

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE  
WITH THE TEN COMMANDMENTS OF GOD  
AND THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH.

FIRST COMMANDMENT:

I AM THE LORD THY GOD; THOU SHALT NOT HAVE STRANGE  
GODS BEFORE ME.

Sins contrary to the First Commandment are the following:

neglect of prayer; ingratitude toward God; spiritual sloth; hatred of God or of the Catholic Church; tempting God (explicitly or implicitly, e.g. by exposing one's self to danger of soul, life, or health without grave cause); not behaving reverently when in church (e.g. not genuflecting to the Blessed Sacrament when entering or leaving the church, etc.); excessive attraction to things/creatures (e.g. over-affection to animals, sports fanatic, having movie star /music/TV idols, love for money, pleasure or power); idolatry (worshiping false gods such as giving honor to a creature in place of God (e.g. Satan, science, ancestors, country); superstition (ascribing powers to a created thing which it does not have); hypnotism (without sufficient cause); divination (communication with Satan, demons, the dead or other false practices in order to discover the unknown, consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, fortune telling); attaching undue importance to dreams, omens or lots; all practices of magic or sorcery (e.g. witchcraft, voodoo); wearing charms; playing with Ouija boards or rotating tables; spiritism (talking with the spirits); sacrilege (profaning or treating unworthily the Sacraments, especially the Holy Eucharist, and other liturgical actions, as well as religious persons, blessed things such as sacred vessels or statues, or places consecrated to God); sacrilege by receiving a sacrament, especially the Holy Eucharist, in the state of mortal sin; simony (buying or selling of spiritual things); profane or superstitious use of blessed objects (sometimes done in order to remain in sin); practical materialism (one believes he needs and desires only material things); atheistic humanism (falsely considers man to be an end in himself, and the sole maker with supreme control of his own history); atheism in general (rejects, denies or doubts the existence of God, either in theory or practice, i.e. ignoring Him in the daily living of our lives); agnosticism (postulates the existence

of a transcendent being which is incapable of revealing itself, and about which nothing can be said or makes no judgment about God's existence declaring it impossible to prove or even to affirm or deny).

Sins against Faith:

Wilful doubt of any article of faith; deliberate ignorance of the truths of faith which ought to be known; neglect of instructing oneself in the faith according to one's state in life; rash credulity (e.g. giving credence to private revelation too easily or believing in a private revelations which has been condemned by the lawful Church authorities); apostasy; heresy; indifferentism (to believe that one religion is as good as another, and that all religions are equally true and pleasing to God, or that one is free to accept or reject any or all religions); reading or circulating books or writings against the Catholic belief or practice in such wise as to jeopardize one's faith; to remain silent when asked about one's faith; engaging in schismatic or heretical worship; joining or supporting masonic groups or other forbidden societies.

Sins against Hope:

despair of God's mercy (to give up all hope of salvation, and the means necessary to be saved) or want of confidence in the power of His Grace to support us in trouble or temptation; no desire to possess eternal happiness in heaven or after this earthly life; presumption (to hope for salvation without help from God or to assume God's forgiveness without conversion, or to hope to obtain heavenly glory without merit); presuming on God's mercy or on the supposed efficacy of certain pious practices, in order to continue in sin; refusing any dependence on God.

Sins against Charity:

not making an act of charity at regular intervals during life especially during times of necessity; egoism (one cares only about himself, praises himself, selfish, enjoys receiving praise) wilfully rebellious thoughts against God; boasting of sin; violating God's law, or omitting good works through human respect.

SECOND COMMANDMENT:

THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN

Sins contrary to the Second Commandment:

dishonoring of God by profane or disrespectful use of the Name of God, or of the Holy Name of Jesus Christ, the name of the Blessed Virgin Mary and all the saints; blasphemy (speech or gestures that have contempt for or insult to God, Jesus Christ, the Catholic Church, the Blessed Virgin Mary or the saints); perjury (to promise something under oath with no intention of keeping it, or breaking a promise made under oath); taking false or unnecessary oaths (to call on God to be witness to a lie); breaking vows or promises to God; talking during Mass and in a Church without sufficient reason or to the distraction of others.

THIRD COMMANDMENT:

REMEMBER THAT THOU SHALT KEEP HOLY THE LORD'S DAY

Sins contrary to the Third Commandment:

omission of prayer and divine worship, all unnecessary servile work, and whatever hinders the keeping of the Lord's Day holy; engaging in unnecessary commerce, i.e. buying and selling on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation.

FOURTH COMMANDMENT

HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER

Sins contrary to the Fourth Commandment:

For Parents: Hating their children; cursing them; giving scandal to them by cursing, drinking, etc.; allowing them to grow up in ignorance, idleness or sin; showing habitual partiality without cause; deferring a child's baptism; neglecting to watch over their bodily health, their

religious instruction, the company they keep, the books they read, etc.; failing to correct them when needful; being harsh or cruel in correction; sending children to Protestant and other dangerous schools; neglect of directing them to attend Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days and to frequent reception of the Sacraments.

