

To Make a Good Confession: Pray & Examine Your Conscience

St. Thomas Chaldean Catholic Church, West Bloomfield MI

Come, Holy Spirit, divine Spirit of light and truth, assist me to discover all my sins, to be truly sorry for them, to confess them sincerely, and to amend my life. Amen. Holy Mary, Pray for me. St. Joseph, pray for me My Guardian Angel, help me that I may make a good confession. Amen.

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT –

You shall have no other gods before your God.

- Did I give time to God each day in prayer?
- Did I receive Holy Communion in the state of mortal (serious, grave) sin?
- Did I deliberately tell a lie in confession or withhold a mortal sin from the priest in confession?
- Did I seriously believe in something superstitious or engage in a superstitious practice such as palm-reading, horoscopes, dream interpretations, finjan/Turkish coffee reading, fortune telling, OUIJA board, evil eye ('ain), energy stones, séances, etc.?
- Did I seriously doubt a matter of Faith?
- Have I committed the sin of sacrilege (profaning a sacred person, place or thing)?
- Have I put people, money, work, clothing, jewelry, and entertainment before God?
- Did I love God with my whole heart?

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT –

You shall not take the Lord your God's name in vain.

- Did I take the name of God in vain? Did I make use of God's name mockingly, jokingly, angrily, or in any other disrespectful manner?
- Did I use the Blessed Virgin Mary's name or another saint's name mockingly, jokingly, angrily, or in any other irreverent manner?
- Did I endanger my faith by attending meetings, activities or services of organization supposed to the Catholic faith, for example of non-Catholic or of other religions or cults?
- Did I tell a lie under oath? Did I break vows?
- Did I use profane language?

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT –

Keep the Sabbath day holy.

- Did I miss Mass on Sunday?
- Did I fail to dress appropriately for Mass?
- Was I attentive, reverent, and participating during Mass?
- Did I cause another to be distracted?
- Have I performed any work or business activity that would inhibit the worship due to God, the joy proper to the Lord's Day?

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT –

Honor your mother and father.

FOR PARENTS:

- Have I neglected to teach my children their prayers, take or send them to church, or give them a Christian education?
- Have I set a bad example for my children?
- Did I disobey my parents or lawful superiors in important matters?
- Did my anger lead me to be uncharitable to my children?

- Have I neglected to visit and care for my elderly parents?

FOR CHILDREN:

- Did I listen to my parents? Did I treat them with respect?
- Did I neglect to help my parents when my help was needed?
- Did I treat my parents with respect?
- Did I react prideful when my parents corrected me?
- Did I do my chores?
- Did I humbly accept correction from my parents?

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT –

You shall not kill.

- Did I easily get angry or lose my temper?
- Was I envious or jealous of others?
- Did I injure or take the life of anyone? Was I ever reckless in driving?
- Did I hold a deep hatred or resentment toward a family member or friend? Did I try to make peace?
- Was I an occasion of sin for others by way of conversation, the telling of jokes religiously, racially, or sexually offensive, my way of dressing, inviting somebody to attend certain shows, lending harmful books or magazines, helping someone to steal, etc.? Did I try to repair the scandal done?
- How many persons did I lead to sin? What sins were involved?
- Did I neglect my health? Did I attempt to take my life?
- Did I mutilate myself or other another?
- Did I get drunk or use prohibited drugs?
- Did I eat or drink more than a sufficient amount, allowing myself to get carried away by gluttony?
- Did I participate in any form of physical violence?
- Did I consent to or actively take part in direct sterilization (tying tubes, vasectomy, etc.)?
- Have I engaged, in any way, in sins against human life such as artificial insemination or in vitro fertilization?
- Did I consent to, advise, or actively take part in an abortion?
- Did I hold a grudge or seek revenge against someone who wronged me?
- Did I cause harm to anyone by my words or actions?
- Did I desire revenge or harbor enmity, hatred, or ill feelings when someone offended me?
- Did I ask pardon whenever I offended anyone?
- Did I refuse to forgive?
- Did I insult or offensively tease others?
- Did I fight with one of my brothers or sisters?
- Do I complain more than I compliment?
- Am I prejudiced against people because of their color, language, ethnic or religious background?

THE SIXTH AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS –

You shall not commit adultery; You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

- Did I willfully entertain impure thoughts?
- Did I dress immodestly?
- Did I consent to evil desires against the virtue of purity, even though I may not have carried them out?
- Did I engage in impure conversations? Did I start them?
- Did I look for fun in forms of entertainment that tempts me to sin, such as certain dances, movies, shows, or books with immoral content? Do I keep bad company?

