

FIRST COMMANDMENT: I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.

Have I neglected the knowledge of my faith as taught in the catechism?
Have I deliberately doubted or denied any of the teachings of the Church?
Have I taken part in any non-Catholic worship?
Am I a member of any non-Catholic religious organization, secret society or anti-Catholic group (e.g., Freemasons)?
Have I knowingly read any heretical, blasphemous or anti-Catholic literature?
Have I practiced any superstitions (e.g., horoscopes, fortune telling, Ouija board)?
Have I omitted religious duties or practices through motives of human respect?
Have I been faithful to my daily prayers?
Have I abused the Sacraments in any way? Received them irreverently or sacrilegiously? Have I received Holy Communion in the state of mortal sin? (This is a very grave sacrilege.)
Have I insulted holy persons or holy things?
Have I been guilty of great irreverence in church (e.g., conversation, behavior, or dress)?
Have I been indifferent with regard to my Catholic Faith (e.g., believing one can be saved in any religion, that all religions are basically equal)?
Have I presumed or despaired on God's mercy at any time?
Have I given too much importance to any creature, activity, object or opinion?

SECOND COMMANDMENT: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

Have I sworn by God's name falsely, rashly or in slight and trivial matters?
Have I murmured or complained against or insulted God (blasphemy)?
Have I cursed myself or others, or any creature?
Have I broken an oath or vow made to God?

THIRD COMMANDMENT: Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

Have I missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of obligation?
Have I been late for Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of obligation or left early through my own fault?
Have I made others miss Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of obligation, leave early or be late for Mass?
Have I been willfully distracted during Mass?
Have I done or commanded any unnecessary servile work on Sunday or Holy Days of Obligation?
Have I bought or sold things not of necessity on Sunday and Holy Days of obligation?

FOURTH COMMANDMENT: Honor thy father and thy mother.

Have I been disobedient or disrespectful to my parents, or have I neglected or refused to aid them in their wants or to do their last will?
Have I shown irreverence to others in positions of authority?
Have I maligned or insulted priests or others consecrated to God?
Have I failed in due reverence to aged persons?
Have I mistreated my spouse or my children?
Have I been disobedient or disrespectful to my husband?
Regarding my children:
Have I neglected their material needs?
Have I failed to care for their early baptism? (Note: The Code of Canon Law states that "parents are obliged to see that their infants are baptized within the first few weeks..." and "If the infant is in danger of death, it is to be baptized without any delay"—CIC 867. Delay beyond a month without reason would be a serious sin.)
Have I failed to care for their proper religious education?
Have I allowed them to neglect their religious duties?

Have I allowed them to date/go-steady without the prospect of marriage within the near future (St. Alphonsus says one year maximum)?

Have I failed to supervise the company they keep?

Have I failed to discipline them when they need it?

Have I given them a bad example?

Have I scandalized them (e.g., by arguing with my spouse, by cursing or by swearing in front of them)?

Have I guarded modesty in the home?

Have I permitted them to wear immodest clothing (mini skirts; tight pants, dresses, or sweaters; see-through blouses, short-shorts, revealing swim wear, etc.)?

Have I denied their freedom to marry or to follow a religious vocation?

Have I voted in accordance with a properly informed conscience (e.g., consistent with the Church's teaching on matters pertaining to human life, the unborn, etc.)?

FIFTH COMMANDMENT: Thou shalt not kill.

Have I procured, desired, or hastened the death or bodily injury of anyone (e.g., Euthanasia or "mercy killing")?

Have I hated, oppressed, or wished evil on anyone?

Have I caused enmity between others?

Have I quarreled or fought with anyone?

Have I intended or attempted to injure myself or others?

Have I put my life or that of others in danger (e.g., reckless or drunk driving)?

Is there anyone with whom I refuse to speak, or against whom I bear a grudge or desire revenge?

Have I taken pleasure in another's misfortune?

Have I been jealous or envious of anyone?

Have I had or attempted to have an abortion or counseled anyone else to do so?

Have I practiced or counseled others to use artificial insemination?

Have I mutilated my body unnecessarily in any way? (e.g., sterilization).

Have I entertained thoughts of suicide, desired or attempted to commit suicide?

Have I become drunk, used illicit drugs, abused prescription drugs?

Have I overeaten or do I neglect to eat properly (i.e., nutritious foods)?

Have I failed to correct in Charity?

Have I harmed anyone's soul, especially children, through bad example?

Have I harmed my own soul by intentionally and without necessity exposing it to temptations (e.g., bad TV and movies, bad music, beaches, etc.)?

Have I followed the directives of the Church in making my "living will"?

SIXTH AND NINTH COMMANDMENTS: Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.

Have I denied my spouse his or her marriage rights or abused these rights in any other way?

Have I practiced birth control in anyway?

Have I committed adultery or fornication?

Have I committed any unnatural sin against purity (e.g., sins of Sodom and Gomorrah)?

Have I embraced another impurely or aroused the passions of another (e.g., passionate kissing or touching)?

Have I sinned impurely by myself?

Have I entertained or taken pleasure in impure thoughts?

Have I read indecent literature or looked at bad pictures?

Have I watched suggestive or impure movies, TV, internet or permitted my children to do so?

Have I attended immodest dances or indecent plays?

Have I been an occasion of sin for others deliberately or through carelessness (e.g., immodest clothing, indecent language, obscene jokes and stories)?

(Note: "Modesty protects the intimate center of the person. It means refusing to unveil what should remain hidden... Modesty is decency. It inspires one's choice of clothing. It keeps silence or reserve where there is evident risk of unhealthy curiosity. It is discreet... Modesty inspires a way of life which makes it possible to resist the allurements of fashion and the pressure of prevailing ideologies"—Catechism nos. 2521-23. Our Lady of Fatima: "Certain fashions will be introduced that will offend My Son very much!")

