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# Examination of Conscience for Engaged Persons

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## Prayer before Examination

O Holy Spirit, source of all light, Spirit of wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, come to my assistance and help me to make a good confession. Bring to 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.

## Relationship with God

### How do I pray?

- Out of my personal relationship and respect for God • Reading the bible
- *Out of fear • Out of need • Out of desire for personal gain • I don't pray*

← Virtuous • Holy Life

← Vicious • Sinful Life

### How do I attend Mass? Every Sunday and Holy Day of Obligation?

- Regularly, respecting the Eucharist and as part of the community • I contribute to the Church
- *Out of habit / fear • Bitterly, because I should • When convenient • I don't attend / contribute*

### How do I use God's name?

- Out of respect and love • Desiring to acknowledge the Divine presence in the moment
- *To swear • To express anger • Casually and without much thought*

### How do I treat all of God's creation?

- I respect others equally regardless of race, religion, or economic status • I see all human life as sacred, even the unborn • I am considerate of the environment and our limited resources
- *I waste what I have received • I keep my relationship with God separate from everything else • Faith has no effect on my world view • I have had an abortion or helped / convinced another*

## Relationship with Others (the Church)

### How do I treat my family?

- Help them as best I can • Respect my parents • Believe that family comes first • Forgive them when I feel they've hurt me • Love them, as they are, as fully as I can
- *Insult or ignore them • Make little effort at peace • Expect more than they can expect in return*

### How do I treat my fiancé / fiancée?

- With love / respect • Desire to lead them to Christ • Forgive them • Compliment / encourage
- *Use them physically / emotionally • Gossip / belittle • See them for what they do for you*

### How do I treat bosses, teachers, priests, and others in authority?

- I do my duty and show respect • I do my best to honestly communicate my needs and desires
- *I am rude and disruptive • I don't do my best work • I gossip and belittle them*

### How do I treat people that I don't know? Including the poor and marginalized?

- Honor and follow through on all the promises and commitments I have made • Kind and courteous
- Share what I have with others • Attempt to see all as Children of God
- *Cheat or lie to get what I need • I don't care because I'll never see them again • Rude / demeaning*

### How do I treat my friends and co-workers?

- With love / respect • Accept / understand differences • Forgive them • Compliment / encourage
- *Use them to gain popularity or gifts • Make fun of them behind their backs*

### How do I treat other's sexuality?

- I see sex as a gift from God and something that should be saved for marriage
- *Use crude language and jokes • Use people for my physical pleasure • View pornography or otherwise abuse the internet • Regard sex as trivial and casual • Sexually active outside marriage*

## Relationship with Myself

### How do I see myself?

- Created in the image and likeness of God • As a child of God • Balancing love with conversion
- *I focus only on what I don't like about myself • I frequently compare myself to others*

### How do I treat myself?

- I care for my physical, emotional, and spiritual well-being • I respect my God-given sexuality
- *Misuse drugs, tobacco or alcohol • Sexual activity or masturbation • Physically harming my body*

### How seriously do I take my work, education, and vocation?

- See myself working with God and others to build God's Kingdom • Actively participate in life
- *Disregard work, education, and self-mastery • Underappreciating the gift I have received*

### How do I make choices?

- My relationship with God, the Church, and my intended spouse informs my conscience
- *Peer pressure • The easy way out of the situation • Desire for popularity, possessions, or power*

## Summary Reflections

- For what do I seek forgiveness through confession? • How do I want God to transform me?
  - How will I accept God's grace to change?

## Ten Steps While in Confession with The Priest

1. Walk in the confessional. If there is a choice, choose to go face-to-face or kneel 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.

### Traditional Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because of Thy just punishments, but most of all because they offend Thee, my God, Who art all-good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy grace, to sin no more and to avoid the near occasions of sin.

### Contemporary 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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