

# Have I sinned?

## An Examination of Conscience

### Sunday Reflection With Fr. Rafal

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ Jesus,

On this **22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time** the teaching of Christ is challenging us once again. In today's Gospel we see Jesus who confronts a group of sin deniers. Although they criticized others for things like not washing hands before eating and improper care of utensils, they had a way of passing over their own faults. Jesus gives them an examination of conscience:

*evil thoughts, unchastity, theft, murder,  
adultery, greed, malice, deceit,  
licentiousness, envy, blasphemy, arrogance, folly. (Mk 7:21f.)*

Jesus called a spade a spade. However, we have a hard time hearing him. Like the Pharisees, we want to equivocate. Unchastity has become "lifestyle." Deceit, "a few white lies," or "face saving." Greed, "retirement planning." Murder... "reproductive rights," or "compassion to the terminally ill." And what Christians once considered the deadliest sin (pride - arrogance) has morphed into "self-esteem."

Abraham Lincoln reputedly said that you can fool all of the people some of the time and some of the people all of the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time. Unfortunately, the easiest person to fool all the time is ones own self. By plain talk Jesus attempts to break the illusion.

Self-deception has enormous consequences. In the case of the Pharisees, it shut them off from Christ, from salvation, from life.

Jesus does not ask for a guilt trip, only honesty. The hardest thing any of us can do is admit our own fault. The *Catechism* describes it this way:

*Interior repentance is a radical reorientation of our whole life, a return, a conversion to God with all our heart, an end of sin, a turning away from evil, with repugnance toward the evil actions we have committed. At the same time it entails the desire and resolution to change one's life, with hope in God's mercy and trust in the help of his grace. This conversion of heart is accompanied by a salutary pain and sadness which the Fathers called *animi cruciatus* (affliction of spirit) and *compunctio cordis* (repentance of heart). 1431.*

My Friends, Jesus is calling all of us to make an examination of conscience, to come back to him, to change our bad habits and lifestyles. I pray we will be able to follow the path of the Lord today and always through our speech, actions and deeds. As we enter this busy time of the year... a new academic year at St. Joseph school, resuming our parish activities and meetings ... may we always have in mind Jesus is our center and as believers we should always trust the Lord in our life's journey.

Have a Blessed Week!

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