



EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE FOR TEENAGERS

5 STEPS FOR A GOOD CONFESSION

1. Examine your conscience: recall the sins that you have committed since your last good confession.
2. Be sincerely sorry for your sins.
3. Confess your sins to the priest.
4. Make certain that you confess all your mortal sins and the number of them.
5. After confession, do the penance the priest gives you.

ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended Thee, and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of Heaven and the pains of Hell, 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.

Sins of action – Sins of omission – Sins of thought

*Each area of my life should be considered:
My family, friends, school life, work, study*

*The Seven Capital Sins
(Acronym: PLACES-G): Pride, Lust, Anger, Covetousness, Envy, Sloth, Gluttony*

Pride (cf. St Thomas Aquinas, Summa Theologica II-II, q 162)

Pride is the mother of all sin

- Have I dwelt on the failings of others?
- Have I judged others, in my thoughts or words?
- Have I ranked myself better than others?
- Have I borne hatred for others? Have I refused to learn from others?
- Have I been stubborn? Refused to admit I was wrong? Refused to accept that another person had a better idea?
- Have I been arrogant?
- Have I refused to admit my own weaknesses?
- Have I held others in contempt?

Pusillanimity (*spiritual cowardice*):

- Have I neglected to use the talents that God has given me?

Vanity (Summa Theologica, II-II, q 132)

Vanity is excessive concern about what others think of me - not just what they think of my appearance

- Have I been overly concerned about what others think of me? Have I allowed this to motivate my actions?
- Have I lied or exaggerated to make myself look good?
- Have I wasted undue time and money on clothes and appearance?
- Have I exercised in a vain manner, or with an excessive concern to make my body perfect?
- Have I been content with my lowly position?

Lust (Summa Theologica, II-II, q 153)

Lust is disordered desire for sexual pleasure, isolated from its God-given procreative purpose.

Custody of the Eyes:

- Have I viewed other people as mere sexual objects rather than as persons to be loved?
- Bad pictures/videos on internet, TV, books?

Impure Thoughts:

- Have I entertained impure thoughts? Have I consented to impure thoughts?

Impure Words:

- Conversation? Jokes?

Impure Acts:

- Alone: Impure touches? Incomplete or complete impure acts? With others: Impure touches or acts?
- Have I flirted/toyed with the feelings of another?

Anger/Wrath (Summa Theologica II-II, q 158)

Anger is undue desire for vengeance, undue in cause or in amount

- Have I harbored resentment, grudges, or hatred in my thoughts?
- Have I nurtured imaginary angry conversations?
- Have I been slow to forgive?
- Have I lost my temper?

Impatience:

- How have I carried my cross?
- Have I been impatient with people, family, events, sufferings, sicknesses?

Covetousness/ Avarice (Summa Theologica, II-II, q 118)

Avarice is the excessive love of possessing things

- Have I cheated, stolen, or failed (Continued...)

to return things that I borrowed?
Did I borrow things without permission?
Have I been generous and cheerful in giving?
Have I wasted money?

Envy/Jealousy (Summa Theologica, II-II, q 36)

Envy is sadness at the happiness of another
Have I envied or been jealous of the abilities, talents, ideas, good-looks, intelligence, clothes, possessions, money, friends, family, of others?

Gossip:

Have I judged others in my thoughts?
Have I damaged the reputation of another person by my words, attitude, or looks?
Have I repeated accusations that might not be true? Have I exaggerated?
Have I said things that were true but that I nonetheless should have kept private?
Have I failed to defend the reputation of others?
Have I failed to keep secrets?
Do I despise others of different race or class?

Lies:

Have I lied or exaggerated?

Sloth/Apathy (Summa Theologica, II-II, q 35)

Laziness, especially in the things of God. Sloth is a sorrow in the face of spiritual good. It makes you lethargic and want to do nothing.

Have I sought God above all else, or have I put other priorities ahead of him (e.g., friendships, ambition, comfort and ease)?
Have I gotten so caught up in the things of this world that I have forgotten God?
Have I attended Mass each and every Sunday? Have I neglected to say my daily prayers?
Have I entertained distractions in prayer, or failed to give God due concentration in prayer or Mass?

(Note: Not giving God the effort He deserves in prayer is a sin, but it is not the same thing as involuntary weakness in mental distractions.)

Have I made a prayerful preparation before Mass and a good thanksgiving after Mass?
Have I risked losing my faith/piety by bad company, bad reading, cowardice, or pride?
Have I trusted God, especially in difficulty?
Have I received Holy Communion while in a state of serious sin? Have I neglected to seek Confession before Holy Communion?
Have I taken the Lord's name in vain? Or used other foul language?

My Neighbor:

Have I been lazy in helping others?
Have I been attentive to the needs of my friends? Has my conversation been focused on my own pleasure, or on others?
Has my humor been insensitive to others?

My Family:

Have I been more focused on myself than on the needs of others in my family?
Have I neglected to help at home? I have quarreled needlessly?
Have I been pointlessly stubborn?
Have I given a bad or lazy example to younger family members?

Punctuality and Discipline:

Have I wasted other people's time by being late? Have I made good use of my time, or have I wasted time needlessly? Did I waste time on TV or the internet?
Have I gone to sleep on time?
Have I planned good use of relaxation and recreation, knowing that I need to rest well?
Have I studied as much as I should?

Gluttony (Summa Theologica, II-II, q 148)

Gluttony is the inordinate desire for food.

Have I eaten more than I need? To how serious an extent?
Have I consumed alcohol excessively? Other substances? Have I driven after drinking?
Have I eaten greedily and with little consideration for those at table with me?
Have I regularly practiced fasting and self-denial, especially on Fridays? Have I eaten meat on Fridays? Have I always observed the Eucharistic fast before receiving Holy Communion at Mass?

The Ten Commandments:

1. I am the Lord, thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before me.
2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
3. Remember thou keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor thy father and thy mother.
5. Thou shalt not kill.
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
7. Thou shalt not steal.
8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.