

## ***Before Confession***

Be truly sorry for your sins. The essential act of Penance, on the part of the penitent, is contrition, a clear and decisive rejection of the sin committed, together with a resolution not to commit it again, out of the love one has for God and which is reborn with repentance. The resolution to avoid committing these sins in the future (amendment) is a sure sign that your sorrow is genuine and authentic. This does not mean that a promise never to fall again into sin is necessary. A resolution to try to avoid the near occasions of sin suffices for true repentance. God's grace in cooperation with the intention to rectify your life will give you the strength to resist and overcome temptation in the future.

## ***Examination of Conscience***

Before going to Confession you should make a review of mortal and venial sins since your last sacramental confession, and should express sorrow for sins, hatred for sins and a firm resolution not to sin again.

A helpful pattern for examination of conscience is to review the Commandments of God and the Precepts of the Church:

- Have God and the pursuit of sanctity in Christ been the goal of my life? Have I denied my faith? Have I placed my trust in false teachings or substitutes for God? Did I despair of God's mercy?
- Have I avoided the profane use of God's name in my speech? Have I broken a solemn vow or promise?

- Have I honored every Sunday by avoiding unnecessary work, celebrating the Mass (also holydays)? Was I inattentive at, or unnecessarily late for Mass, or did I leave early? Have I neglected prayer for a long time?
- Have I shown Christlike respect to parents, spouse, and family members, legitimate authorities? Have I been attentive to the religious education and formation of my children?
- Have I cared for the bodily health and safety of myself and all others? Did I abuse drugs or alcohol? Have I supported in any way abortion, "mercy killing," or suicide?
- Was I impatient, angry, envious, proud, jealous, revengeful, lazy? Have I forgiven others?
- Have I been just in my responsibilities to employer and employees? Have I discriminated against others because of race or other reasons?
- Have I been chaste in thought and word? Have I used sex only within marriage and while open to procreating life? Have I given myself sexual gratification? Did I deliberately look at impure TV, pictures, reading?

- Have I stolen anything from another, from my employer, from government? If so, am I ready to repay it? Did I fulfill my contracts? Did I rashly gamble, depriving my family of necessities?
- Have I spoken ill of any other person? Have I always told the truth? Have I kept secrets and confidences?
- Have I permitted sexual thoughts about someone to whom I am not married?
- Have I desired what belongs to other people? Have I wished ill on another?
- Have I been faithful to sacramental living (Holy Communion and Penance)?
- Have I helped make my parish community stronger and holier? Have I contributed to the support of the Church?
- Have I done penance by abstaining and fasting on obligatory days? Have I fasted before receiving communion?
- Have I been mindful of the poor? Do I accept God's will for me?

*<http://www.catholic.org/prayers/confession.php>*