For Children: All manner of anger or hatred against parents and other lawful superiors; provoking them to anger; grieving them; insulting them; neglecting them in their necessity; contempt or disobedience to their lawful commands.

Husbands and wives: Ill-usage (i.e. using them without consideration for their own welfare and without regard to charity); putting obstacles to the fulfilment of religious duties; want of gentleness and consideration in regard to each other's faults; unreasonable jealousy; neglect of household duties; sulkiness; injurious words; neglect of attempting to secure means of supporting the family due to laziness or timidity.

For Employers: not allowing one's employees reasonable time for religious duties and instruction; giving bad example to them or allowing others to do so; withholding their lawful wages; not caring for them in sickness; dismissing them arbitrarily and without cause; imposing unreasonable policies.

For Employees: disrespect to employers; want of obedience in matters wherein one has bound oneself to obey (e.g. by fulfilling a contract); waste of time; neglect of work; waste of employer's property by dishonesty, carelessness or neglect; violating company policies without sufficient reason.

For Professionals and Civil Servants: culpable lack of the knowledge relating to duties of office or profession; neglect in discharging those duties; injustice or partiality; exorbitant fees (this sin may also be included under the Seventh Commandment).

For Teachers: neglecting the progress of those confided to their care; unjust, indiscreet or excessive punishment; partiality; bad example; loose or false maxims (i.e. teaching them things which are untrue as being true)

Students: disrespect; disobedience; stubbornness; idleness; waste of time; giving in to idle distractions (e.g. partying and undue recreating)

For All: contempt for the laws of State and country as well as of the Church; disobedience to lawful authority; breaking of civil laws.

#### FIFTH COMMANDMENT THOU SHALT NOT KILL

Sins against the Fifth commandment include:

murder; performing an abortion; having an abortion, aiding in someone procuring an abortion (the penitent should know that having, causing or aiding in an abortion causing one to be excommunicated); euthanasia; withholding ordinary means to a dying or terminally ill patient; suicide; attempts of suicide, serious thoughts about committing suicide; fighting; quarreling anger; hatred; desires of revenge; human torture; gluttony (excessive eating or drinking); drunkenness; abuse of alcohol, medicine or drugs; endangering other people's lives (e.g. by drinking and driving, by driving too fast, etc.); risking one's own life or limb without a sufficient reason (e.g. daredevil stunts, Russian roulette, etc.); carelessness in leaving about poisons, dangerous drugs, weapons, etc.; mutilation of the body; immoral scientific research and its applications; bad example or scandal; disrespect for the dying or the dead; not trying to avoid war; showing aversion or contempt for others; refusing to speak to them when addressed; ignoring offers of reconciliation especially between relatives; cherishing an unforgiving spirit; raillery and ridicule; insults; irritating words and actions; sadness at another's prosperity; rejoicing over another's misfortune; envy at attention shown to others; tyrannical behavior; inducing others to sin by word or example; injury to health by over-indulgence; giving drink to others knowing they will abuse it; contraception and sterilization in all its forms; causing unnecessary suffering or death to animals.

#### SIXTH AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S WIFE

“The former forbids in action what the latter forbids in thought or desire. We shall not enter into details on this subject. It is a pitch which defiles. Those who sin against these two commandments know it well; those who do not, should pray [to] God that they may never learn it. It is sufficient to remind penitents that each and every act, if deliberate, contrary to the holy virtue of Purity – be it in thought or desire, in look, gesture, word or deed – is a Mortal Sin, and such must be mentioned in Confession intelligibly, yet modestly.

It will be further useful to remark: that in regard to sins of this kind it is wrong to dwell too much on details; that we should be especially careful to take note of the avoidable occasions of our falls, and to direct our purpose of amendment to the keeping away from them, rather than to the making of vague, general resolutions about the future avoidance of the sin itself.” – *A Manual of Prayers*, p. 297.

#### SEVENTH COMMANDMENT THOU SHALT NOT STEAL

Sins against the Seventh Commandment are:

stealing; petty thefts (e.g. taking things from one's place of employment to which one is not entitled or taking money from a family member without his permission); cheating; plagiarizing; breaking copyright regulations, (e.g. photocopying without permission); keeping borrowed or lost objects without making a reasonable attempt to restore the other's property; possession of ill-gotten goods; counseling or commanding someone to do injury to another person or to his goods; careless or malicious injury to the property of others; concealment of fraud, theft or damage when in duty bound to give the information; tax evasion by not paying just taxes; business fraud; dishonesty in politics, business, etc.; not paying just debts at scheduled time and neglecting to make reasonable efforts and sacrifices in this matter, e.g. by gradually laying up the amount required; not making reparation or compensation to someone suffering from unjust damages; forcing up prices by taking advantage of the ignorance or hardship of another; usury (lending money at high interest rates to someone in financial difficulty); speculation in which one contrives to manipulate the price of goods artificially in order to gain an

