

Examination of Conscience: Seven Capital Sins

Preparatory Prayer:

My precious and divine Lord, as I begin an examination of conscience, help me to see my soul as You see it. In Your perfect mercy, You love me as I am, even though my sin keeps me from entrusting my life more fully to You.

May I see my sin so that You can gently free me from these obstacles to Your love. Give me courage and confidence in You Who are Love and Mercy itself. Jesus, I trust in You. Have mercy. Amen.

Pride: Pride is an untrue opinion of ourselves, an untrue idea of what we are not.

Do I have a superior attitude in thinking or speaking or acting? Am I snobbish? Do I have an offensive, haughty way of acting or carrying myself? Do I hold myself above others? Do I demand recognition? Do I desire to be always first? Do I seek advice? Am I ready to accept advice? Am I in any sense a “bully”? Am I inclined to be “bossy”? Do I speak ill of others? Have I lied about others? Do I make known the faults of others? Do I seek to place the blame on others, excusing myself? Is there anyone to whom I refuse to speak? Is there anyone to whom I have not spoken for a long time? Am I prone to argue? Am I offensive in my arguments? Have I a superior “know-it-all attitude” in arguments? Am I self-conscious? Am I sensitive? Am I easily wounded?

Envy: Envy is a sadness which we feel, on account of the good that happens to our neighbor.

Do I feel sad at the prosperity of others? At their success in games? In athletics? Do I rejoice at their failures? Do I envy the riches of others?

Sloth: Sloth is a kind of cowardice and disgust, which makes us neglect and omit our duties rather than discipline ourselves.

Have I an inordinate love of rest, neglecting my duties? Do I act lazily? Am I too fond of rest? Do I take lazy positions in answering prayers? Do I kneel in a lounging way? Do I delight in idle conversation? Do I fail to be fervent in the service of God?

Lust: Lust is the love of the pleasures that are contrary to purity.

Have I desired or done impure things? Have I taken pleasure in entertaining impure thoughts or desires? Have I read impure material, listened to music with impure lyrics, or looked at impure images, whether in photos or on television or in movies or on the Internet? Have I aroused sexual desire in myself or another by impure kissing, embracing, or touching? Have I committed impure actions alone, i.e., masturbation? Do I dress immodestly or am I too concerned with the way I look? Do I use vulgar language or tell or listen to impure jokes or stories? Have I given in to desires of adultery even in my imagination?

Covetousness: Covetousness is a disordered love of the goods of this world.

Do I dispose of my money improperly or selfishly? Do I discharge my duties in justice to my fellow man? Do I discharge my duties in justice to the Church?

Gluttony: Gluttony is a disordered love of eating and drinking.

Do I eat to live or live to eat? Do I drink to excess? Do I get drunk? Do I misuse prescription drugs? Do I use illegal drugs? Have I allowed myself to become addicted to alcohol and/or drugs?

Anger: Anger is an emotion of the soul, which leads us violently to repel whatever hurts or displeases us.

Am I prone to anger? Does practically any little thing arouse my temper? Do I fail to repress the first signs of anger? Do I fail to get along well with everybody? Do I ponder over slights or injuries and even presume them? Do I rejoice at the misfortunes of others? Do I think of means of revenge? Of “getting even”? Am I of an argumentative disposition? Have I a spirit of contradiction? Am I given to ridicule of persons, places, or things? Am I hard to get along with? Do I carry grudges, remain “on the outs” with anyone? Do I talk about the faults of others? Do I reveal the faults or defects of others? Do I reveal the faults of others from the wrong motive?