

The Holy Sacrament of Forgiveness

How to Prepare for Confession

- a. Find a quiet place where you can be alone and where you can concentrate on the love of God; His love for the world and for you. Think of the Christmas story and how Our Lord became Man because He loved us, how He experienced death on the cross because He loved us, and how, at Easter, He resurrected, because He loves us.
- b. Think of what God wants you to be and where you are in life, at this very moment. Ask yourself: Am I worthy to be called a creation of God? When Christ returns at the second coming, will we be able to tell him that in spite of our failures in life, we sincerely tried to make amends in our shortcomings?
- c. Once we have gone through (a) and (b), we are now ready to face the most difficult question of all: How have we offended God? In examining ourselves, what sins have been committed? One easy way of doing this is to put down on a piece of paper all the sins committed recently, or since your last confession. Details and unnecessary descriptions should be avoided.
- d. Once you have completed your list, check them with the following "self-examination" questions based on the Ten Commandments, which will also help you to crystallize your thinking before you share your feelings with your Father confessor. (These were basically taken from a little Archdiocesan pamphlet entitled, "The Neglected Sacrament, A Practical Guide to Confession and Happiness.")

First Commandment

"I Am The Lord Thy God; Thou Shalt Have No Other Gods Before Me." Have I loved God as much as I should? Have I been more interested in myself than in God? Have I tried to serve God and keep His Commandments? Have I been vain about my personality, personal appearance, clothes, possessions, my family, ability, success in games or in accomplishments? Have I given way to anxiety instead of turning to God for help? Have I failed to trust in God and His mercy? Have I failed to pray to God sincerely and faithfully? Have I put my self before God?

Second Commandment

"Thou Shalt Not Make Unto Thee Any Graven Image. " Have I put another person before God's law; by not going to Church, or by committing some other sin to please that person? Have I neglected my duties to God through fear of ridicule? Have I been insincere about my religion? Have I been receiving Holy Communion without the appropriate preparation?

Third Commandment

"Thou Shalt Not Take Thy Name of The Lord Thy God in Vain . " Have I profaned the Holy Name of God? Have I misused the Holy Name of Jesus? Have I cursed anyone or sworn a false oath? Have I paid proper attention to holy persons and things? Have I broken any solemn vow or promise?

Fourth Commandment

"Remember The Sabbath Day, to Keep it Holy. " Have I missed Church on Sundays? Have I always kept Sunday as it ought to be kept? Have I

done unnecessary work on Sundays? Have I been irreverent during Church Services? Have I caused anyone to profane the Lord's day? Have I been ashamed of my religion or my Church?

Fifth Commandment

"Honor Thy Father and Thy Mother." Have I respected my parents and been grateful enough for all they have done for me? Have I disobeyed them or neglected them? Have I contributed as much as I should to the support and happiness of my parents? Have I tried to bring my children up properly? Have I given as much care as possible to the religious life of my family; with regard to daily prayer, church going, etc? Have I honored God, my Heavenly Father, by working or treating my employers as well as other co-workers honestly and diligently?

Sixth Commandment

"Thou Shalt Not Kill. " Have I killed if not in outward deed, perhaps in my heart? Have I wished for some one's death? Have I been angry unjustly? Have I harmed others by ridicule or contempt? Have I defamed anyone who needed help? Have I gossiped about people? Have I been cruel to anyone? Have I failed to forgive anyone? Have I shown proper respect toward life?

Seventh Commandment

"Thou Shalt Not Commit Adultery. " Have I been impure in thought, word, or deed? Have I committed unworthy actions alone or with others? Do I dwell on pornography and obscenity? Have I committed any sin with regard to my wife (husband) or other

member of my family? Have I caused others to commit sinful acts?

Eighth Commandment

"Thou Shalt Not Steal. " Have I ever stolen anything, or shared in stolen goods? Have I cheated in business, games or school? Have I kept things that did not belong to me? Have I given as much as I am able to charitable causes and to the Church?

Ninth Commandment

"Thou Shalt Not Bear False Witness." Have I lied often? Have I concealed the truth? Have I exaggerated too much? Have I let others receive blame for my faults? Have I judged others for sins which I also have committed? Have I been deceitful, unfair, hypocritical?

Tenth Commandment

"Thou Shalt Not Covet. " Have I been jealous of others? Have I envied them because they have more money; or are better looking; or more successful; or because people pay more attention to them? Have I been grieved at the prosperity of the others? Have I ever wished the downfall of anyone? Have I failed to thank God for what He has already given me? Have I thought that God is partial?