advantage to the detriment of others; corruption in which one influences the judgment of those who must decide in legal matters; accepting bribes; appropriation and use for private purposes of the common goods of an enterprise; work poorly done; paying unjust wages or defrauding an employee of due benefits; forgery of checks and invoices; bouncing checks knowing that there is not enough funds to cover them; excessive expenses and waste; not keeping promises or contract agreements (if the commitments were morally just); gambling and betting (if they deprive someone of basic living needs for himself or others); excessive unnecessary waste of goods, resources, money or funds.

#### EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR

Sins contrary to the Eighth Commandment are:

lying; boasting; bragging; flattery; hypocrisy; exaggerating; irony; sarcasm; unjust injury to another's good name either by revealing true and hidden faults (detraction); telling false defects (slander or calumny), talebearing, or spreading rumors; to criticize others, to listen with pleasure to others being criticized; gossiping; unjustly dishonoring another person in his presence (contumely); rash judgment (firmly believing, without sufficient reason, that someone has some moral defect); revealing secrets; publishing discreditable secrets about others, even if true; refusing or delaying to restore the good name one has blackened; baseless accusations; groundless suspicions; rash judgments of others in our own mind.

#### TENTH COMMANDMENT

THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S GOODS

The Tenth Commandment forbids the following:

envy (desire another goods); jealousy (a zealous vigilance in keeping a good enjoyed by oneself from others); greed and the desire to have material goods without limit (avarice); the desire to become rich at all

costs; businesses or professions who hope for unfavorable circumstances for others so that they may personally profit from it; envious of someone else's success, talents, temporal or spiritual goods; the desire to commit injustice by harming someone in order to get his temporal goods.

#### THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH

Besides the Ten Commandments of God, the faithful are also bound to follow the Precepts of the Church. The power for making these laws comes from Jesus Christ, and includes everything necessary for the government of the Church and for the direction of the faithful in order that they may attain their eternal salvation.

#### FIRST PRECEPT

TO ASSIST AT HOLY MASS ON ALL SUNDAYS AND HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION

There are Six Holy days of obligation:

- 1) Christmas Day (December 25)
- 2) The Circumcision (January 1)
- 3) Ascension Thursday (40 days after Easter)
- 4) The Assumption (August 15)
- 5) All Saints Day (November 1)
- 6) The Immaculate Conception (Dec. 8)

The Church obliges us to abstain from servile work on Holy Days of Obligation, just as on Sundays, as far as we are able. Catholics who must work on Holy Days are obliged to attend Holy Mass unless excused by a reasonable grave cause. One may violate this precept by not attending Mass on the prescribed days or by arriving late to Mass without sufficient reason.

#### SECOND PRECEPT

TO FAST, ABSTAIN AND DO PENANCE ON PRESCRIBED DAYS

The law of abstinence binds those who have completed their 14th year. The law of fasting binds those who have attained their age of majority (18), until the beginning of their 60th year. Fasting means to eat less food than one normally eats.

On days of fasting, we are allowed only one full meal and two smaller meals together are less than one full meal; days of fasting are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

On days of abstinence, we are forbidden to eat flesh-meat; days of abstinence are: all of the Fridays of the year. In the United States, some form of penance or prayers may be done in place of the abstinence for those Fridays of the year outside of Lent. The permitted substitute penance could be: saying a Rosary, Stations of the Cross, visiting the sick or imprisoned, etc.

THIRD PRECEPT  
TO CONFESS OUR MORTAL SINS AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR

The Church urges us to go to the great Sacrament of Confession frequently, but only actually commands us to go at least once a year in order to warn those people who may have presumption on the mercy of God, which is a sin against the Holy Ghost. Parents must prepare their children for Confession when the children learn to distinguish right from wrong. (i.e.) at about 7 years of age). The obligation to confess once a year is only binding on those who have committed a mortal sin and have not confessed for at least one year.

FOURTH PRECEPT  
TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION DURING EASTER SEASON.

The Easter Season begins on the First Sunday of Lent and ends on Trinity Sunday. However, after receiving our First Holy Communion, it is strongly recommended to receive this great Sacrament frequently during our lifetime (everyday if possible as recommended by Pope St. Pius X).

FIFTH PRECEPT  
CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUPPORT OF YOUR PASTOR

This precept requires each to provide for the material needs of the Church according to his means.

SIXTH PRECEPT  
TO OBSERVE THE LAWS OF THE CHURCH CONCERNING

MARRIAGE.

Have I entered into marriage or aided any one else to do so without permission from the Church to marry or before a State official or a Protestant minister; or without dispensation within the forbidden degrees of kindred; or with any other known impediment?