

Preparation for Confession

God does not desire the death of a sinner, but rather that he turn away from his sins and live. In the holy Sacrament of Penance We have the means whereby we may obtain forgiveness of our sins, and be restored to the favor of God, our heavenly Father.



In order that you may make a good confession, it is necessary for you to prepare yourself carefully. Ask God to give you grace to make a thorough examination of your conscience, courage to make a sincere and complete confession, and strength to amend your way of life in the days to come.

Begin your examination with the time of your last confession; try to recall whether you omitted anything through carelessness or lapse of memory, or from fear of embarrassment. Examine yourself with the assistance of the form of Self-examination according to the Ten Commandments of God, which follows, and with reference to the informative spiritual helps in this book.

It is most necessary that you be truly sorry for the sins, which you have committed, and that you firmly purpose amendment of your manner of living. Accordingly, when you have finished your examination of conscience, say the *Prayer of Repentance and Psalm 50*.

Self Examination

First Commandment

Have I believed in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit? Have I failed to trust in God and His mercy? Have I complained against God in adversity? Have I been thankful for God's blessings? Have I doubted the Christian faith and the teachings of the Church? Have I tried to serve God and keep His Commandments? Have I given way to superstition? Have I frequented the religious meetings of heretics and schismatics? Have I neglected my duties to God through fear of ridicule or persecution? Have I failed to pray to God faithfully? Have I put myself before God?

Second Commandment

Have I made an idol of any person or thing? Have I given to anyone or anything the worship that is due to God alone? Have I set before myself the holy life of Jesus and tried to imitate Him? Have I read the Holy Scriptures regularly? Have I been irreverent during Church Services, let my attention wander, or been insincere? Have I neglected to receive Holy Communion regularly or without due preparation?

Third Commandment

Have I profaned the holy name of God in any way? Have I cursed anyone or anything, or sworn a false oath? Have I failed to give proper reverence to holy persons and things? Have I had due respect for the clergy of the Church or hindered them in performing God's work? Have I broken any solemn vow or promise? Have I entered into any unlawful contract or made an unlawful promise?

Fourth Commandment

Have I stayed away from Church on Sundays or prevented others from going? Have I done unnecessary work on Sundays? Have I spent the day in unwholesome fashion or profaned it by improper conduct? If I could not go to Church because of illness or other grave cause, have I prayed at home? Have I caused anyone else to profane the Lord's Day? Have I kept the Fasts and Festivals prescribed by the Church?

Fifth Commandment

Have I respected my parents and been obedient to them? Have I been guilty of deception, or caused them pain by my words or actions? Have I neglected them or failed to help them? Have I done my duty towards my family? Have I been wanting in love or kindness towards my husband (or wife), or harmed him (or her) in any way?



Have I set my children a good example and tried to bring them up properly? Have I corrected their faults with patience and not with anger? Have I over-indulged or spoiled them? Have I neglected my god-children and failed in my obligations towards them? Have I worked for my employers honestly and diligently? Have I treated fairly all those who have worked for me? Have I honored God as my Heavenly Father by treating others as my brothers, and have I honored the Church as my spiritual Mother by honoring and practicing my religion in accordance with her teachings?

Sixth Commandment

Have I caused the injury or death of any one, or wished that I were dead? Have I done anything to shorten my own life or that of someone else by injuring health, or through evil and intemperate living? Have I given way to anger, or harmed others with words or actions? Have I defamed others who needed help, or failed to stand up for those unjustly treated? Have I been cruel to anyone? Have I mistreated animals or destroyed any life unnecessarily? Have I failed to forgive anyone or harbored evil thoughts against them?

Seventh Commandment

Have I given way to impure thoughts, words, or deeds? Have I committed any unworthy actions alone or with others? Have I degraded myself in any way, or

forgotten human dignity? Have I read immoral books or magazines, or delighted in obscenity of any kind? Have I associated with bad companions or frequented unsavory places? Have I eaten or drunk or smoked too much? Have I been lazy, idle, or wasted my time? Have I led others to commit sinful acts? Have I been unfaithful to any trust confided in me?



Eighth Commandment

Have I stolen anything or wished to do so? Have I kept anything that did not belong to me? Have I tried honestly to find owners of lost articles I have found? Have I cheated anyone? Have I paid my debts? Have I lived within my income, and not wastefully and extravagantly? Have I given to charitable causes in proportion to my means? Have I been honest and upright?

Ninth Commandment

Have I told lies, or added to or subtracted from the truth? Have I made careless statements or spoken evil of anyone? Have I told any secrets entrusted to me, or betrayed anyone? Have I gossiped about anyone or harmed their reputation? Have I concealed the truth, assisted in carrying out a lie, or pretended to commit a sin of which I was not guilty? Have I tried to see the good in others rather than their shortcomings?

Tenth Commandment

Have I envied anything good that has come to others? Have I been jealous of another's good fortune? Have I wished for anything that was another's? Have I damaged or destroyed the property of others? Have I wished for things God has not given me, or been discontented with my lot? Have I been stingy? Have I held back anything due another? Have I hoped for the downfall of anyone so that I might gain by it? Have I failed to be gracious and generous to anyone? Have I expected God to give me that which I would refuse one of my fellow men?

A Prayer of Repentance

O Lord our God, good and merciful, I acknowledge all my sins, which I have committed every day of my life, in thought, word and deed; in body and soul alike. I am heartily sorry that I have ever offended thee, and I sincerely repent; with tears I humbly pray thee, O Lord: of thy mercy forgive me all my past transgressions and absolve me from them. I firmly resolve, with the help of Thy Grace, to amend my way of life and to sin no more; that I may walk in the way of the righteous and offer praise and glory to the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Amen.

Psalm 50

Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy great mercy: according to the multitude or thy tender mercies blot out mine iniquity. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge mine iniquity: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee only have I sinned, and done evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified in thy words, and prevail when thou art judged. For behold, I was shaped in iniquity: and in sin did my mother conceive me. For behold, thou hast loved truth: the unclear and hidden things of thy wisdom thou hast made clear to me. Thou shalt sprinkle me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: thou shalt wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Thou shalt make me to hear joy and gladness: the bones which thou hast broken shall rejoice. Turn away thy face from my sins, and blot out all my iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence: and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation: and steady me with a guiding spirit. Then will I teach transgressors thy ways: and the impious shall be converted unto thee. Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall sing aloud of thy righteousness. O Lord, open thou my lips: and my mouth shall declare thy praise. For hadst thou desired sacrifice, I would have given it thee: thou delightest not in burnt offerings. Sacrifices to God are a contrite spirit: a contrite and humble heart, O God, thou wilt not despise. Do good, O Lord, in thy good will unto Zion: that the walls of Jerusalem may be built up. Then shalt thou be pleased with the sacrifice of righteousness, with burnt offering and whole burnt offerings: then shall they offer bullocks upon thine altar.

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