

A Brief Examination of Conscience

Based on the biblical Ten Commandments



1. I am the Lord your God:

do not have any gods before me.

Have I treated people, events, or things as more important than God?

2. Do not set any idols before God.

Have I made stuff — money, sex, or power — more important in my life than God?

3. Do not misuse the name of the Lord.

Have my words, actively or passively, put down God, the Church, or people?

4. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

Do I avoid, when possible, work that impedes worship to God, joy for the Lord's Day, and proper relaxation of mind and body? Do I look for ways to spend time with family or in service on Sunday? Do I go to Mass every Saturday Vigil / Sunday and on Holy Days of Obligation (15 Aug Assumption & 25 Dec Christmas)?

5. Honour your father and your mother.

Do I show my parents due respect? Do I seek to maintain good communication with my parents where possible? Do I criticise them for lacking skills I think they should have?

6. You shall not murder.

Have I harmed another through physical, verbal, or emotional means, including gossip or manipulation of any kind?

7. You shall not commit adultery.

Have I respected the physical and sexual dignity of others and of myself?

8. You shall not steal.

Have I taken or wasted time or resources that belonged to another?

9. You shall not testify against your neighbour.

Have I gossiped, told lies, or embellished stories at the expense of another?

10. You shall not covet

Am I content with my own means and needs, or do I compare myself to others unnecessarily? Have I honoured my spouse with my full affection and exclusive love?



Celebrate the Sacrament of Reconciliation

Christ's Two Commandments

How well do we love God and others? Do we love as Christ calls us to? In the Gospel of Matthew, Jesus gives us Two Commandments: "He said to him, 'You shall love the Lord, your God, with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the greatest and the first commandment. The second is like it: You shall love your neighbour as yourself. The whole law and the prophets depend on these two commandments'" (Mt 22:37-40).

Not sure what love is? St Paul describes it for us in his first letter to the Corinthians. Is this how you love God and others? "Love is patient, love is kind, love is not jealous, it does not boast, it does not become conceited, it does not behave dishonourably, it is not selfish, it does not become angry, it does not keep a record of wrongs, it does not rejoice at unrighteousness, but rejoices with the truth, bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things. Love never ends. (1 Cor 13:4-8).

The Decalogue (Ten Commandments) is found at *Exodus 20:1-17*. Scripture excerpts used in this work are taken from the *Lexham English Bible, 2012*.

Examination of Conscience

in light of Catholic Social Teaching

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

- Do I respect the life and dignity of every human person from conception through natural death?
- Do I recognize the face of Christ reflected in all others around me whatever their race, class, age, or abilities?
- Do I work to protect the dignity of others when it is being threatened?
- Am I committed to both protecting human life and to ensuring that every human being is able to live in dignity?

Call to Family, Community, and Participation

- Do I try to make positive contributions in my family and in my community?
- Are my beliefs, attitudes, and choices such that they strengthen or undermine the institution of the family?
- Am I aware of problems facing my local community and involved in efforts to find solutions? Do I stay informed and make my voice heard when needed?
- Do I support the efforts of poor persons to work for change in their neighbourhoods and communities? Do my attitudes and interactions empower or disempower others?

Rights and Responsibilities

- Do I recognise and respect the economic, social, political, and cultural rights of others?
- Do I live in material comfort and excess while remaining insensitive to the needs of others whose rights are unfulfilled?
- Do I take seriously my responsibility to ensure that the rights of persons in need are realised?
- Do I urge those in power to implement programs and policies that give priority to the human dignity and rights of all, especially the vulnerable?

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

- Do I give special attention to the needs of the poor and vulnerable in my community and in the world?

- Am I disproportionately concerned for my own good at the expense of others?
- Do I engage in service and advocacy work that protects the dignity of poor and vulnerable persons?

The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

- As a worker, do I give my employer a fair day's work for my wages? As an owner, do I treat workers fairly?
- Do I treat all workers with whom I interact with respect, no matter their position or class?
- Do I support the rights of all workers to adequate wages, health insurance, vacation and sick leave? Do I affirm their right to form or join unions or worker associations?
- Do my purchasing choices consider the hands involved in the production of what I buy? When possible, do I buy products produced by workers whose rights and dignity were respected?

Solidarity

- Does the way I spend my time reflect a genuine concern for others?
- Is solidarity incorporated into my prayer and spirituality? Do I lift up vulnerable people throughout the world in my prayer, or is it reserved for only my personal concerns?
- Am I attentive only to my local neighbours or also those across the globe?
- Do I see all members of the human family as my brothers and sisters?

Care for God's Creation

- Do I live out my responsibility to care for God's creation?
- Do I see my care for creation as connected to my concern for poor persons, who are most at risk from environmental problems?
- Do I litter? Live wastefully? Use energy too freely? Are there ways I could reduce consumption in my life?
- Are there ways I could change my daily practices and those of my family, school, workplace, or community to better conserve the earth's resources for future generations?