

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS AS PREPARATION FOR CONFESSION

TIPS FOR THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION (Also known as Confession):

Remember, God is love, and He loves YOU. He came to redeem the world, not to condemn it (John 3:17). We are all a work in progress, and just as we are called to treat others with mercy, kindness, and without judgment, we are called to treat ourselves. It takes a good person to admit that he or she makes mistakes. You are not bad because you go to the Sacrament of Reconciliation. You are a good person trying to become even better.

1. Think back to your last Confession. Did you forget to say something you wanted to? Did you purposely not say something that might have been good to mention?
2. PREPARE for Confession. If necessary, write on a slip of paper or an index card what you want to say.
3. Don't forget that there exist a) sins of commission: bad things that you shouldn't have done, and b) sins of omission: good things that you should have done, but didn't.
4. Be somewhat specific (i.e., "I told a lie," "I stole something"), but there's no need to go into great detail.
5. Don't mention other people's names, and try not to talk about other people. They have to go to Confession for themselves.

FIRST COMMANDMENT: 'I am the Lord your God: You shall worship the Lord your God and Him only shall you serve.'

- Have I loved God as much as I should?
- Have I been more interested in my own will rather than God's?
- Have I failed to pray sincerely and regularly?
- Have I believed in God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit?
- Have I failed to trust in God and His mercy?
- Have I blamed God for adversity? Have I complained against Him and stayed angry?
- Have I used or believed in psychics, card-readers, astrologers and horoscopes?
- Have I been thankful for God's blessings?
- Have I pulled away from the Catholic faith and the teachings of the Church?
- Have I tried to serve God and keep His Commandments?
- Have I given way to superstition?
- Have I given in to negativity?
- Have I believed unfair negative things about myself and been overly judgmental and unnecessarily critical of myself, as a being made in the image of God?
- Have I neglected my duties to God through fear of ridicule or persecution?
- Have I put another person or object before God in my life?
- Have I been insincere about my religion?
- Have I made an idol of any person or thing, or of myself or my appearance?
- Have I given to anyone or anything the worship that is due to God alone?
- Have I set before myself the holy life of Jesus and tried to imitate Him?
- Have I read the Holy Scriptures regularly?
- Have I neglected to receive Holy Communion on Sundays or without the one hour fast and due preparation?

SECOND COMMANDMENT: 'You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.'

- Have I remained silent, when I was called to defend the Catholic Church, the faith, and the name of Jesus in public?
- Have I paid proper attention to holy persons and things?
- Have I broken any solemn promises?
- Have I profaned the holy name of God in any way?
- Have I spent my time and money watching shows and movies that regularly use the Lord's name as a curse word?
- Have I cursed anyone or anything, or sworn a false oath?
- Have I failed to give proper reverence to holy persons or things?
- Have I had due respect for the clergy of the Church or hindered them in performing God's work?
- Have I gossiped about the clergy and spread their names negatively, instead of praying for them, when I see human faults?
- Have I broken any solemn vow or promise?
- Have I entered into any unlawful contract or made an unlawful promise?

THIRD COMMANDMENT: 'Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.'

- Have I always kept Sunday as it ought to be kept?
- Have I stayed away from Church on Sundays or prevented others from going?
- Have I done unnecessary work on Sundays?
- Have I spent the day in unwholesome fashion or profaned it by improper conduct?
- If I could not go to Church because of illness or other grave cause, have I prayed at home?
- Have I caused anyone else to profane the Lord's Day?
- Have I kept the Fasts and Feast Days prescribed by the Church?

FOURTH COMMANDMENT: 'Honor your father and your mother.'

- Have I argued disrespectfully with my parents?
- Have I respected my parents and been obedient to them, (obedient unless they steered me into sin)?
- Have I been guilty of deception, or caused them pain by my words or actions?
- Have I neglected them or failed to help them?
- Have I done my duty towards my family?
- Have I been wanting in love or kindness towards my mate or harmed my mate in any way?
- Have I set my children a good example and tried to bring them up properly?
- Have I corrected their faults with patience and not with anger?
- Have I over-indulged and spoiled them?
- Have I neglected my godchildren and failed in my obligations toward them?
- Have I worked for my employers honestly and diligently?
- Have I treated fairly all those who have worked for me?
- Have I honored the Church as my spiritual mother by honoring and practicing my religion in accordance with her teachings?

FIFTH COMMANDMENT: ‘You shall not kill.’

