

Examination of Conscience for Children

Here is an "examination of conscience" - a guide for children to be used before receiving the sacrament of penance.

Dear Jesus! I come to confess my sins and to ask your forgiveness in the holy sacrament of penance. Help me to remember my sins and to confess them carefully. O Mary, my heavenly mother, pray for me that I may make a good confession! My dear guardian angel, help me to recall every sin since my last worthy confession.

Examination of Conscience

- How long has it been since my last good confession?
- Did I hide any sin from the priest?
- Did I do the penance the priest gave me?

1st Commandment

- Have I refused to believe anything that the holy catholic church teaches?
What was it?
- Have I failed to learn about my faith: the Apostles Creed? The Ten Commandments? The seven sacraments? My prayers?
- Have I failed to study my faith as I should?

2nd Commandment

- Have I taken the holy name of God in vain? How often?
- Have I spoken disrespectfully of priest? Or holy things? How often?
- Have I used other bad language? How often?

3rd Commandment

- Have I missed mass on Sunday through my own fault? How often?
- Have I misbehaved in church? How often?
- Have I paid no attention to my prayers?

4th Commandment

- Have I been disobedient or disrespectful to my parents or teachers? How often?
- Have I tried to provoke them? How often?

5th Commandment

- Have I had any fights: or quarrels? How often?
- Have I made fun of anybody or called them names? How often?
- Have I picked on anyone or tried to provoke them? How often?

6th Commandment

- Have I done anything immodest or impure? How often?

7th Commandment

- Have I stolen anything?
- Have I harmed anyone's property?
- Have I cheated anyone?
- Have I helped others to commit sin in any way?

8th Commandment

- Have I lied about anyone? How often?
- Have I told other lies? To whom? How often?
- Have I talked behind other people's back? How often?
- Have I kept bad company? How often?

9th Commandment

- Have I purposely thought of impure things? How often?
- Do I watch appropriate programs on television? Visit age appropriate website on the internet? Do I spend too much time on the internet or watching television?

10th Commandment

- Have I desired to have for myself what belongs to another?

Capital sins

- Have I been guilty of boasting or bragging? How often? (Pride)
- Have I stuffed myself when eating? How often? (Gluttony)
- Have I used any dope or drugs? How often?
- Have I failed to study or do my other work? How often? (Sloth)
- Are there any other sins I may need to confess?

Prayer before Confession

O my Jesus, forgive me my sins! They have crucified you again in my heart! Because of them I deserve to lose you forever and to suffer with the demons in the fires of hell. But you have died that I may live and not lose my soul. I wish now to thank thee with all my heart by keeping thy commandments and to please thee in all that I do. Help me to begin with a good confession. To thee I confess my sins. I resolve, dear Jesus, to give them up. Please pardon me by the hand of thy priest!

Act of Contrition at the end of Confession

O, my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended thee, and I detest all my sins because of your just punishment. 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 confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen. (This prayer should be learned by heart.)

Prayer of Thanksgiving after Confession

O my God and saviour Jesus Christ, I thank thee with all my heart for pardoning my sins and for washing my sinful soul in thy precious blood from the cross! So many times I have sinned against thee, and so many times you have forgiven me and given me another chance! O grant that I may never willfully break one of thy commandments again.

Thank you, my dear mother Mary. Help me to be thy very good child.

Thank you, my dear guardian angel. Please guide me on the path to paradise.

(Do not forget to say or do the penance given you by the priest.)