

AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE BASED ON THE SEVEN DEADLY SINS by Fr. Dylan James

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 to you.

ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You, 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 You, my God, Who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life.
Amen.

Sins of omission: "In what I have done, **and** in what I have failed to do"-sins of omission may be more serious than sins of commission.

- e.g. Have I omitted to say my prayers?
Have I omitted to look for and respond to the needs of family?

Thought: "In thought, word, and deed"

- e.g. Even if I did not gossip in word, did I judge someone in my thoughts?

*Each **area** of my life should be considered:*

- e.g. My family, my friends, my work, my prayer, those I work and live with, etc.

Anagram: PLACES-G (the seven deadly sins):

Pride, Lust, Anger, Covetousness, Envy, Sloth, Gluttony

PRIDE (ST II-II q162) - an exaggerated opinion of oneself

Opposes the virtue of Humility

Pride is the mother of **all** sin

- Have I refused to admit by own weaknesses?
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 another?
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 held others in contempt?

Pusillanimity-the opposite of pride?

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

VANITY (ST II-II q132) - 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 been content with my lowly position, or have I resented the role that Christ asks of me?

LUST (ST II-II q153; CCC 2351) - an uncontrolled desire for sexual pleasure, isolated from its procreative and unitive purpose.

Opposes the virtue of Chastity

Custody of the Eyes: "Whoever looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart: (Mt 5:28)

- Have I viewed other people as mere sexual objects rather than as persons to be loved? Pornography: On internet? or TV? or books?

Impure Thoughts:

- Have I entertained impure thoughts?

Impure Acts:

- Alone, or with another?

Impure Words: Jokes? Conversation?

ANGER/WRATH (ST II-II q158) - an uncontrolled feeling of displeasure and antagonism; undue desire for vengeance-undue in cause or in amount

Opposes the virtue of Meekness

- Have I harbored resentment, grudges, and 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 (ST II-II q118) - an uncontrolled desire for earthly goods, such as money, clothes, etc.; the love of possessing things

Opposes the virtue of Liberality

- Have I been overly concerned about my own comfort and well-being?
Have I been resentful of my lack of money?
Have I been generous in giving? Have I given with a cheerful heart?
Have I cheated, stolen, or failed to pay my bills on time?
Have I used people for my own ends and advantage?
Have I wasted money?

ENVY/JEALOUSY (ST II-II q36) - unhappiness or discontent over the good fortune or success of others

Opposes the virtue of Brotherly Love

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 failed to defend the reputation of others?
Have I failed to keep secrets?
Do I despise others of different race, class, or culture?

Lies:

Have I lied or exaggerated?

SLOTH/APATHY (ST II-II q35) - laziness or carelessness in doing right and practicing virtue because of the work and effort needed to do so; a sorrow in the face of spiritual good

Opposes the virtue of Diligence

Have I sought God above all else, or have I put other priorities ahead of him? (friendships, ambition, comfort)
Have I got so caught up in the things of this world that I've forgotten God?
Have I risked losing my faith/piety by bad company, bad reading, cowardice, or pride?
Have I trusted God, especially in times of difficulty?
Have I attended Mass each and every Sunday?
Have I neglected to say my daily prayers?
Have I entertained distraction in prayer, or failed to give God due concentration in prayer or in the Mass?
Have I made a prayerful preparation before Mass and a good thanksgiving after Mass?
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 neighbor, the needs of my family?
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:
Have I spent time with my family? How have I manifested my concern for them? Have I scandalized them by a bad or lazy example?

Punctuality and Discipline:

Have I wasted other people's time by being late?
Have I sinned against God and the congregation by being late for Mass?
Have I gone to sleep on time?
Have I made good use of my time, or have I wasted time needlessly: E.g. TV or internet?
Have I planned good use of relaxation and recreation, knowing that I need to rest well?

GLUTTONY (ST II-II q148) - an uncontrolled use of food and drink; the inordinate desire for food

Opposes the virtue of Temperance

Have I eaten more than I need? To how serious an extent?
Have I spent excessive money on food?
Have I consumed alcohol excessively? Have I driven after drinking?
Have I eaten greedily and with little consideration for those at table with me?
Have I given money to help the hungry?
Have I regularly practiced fasting and self-denial, especially on Fridays?
Have I abstained from meat on Fridays?
Have I always fasted an hour before receiving Holy Communion at Mass?

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS:

1. I, the Lord, am your God. You shall not have other gods besides me.
2. You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.
4. Honor your father and your mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness.
9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.