
Examination of Conscience for Children

Overview

1. We ask the Holy Spirit to help us remember our sins.
2. We are truly sorry for our sins.
3. We firmly decide not to commit these sins again.
4. We confess our sins to a Catholic priest.
5. We do the penance the priest tells us to do.

Prayer before Examination of Conscience

O Holy Spirit, source of all light, Spirit of wisdom, of understanding, and of knowledge, come to my assistance and help me to make a good confession. Bring to my mind the wrong I have done and the good which I have neglected. Permit me to not be blinded by self-love. Grant me heartfelt sorrow for my faults, and the grace of a sincere confession, so that I may be forgiven and admitted into your friendship.

Examination of Conscience

Responsibilities to God:

- Have I prayed every day? Have I prayed my morning prayers and night prayers?
- Have I prayed with my parents and family?
- Have I been moody and rebellious about praying and going to church on Sunday?
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me whenever I have been tempted to sin?
- Have I asked the Holy Spirit to help me do what is right?

Responsibilities to others:

- Have I been obedient and respectful to my parents?
- Have I lied or been deceitful to them or to others?
- Have I been arrogant, stubborn or rebellious?
- Have I talked back to parents, teachers or other adults?
- Have I pouted and been moody?
- Have I been selfish toward my parents, brothers, and sisters?
- Have I been selfish with teachers, or my friends and other students?
- Have I gotten angry at them? Have I hit anyone?
- Have I held grudges or not forgiven others?
- Have I treated other children with respect or have I made fun of them, calling them names?
- Have I used bad language?
- Have I stolen anything? Have I returned it?
- Have I performed my responsibilities, such as homework and household chores?
- Have I been helpful and affectionate toward my family?
- Have I been kind and generous with my friends?

Responsibilities to self:

- Have I respected my body as a temple of the Holy Spirit, a place where God is happy to be?
- Have I tried to see myself the way God sees me?
- Have I intentionally hurt myself or done things that I know are not good for me?
- Have I put myself down or made fun of who I am?

Ten Steps While in Confession with The Priest

(have your parents help explain this to you)

1. Walk in the confessional. If there is a choice, choose to go face-to-face or behind the screen.
2. After the priest says, "In the name of the..." you say: "**Father forgive me for I have sinned, it has been** (estimate # of months, years, etc.) **since my last confession.**"
3. List your sins, technically you only need to tell the priest the kind of sin you have committed and how many times. For example, "I stole money from the store 5 times."
4. The priest may ask you to clarify some point. For example, "why did you steal the money?"
5. The priest will give you a penance, he may also explain why he is giving you that penance and he may give you some advice to help you with whatever situation you are in.
6. Feel free to ask any questions you may have, mindful of the possible line for confession.
7. The priest will ask you to pray an act of contrition (found below) you can use your own words, include: I'm sorry, I am relying on the mercy of Jesus Christ, and I promise to try and sin no more.
8. Listen to the prayer of absolution that the priest prays over you. Remember to make the sign of the cross when the priest says, "In the name of the Father, the son, and the Holy Spirit..."
9. If the priest says the words "Go in peace" or "Go in peace, your sins are forgiven you" respond with "**thanks be to God**" just like at the end of Mass, afterwards you may go.
10. Do penance as soon as you are able. Unless you intentionally withheld a sin, all your sin is forgiven.

Act of Contrition

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,
I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things.
I firmly intend, with your help, to do penance,
to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.
Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.
In his name, my God, have mercy.

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