Have I willingly listened to impure stories?
Have I boasted of my sins or taken delight in past sins?
Have I dated someone civilly divorced but still married in the eyes of the Church?
Have I consented to impure glances?
Have I avoided laziness, gluttony, idleness, and the occasions of impurity?
Have I been in lewd company?
Have I unnecessarily remained alone in the company of someone of the opposite sex?

SEVENTH AND TENTH COMMANDMENTS: Thou shalt not steal. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

Have I stolen anything? What or how much?
Have I damaged anyone's property?
Have I negligently spoiled anyone's property?
Have I been negligent in the stewardship of other people's money or goods?
Have I cheated or defrauded others (e.g., charging exorbitant prices, concealing defects of goods offered for sale)?
Have I speculated or gambled excessively?
Have I refused or neglected to pay any debts?
Have I acquired anything known to be stolen?
Have I failed to return things borrowed?
Have I borrowed something without permission of the owner?
Have I cheated my employer of an honest day's work?
Have I cheated my employees of their wages?
Have I refused or neglected to help anyone in urgent need?

Have I accepted bribes?
Have I failed to make restitution for stolen goods? (*Ask the priest how to go about making restitution, that is, returning to the owner what you unjustly took from him.*)
Have I been envious of another's goods?
Have I been jealous of what another has?
Have I been stingy, grasping and avaricious, placing too great importance upon material goods and comforts? Is my heart set on earthly possessions or on the true treasures of Heaven?

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT: Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

Have I lied about anyone (calumny)?
Have my lies caused them any material or spiritual harm?
Have I rashly judged anyone (i.e. believed firmly, without sufficient evidence, that they are guilty of some moral defect or crime)?

Have I injured the good name of another by revealing true but hidden faults or sins (detraction, slander)?

Have I unjustly read the private documents of others?

Have I disclosed another's secrets?

Have I been guilty of tale bearing (i.e. reporting something unfavorable said of someone by another so as to create enmity between them)?

Have I lent an ear to or encouraged the spreading of scandal about my neighbor?

Have I taken false oaths or signed false documents?

Have I cheated on tests, reports or schoolwork?

Have I falsified documents?

Am I, without necessity, critical, negative or ever uncharitable in my talk?

Have I flattered others?

NINE WAYS OF BEING AN ACCESSORY TO ANOTHER'S SIN

Have I knowingly caused others to sin?
Have I co-operated in the sins of others:

- 1) By counsel.
- 2) By command.
- 3) By consent.
- 4) By provocation.
- 5) By praise or flattery.
- 6) By concealment.
- 7) By partaking.
- 8) By silence.
- 9) By defense of the ill done?

THE SIX PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH

1. Have I heard Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation?
2. Have I fasted and abstained on the days appointed and have I kept the Eucharistic fast?
3. Have I confessed at least once a year?
4. Have I received the Holy Eucharist at least once in the year (i.e., Easter Duty—1st Sunday of Lent to Trinity Sunday)?
5. Have I contributed as far as I must to the support of the Church?
6. Have I observed the laws of the Church concerning Marriage (e.g., it is held in a Catholic Church with a priest present)?
(Note: this precept binds both the wedding party and those witnessing.)

PRAYER FOR A GOOD CONFESSION

O MY GOD, by my grievous sins I have crucified again Thy Divine Son and made Him a mockery. For this I have deserved Thy wrath and made myself fit for the fires of hell. How ungrateful have I been to Thee as well, my heavenly Father, Who created me out of nothing, redeemed me by the precious Blood of Thy Son and sanctified me by Thy holy sacraments and by the Holy Ghost. But Thou hast spared me, by Thy mercy, to make this confession. Receive me back as Thy prodigal son and grant me to confess well, that I may begin anew to love Thee with my whole heart and soul, and henceforth to keep Thy commandments and suffer patiently whatever temporal punishment may remain. I hope by Thy goodness and power to obtain everlasting life in Paradise. Through Jesus Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

"The sins we try to hide, always reappear. To hide one's sins well, one must confess them well"—St. Jean Vianney.

AN ADULT EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

How to Confess: First examine your conscience well, then tell the priest the specific kind of sins you have committed and, to the best of your ability, how many times you have committed them since your last good confession. If you are in doubt about whether a sin is mortal or venial, mention your doubt to the confessor. A *mortal sin involves a serious matter in which there is sufficient reflection and is committed with full consent of the will*. Remember that although you are not obliged to confess venial sins, doing so is very helpful for avoiding sin and advancing toward Heaven. Confess your sins with supernatural sorrow, a firm resolution not to sin again and to avoid the near occasions of sin. Ask your confessor to help you with any difficulties you have in making a good confession. Say your penance promptly.

Preliminary Considerations:

1. Have I ever confessed my sins to a priest whose faculties to absolve are in doubt? If so, it is best to make a general confession.
2. Have I ever deliberately failed to confess a past mortal sin, or have I willfully disguised or hidden such a sin?
Note: *The deliberate concealing of a mortal sin invalidates one's confession and makes the person guilty of another mortal sin.*
3. Have I been guilty of irreverence for this sacrament by failing to examine my conscience carefully or seeking to increase my sorrow for sin?
4. Have I failed to do the assigned penance?
5. Have I any habits of serious sin? (e.g. impurity, drunkenness, etc.). **Note:** *These may require delayed absolution to conquer.*
6. General Absolution is invalid unless all mortal sins are confessed as soon as possible to a priest in confession.