

Sin, Repentance & the Restoration of Married Life

When Adam and Eve rebelled against God, preferring to be gods unto themselves, they devastated their life together as a married couple. No longer were they faithful and loyal. The effects of their sin have contaminated every marriage and family.

The evil of the Fall should not blind us to God's love. He immediately promised a Savior (cf. Gen 3:15). This great work of redemption was accomplished in Christ Jesus. Our marriages and families can be healed and rejuvenated only if we participate in this new life.

As partakers of the Holy Spirit, a Christian husband and wife can confidently commit themselves to one another, knowing that no sin can destroy the mutual promises. Only if we are clear about the greatness of God's call in marriage and family life will we see the importance of our responsibilities, the way sin undermines these, and how the Sacrament of Reconciliation can restore familial relationship.

We can find great strength in the saving presence, power and life of Jesus Christ.

Responsibilities to God:

Have I gone to Mass every Sunday?

Have I participated at Mass or have I day dreamed or been present with a blank mind?

Have I prayed every day (15-20 minutes)?

Have I read the Bible? Have I studied the truths of our faith and allowed them to become more part of the way I think and act?

Have I read any spiritual books or religious literature?

Going to Confession

The penitent and the priest begin with the sign of the Cross, saying:

In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

The priest then invites you to begin.

The penitent then states his or her sins.

Express the area(s), direction(s), pattern(s) in your life that you need to change and ask forgiveness using the examination of conscience found here.

After this, the priest will generally give some advice to the penitent and impose a penance. A penance helps us to change and to grow—to become the best we can be—the best God created us to be.

PRAYER OF SORROW/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. Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us. In his name, my God, have mercy. Amen.

Priest: "Give thanks to the Lord for He is good"

Penitent: "His mercy endures forever."

OR

Priest: "The Lord has freed you from your sins. Go in Peace."

Penitent: "Thanks be to God."

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An Examination of Conscience for Married Persons



God calls most men and women to the married vocation.

This is a great honor and an immense challenge.

To fulfill this marvelous calling,

we need Christ's help;

we need his Spirit's power.

An Examination of Conscience for Married Persons

Have I told God that I want to love him with my whole heart, mind and strength? Do I hold any resentments toward God?

Have I recognized my need for Jesus and his salvation? Have I asked the Holy Spirit to empower me to live the Christian life, to be a proper husband/wife and parent?

Have I been financially generous to the Church? Have I participated in parish or religious activities?

Responsibilities to my spouse:

Have I cared for my spouse?

Have I been generous with my time?

Have I been affectionate and loving?

Have I told my spouse that I love him or her?

Have I been concerned about the spiritual well-being of my spouse?

Have I listened to my spouse? Have I paid attention to his or her concerns, worries, and problems?

Have I allowed resentments and bitterness toward my spouse to take root in my mind?

Have I forgiven my spouse for the wrongs he or she has committed against me?

Have I lied, been deceitful or manipulated my spouse in order to get my own way?

Have I spoken sharply or sarcastically to my spouse? Have I injured my spouse through taunting and negative teasing?

Have I gossiped about my spouse?

Have I been moody and sullen?

Have I bickered with my spouse out of stubbornness and selfishness?

Have I been loving and physically affectionate in my sexual relations?

Have I refused sexual relations out of laziness, revenge or manipulation?

Have I flirted or fostered improper relationships with someone else, either in my mind or through words and actions?

Have I committed adultery?

Have I used pornography: books, magazines or movies or masturbated?

Have I misused alcohol or drugs?

Have I been financially responsible?

Responsibilities to children:

Have I cared for the spiritual needs of my children?

Have I tried to foster a Christian family where Jesus is Lord?

Have I taught my children the Gospel and the commandments of God?

Have I prayed with them?

Have I been persistent and courageous in my training and teaching? Have I been lazy and apathetic?

Have I disciplined them when necessary?

Have I been affectionate toward them? Have I hugged them and told them that I love them?

Have I been impatient and frustrated with them? Have I corrected them out of love in

order to teach them what is right and good?

Have I treated them with respect?

Have I spoken to them in a sarcastic or demeaning way?

Have I held resentments against them or have I forgiven them?

Have I been of one heart and mind with my spouse in the upbringing of the children? Or have I allowed disagreements and dissension to disrupt the training, educating and disciplining of our children?

Have I been a good Christian witness to my children in what I say and do? Or do I demand one standard for them and another for myself?

Responsibilities to society:

Have I been a Christian witness to those with whom I work or associate?

Have I spoken to anyone about the Gospel and how important it is to believe in Jesus?

Have I held resentments and anger against those with whom I work, relatives or friends?

Have I forgiven them?

Have I been unethical in my business dealings?

Have I stolen or lied?

Have I allowed the Gospel to influence my political and social opinions?

Have I had a proper Christian concern for the poor and needy?

Have I been prejudiced toward others because of race, color, religion or social status?