

Examination of Conscience

FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL USING THE 10 COMMANDMENTS

1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.

- Have I wanted more things, making things more important than God?

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain

- When I make promises, do I take them seriously?
- Do I use God's name carelessly or in anger?

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

- Did I stay home from church when I could have gone with my family?
- Have I tried to get a ride to church for Mass if I needed one?
- Have I remembered to pray regularly?

4. Honor your father and your mother.

- Do I obey my parents? Have I done my chores without complaining? Have I been disrespectful to teachers or coaches?

5. You shall not kill.

- Do I keep my patience or do I lose my temper? Do I hold grudges and try to get even with others? Have I been unfair to others, especially those who are different than I am? Have I refused to forgive someone else? Have I caused another person to sin?

6. You shall not commit adultery.

- Have I forgotten to show respect for the bodies of others as well as myself? Do I avoid harmful things like drugs, tobacco and alcohol?

7. You shall not steal.

- Have I taken something that belongs to someone else?
- Have I "forgotten" to return something that I borrowed?
- Have I used money responsibly?

8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

- Do I play fairly or do I ever cheat at school or games? Have I been honest, truthful and fair or have I lied? Have I hurt someone by what I have said or done? Have I copied someone else's homework?

9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

- Have I been jealous of friends that someone else has?
- Have I tried to be kind to others?

10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

- Have I been jealous of the things that my friends have?
- Have I nagged my parents into buying things because my friends have them? Have I helped others when they needed help?

- Is there anything else? _____

If we really want to
love
we must learn how to
forgive.

- Mother Teresa

Steps of Confession

1. Introduction. When you come before the priest, begin by making the Sign of the Cross (praying the words out loud), and continue by saying, "Bless me, Father, I have sinned. It has been (how long) since my last confession. These are my sins..."

2. Confession. List the sins you have committed that came to mind when doing your examination of conscience. Don't be too general (like, "I haven't been a good person"), but a lot of detail is not necessary either (you don't need to tell the whole story of how a sin came about). If you're not sure if something is a sin is, just ask the priest. This isn't counseling, so unless you ask, the priest likely won't give you advice. He'll just move on to...

3. Penance. The priest will suggest something for you to do or pray as a response to God's mercy. You'll have to remember what this is and do it after the confession is over, so pay attention.

4. Contrition. The priest will then ask you to pray your "Act of Contrition," demonstrating your sorrow for your sins. This needs to be prayed out loud for the priest to hear

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.

- Amen.

5. Absolution. Don't get up to leave after that prayer, because the best part is yet to come: the priest will extend his hands in your direction and he will pray the Prayer of Absolution: "God, the Father of Mercies, through the death and resurrection of his Son, has reconciled the world to himself and sent the Holy Spirit among us for the forgiveness of sins. Through the ministry of the Church, may God grant you pardon and peace. And I absolve you from your sins in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Amen." You respond: Amen.

- **Conclusion.** The priest will then likely say something like, "God has freed you from your sin. Go in Peace." To which you can respond: "Thanks be to God."
- **After You Leave...** Don't forget to do your penance. If it is saying certain prayers, it's best to do it right away in the church before you forget