- Have I harmed others by ridicule & sarcasm or contempt & stubbornness?
- Have I fought with my family and friends?
- Have I punished myself through words or actions?
- Have I beaten myself up unnecessarily in my thoughts and through unhealthy self-criticism?
- Have I caused the injury or death of any one, or wished that they or I were dead?
- Have I had an abortion, or assisted or remained silent when someone close to me has?
- Have I done anything to shorten my own life or that of someone else by injuring health, or through evil and intemperate living?
- Have I sought to watch horror films and television shows with excessive violence?
- Have exposed children to such movies or shows?
- Have I given way to anger, or harmed others with words or actions?
- Have I defamed others who needed help, or failed to stand up for those unjustly treated?
- Have I been cruel to anyone, or have I mistreated or destroyed any life unnecessarily?
- Have I failed to forgive anyone, or a group of people, or harbored evil thoughts against them?
- Have I neglected to help the poor, many of whom live in subhuman conditions?

SIXTH COMMANDMENT: ‘You shall not commit adultery (or infidelity).’

- Have I given way to impure thoughts, words, or deeds?
- Have I committed any unworthy actions alone or with others?
- Have I masturbated or been involved in sexual acts outside of male/female marriage?
- Have I degraded myself in any way, or forgotten human dignity?
- Have I given in to sensuality?
- Have I read immoral books or magazines, kept them in my home, or delighted in obscenity of any kind?
- Have I indulged in reading, conversation, shows, and entertainments that offend against Christian and human decency?
- Have I sought out movies, shows, etc. with immoral sexual content?
- Have I exposed children to such books, magazines, films, or shows?
- Have I associated with bad companions or frequented unsavory places?
- Have I eaten or drunk or smoked too much? Have I been intoxicated while driving?
- Have I been lazy, idle, or wasted my time?
- Have I emailed, texted, or posted on the Internet suggestive pictures of myself or someone else?
- Have I led others to commit sinful acts, with me or others?
- Have I been unfaithful to any trust confided in me?
- Have I dressed in such a way that would incite lust?
- Have I used artificial contraception or condoned it?
- Have I used in vitro fertilization or condoned it?

SEVENTH COMMANDMENT: ‘You shall not steal.’

- Have I ever stolen or wished to do so, or shared in stolen goods?
- Have I given to my Church what I know I can afford to give?
- Have I kept anything that did not belong to me?
- Have I bought or kept more material goods or money than I need, and refused, or never thought, to give the rest of it to the poor?

- Have I tried honestly to find owners of lost articles I have found?
- Have I cheated anyone?
- Have I paid my debts?
- Have I lived within my income, and not wastefully and extravagantly?
- Have I given to charitable causes in proportion to my means?
- Have I been honest and upright?

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT: ‘You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.’

- Have I exaggerated or let others take the blame?
- Have I told lies, or added or subtracted from the truth?
- Have I made careless statements or spoken evil of anyone?
- Have I told any secrets entrusted to me, or betrayed anyone?
- Have I gossiped about anyone or harmed their reputation?
- Have I concealed the truth, assisted in carrying out a lie, or pretended to commit a sin of which I was not guilty?
- Have I tried to see the good in others rather than their shortcomings?

NINTH COMMANDMENT: ‘You shall not covet your neighbor’s wife’

- Have I harbored desires for another’s spouse or for a different spouse?
- Have I promoted or contributed to environments that are existing causes for sin?
- Have I neglected to pray to banish bad thoughts and temptations?
- Have I loved my spouse with a divided heart?
- Have I allowed my marital activities to be seen by my children or others?
- Have I envied the significant other or spouse of famous people or people I know to whom I am attracted?
- Have I associated too much with someone else’s spouse or significant other? Have I flirted with them?

TENTH COMMANDMENT: ‘You shall not covet your neighbor’s goods.’

- Have I envied anything good that has come to others?
- Have I been jealous of another's good fortune?
- Have I wished for anything that was another's?
- Have I damaged or destroyed the property of others?
- Have I wished for things God has not given me, or been discontented with my lot?
- Have I been stingy?
- Have I held back anything due another?
- Have I hoped for the downfall of anyone so that I might gain by it?
- Have I failed to be gracious and generous to anyone?
- Have I expected God to give me that which I would refuse one of my fellow men?
- Have I been too attached to my own opinions?
- Have I been too attached to my own life?