

A DETAILED EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Take time in quiet prayer to reflect on your thoughts, words and actions, inviting God to bring about a true *metanoia*—a turning back to God. The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a sacred encounter with God's infinite mercy, restoring us to grace and renewing our hearts.

As followers of Jesus, we are invited to reflect on our lives, recognising where our thoughts, words, deeds, or omissions may have fallen short, and to bring these before God for his forgiveness and healing.

Sin, whether mortal or venial, can harm our relationship with God. For a sin to be mortal, it must meet the following conditions:

1. Grave matter, such as actions that go against the Ten Commandments.
2. Full knowledge of its seriousness.
3. Full consent of the will.

Venial sins, while less serious, are absolved in the Holy Eucharist. Yet, confessing them strengthens us and deepens our trust in God's mercy.

God longs to forgive and restore you, inviting you to a true *metanoia*. Return with confidence, for he welcomes you with open arms and rejoices in your transformation.

“Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and compassionate.” JOEL 2:13

Come, Holy Spirit, enlighten my mind that I may clearly see all my sins. Amen.

1. **First Commandment:** *I am the Lord your God; you shall not have strange gods before me.*
 - Have I loved God above all things, or allowed money, power, or entertainment to take his place?
 - Have I neglected prayer, Mass, or the sacraments through indifference or laziness?
 - Have I trusted in God's plan, or have I turned to superstition, horoscopes, New Age practices, or the occult, such as: *witchcraft, wicca, fortune-tellers, mediums, ouija boards, or tarot cards?*
2. **Second Commandment:** *You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.*

- Have I used God's name disrespectfully in anger or thoughtlessness?
- Have I shown reverence for holy things, such as the Mass, Scripture, and sacraments?
- Have I made promises or oaths that I did not keep?

3. **Third Commandment:** *Remember to keep holy the Sabbath.*

- Have I attended Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation?
- Have I set aside Sunday as a day for rest, family and worship, avoiding unnecessary work?
- Do I honour the Lord by dedicating time for prayer, reflection, and gratitude?

4. **Fourth Commandment:** *Honour your father and your mother.*

- Have I shown respect, love, and obedience to my parents and those in legitimate authority?
- Have I fulfilled my duties to my family, supporting my parents in their needs and treating loved ones with patience and kindness?
- If I have children, have I taught them about God and led them by my example?

5. **Fifth Commandment:** *You shall not kill.*

- Have I harmed others through my words, actions, or neglect, or harboured anger and refused to forgive?
- Have I abused my health or supported actions that harm life, such as abortion or euthanasia?
- Have I defended the dignity of all, especially the vulnerable?

6. **Sixth Commandment:** *You shall not commit adultery.*

- Have I respected the sanctity of marriage—my own or others'—by avoiding cohabitation,

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

1 JOHN 1:9

A GUIDE TO RECONCILIATION

casual sexual relationships, or actions that disregard God's plan for marriage?

- Have I engaged in sexual sins such as fornication (sex outside of marriage), masturbation, or viewing pornography?
 - Have I entertained lustful thoughts or desires, or failed to treat my body and others' with dignity and respect through immodesty or inappropriate actions?
7. **Seventh Commandment:** *You shall not steal.*
- Have I taken, damaged, or kept what does not belong to me?
 - Have I been fair and honest in financial matters and fulfilled my obligations?
 - Have I been wasteful or failed to share my resources generously with those in need?
8. **Eighth Commandment:** *You shall not bear false witness.*
- Have I lied, deceived, or spoken in ways that harmed others?
 - Have I spread gossip or damaged someone's reputation?
 - Have I been truthful and charitable, avoiding exaggeration or manipulation?
9. **Ninth Commandment:** *You shall not covet your neighbour's wife.*
- Have I entertained impure thoughts or desires about another person?
 - Have I respected the dignity and commitments of others in my thoughts and actions?
 - Have I avoided envy or jealousy in my relationships?
10. **Tenth Commandment:** *You shall not covet your neighbour's goods.*
- Have I been jealous of others' success, possessions, or circumstances?
 - Have I been content with what God has blessed me with, avoiding greed or materialism?
 - Have I shown gratitude for the gifts I have received, both material and spiritual?

PREPARING FOR THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION:

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is a sacred encounter with Jesus, who longs to forgive and restore you. Begin with prayer, inviting the Holy Spirit to guide your heart. If you are unsure at any point during Reconciliation, ask the priest for help—he will guide you.

A PRAYER BEFORE RECONCILIATION:

Come Holy Spirit into my soul, enlighten my mind that I may know the sins I ought to confess, and grant me your grace to confess them fully, humbly, and with a contrite heart. *Amen.*

DURING RECONCILIATION

(Begin with the Sign of the Cross, and then say:)

Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been *(state how long)* since my last Confession, and these are my sins:

(Confess your sins honestly, including all mortal sins and their frequency, along with any venial sins. Listen as the priest offers guidance and assigns a penance, then pray an Act of Contrition such as the following:)

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 Saviour Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. *Amen.*

AFTER RECONCILIATION & PRAYER

Complete the penance given by the priest, thank God for his mercy, and renew your commitment to holiness.

Heavenly Father, thank you for forgiving my sins and restoring me to your grace. Help me stay faithful, resist temptation, and grow in holiness. *Amen.*