- Did I share a room with a person I find sexually attractive, or was I alone with such a person in circumstances that could lead to sin?
- Did I fail to take care of those details of modesty and decency that are the safeguard of purity?
- Did I fail, before going to a show or reading a book, to find out its moral implications, so as not to put myself in immediate danger of sinning and in order to avoid distorting my conscience?
- Did I willfully look at indecent pictures (any form of pornography) or sell any pornography? Did I willfully desire to commit such a sin? Did I have lustful thoughts?
- Did I lead others to sins of impurity or immodesty? Which sins?
- Did I commit an impure act? By myself, through masturbation or with someone else? How many times? With someone of the same or opposite sex?
- Do I have friendships that are habitual occasions of sexual sins? Am I prepared to end them?
- *In dating*: is true love my fundamental reason for wanting to be with the other person? Do I live the constant and cheerful sacrifice of not putting the person I love in danger of sinning? Do I degrade human love by confusing it with selfishness or mere physical pleasure?
- Did I engage in any inappropriate acts such as petting, necking, passionate kisses, or prolonged embraces?

FOR MARRIED PEOPLE:

- Did I, without serious reason, deprive my spouse of the marital right? Did I claim my own rights in a way, which showed no concern for my spouse's state of mind or health?
- Did I cheat on my spouse?
- Did I take "the pill" or use any other artificial birth control device (or practice) before or after new life had already been conceived?
- Did I suggest to another person the use of birth control pills or any other artificial methods of preventing pregnancy (like condoms)?
- Did I have a hand in contributing or selling any form of contraception?
- Did I have a contraceptive mentality while using Natural family planning?
- On abortion, contraception, sterilization, etc., see the 5th Commandment.

THE SEVENTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS –

You shall not steal. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

- Did I steal? How much? How much was the object worth? Did I give it back, or at least have the intention of doing so?
- Have I done or caused damage to another person's property? To what extent?
- Did I harm anyone by deception, fraud, or coercion in business contracts or transactions?
- Did I unnecessarily spend beyond my means? Do I spend too much money because of vanity or caprice?
- Was I envious of my neighbor's goods?
- Did I neglect to pay my debts?
- Did I knowingly accept stolen goods?

- Did I give in to laziness or love of comfort rather diligently work or study?
- Was I greedy? Do I have an excessively materialistic view of life?

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT –

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

- Did I tell lies? Did I repair any damage that may have resulted as a consequence of this?
- Have I unjustly or rashly accused others?
- Did I sin by detraction, that is, by telling the faults of another person without necessity?
- Did I sin by calumny, that is, by telling derogatory lies about another person?
- Did I engage in gossip, backbiting, or tale-telling?
- Did I reveal a secret without due cause?

REQUIREMENTS FOR CONFESSION

- 1) To be truly sorry for your sins— Rejection of sin.
- 2) The resolution to avoid committing these sins in the future (amendment)— This does not mean that one will never sin again. A resolution is to try to avoid the near occasion of repeating the same sins.

HOW TO GO TO CONFESSION

- 1) Make the Sign of the Cross and say, "*Bless me, father, for I have sinned. My last confession was [give the number of weeks, months, or years].*"
- 2) Confess all of your sins to the priest. The priest will help you to make a good confession. If you are unsure about how to confess or you feel uneasy, just ask him to help you. Answer his questions without hiding anything out of fear or shame. Place your trust in God, a merciful Father who wants to forgive you.
- 3) The priest will assign you some penance and give you some advice to help you to be a better Christian. Listen to the words and be willing to do the penance as soon as possible.
- 4) Pray the Act of Contrition.
- 5) The priest will absolve you of your sins. Make the Sign of the Cross followed by: Amen.
- 6) Do your penance after you leave the confessional

ACT OF CONTRITION:

My God, I am sorry for my sins with all my heart. In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good, I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things. I firmly intend with your help, to do penance, to sin no more, and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.

Amen.

WHAT IS A MORTAL SIN?

In Confession you should confess all your *mortal* sins (serious sins) that you have committed since the last time you confessed. For a sin to be considered mortal it must be:

- 1) *Grave Matter* – something serious that is against the 10 Commandments directly or indirectly.
- 2) *Done with full knowledge* – you knew it was sinful but still did it.
- 3) *Done with full consent of the will* – you freely choose to do it.