similar sins, or it may do eternal harm as in the case of scandal and cooperation in another's sins. Each of these topics has a wide variety of applications, of which the chief ones are touched on in this examen.

I. Mortal Sins

1. Have I hated others, which means actually and deliberately wishing them grave harm on earth or the loss of their souls?
2. Have I callously rejoiced over the serious misfortunes that came to others, not because they might be turned away from sin thereby, but because it pleased me to see them suffer?
3. Have I sought opportunities to revenge myself on others by inflicting serious pain on them?

4. Have I slandered others, i.e., attributed serious sins to them which they did not commit, or of which I had no evidence?
5. Have I ruined the reputation of others, telling their secret serious sins to persons who could not otherwise have known and who had no reason to know these sins?
6. Have I lied in order that I might gain from another's serious loss?
7. Have I directly desired and tried to lead another into sin, because I wanted to turn him away from religion?
8. Have I induced another to sin to gratify my own passions?
9. Have I tried to induce another person to sin seriously, even though I did not succeed?
10. Have I advised or otherwise induced persons to practice contraception, or abortion, or to get a divorce and remarry?
11. Have I taught employees or others under my supervision how to cheat in business for the sake of profit?
12. Have I sold or given away obscene magazines, bad pictures, or contraceptives, or other things designed for sin?
13. Have I destroyed or lessened the faith of others by speaking contemptuously about religion, or the Church, or priests, etc.?
14. Have I advised or encouraged Catholics not to send their children to a Catholic school?
15. Have I urged another to keep on drinking until he became intoxicated?
16. Have I sold liquor to persons when I knew they were already intoxicated and would keep on drinking, or when I knew they were about to become intoxicated?

17. Have I committed a mortal sin that did not involve others, knowing, however, that my example would probably lead others to do the same?

18. Have I given occasion to evil thoughts in others by gravely immodest dress, looks, words, or actions?

19. Have I cooperated with another in the commission of a mortal sin—for example, of stealing, by providing the necessary means or the necessary occasion?

20. Have I helped doctors perform illegal operations, or businessmen to consummate unjust transactions, or heretics to spread false doctrines?

21. Have I assisted at the invalid marriage of a Catholic before a judge or minister, or taken part in any non-Catholic religious ceremony?

22. Have I deprived an unborn child of its right to life by causing an abortion, or paying for an abortion, or cooperating in it in some other way?

II. Venial Sins

1. Have I been touchy and sensitive towards those around me?

2. Have I permitted jealousy of another who was promoted ahead of me to show itself in my conduct?

3. Because I did not like others, did I refuse to cooperate with them in work we were given to do?

4. Have I engaged in petty gossip about my neighbors?

5. Have I told my friends the unkind remarks others made about them, thus fomenting ill-will?

6. Have I attributed bad motives to others when I could not be certain of their motives?
7. Have I hurt others by my flare-ups of anger and impatience?
8. Have I made cutting, sarcastic remarks to others?
9. Have I contributed to the venial sins of others by unreasonably teasing or annoying them?
10. Have I lessened the fear of sin in others by thoughtlessly making light of some sin?
11. Have I led others into venial sin by suggestion or bad example?
12. Have I prevented others from performing a good work by dissuading them from it?
13. Have I committed venial sins in the presence of children, knowing that they might possibly imitate me?
14. Have I approved the venial sins of others by providing them with justifying reasons?
15. Have I failed to remove the possibility of scandal being taken from some good action of mine when I could easily have done so?