



**St. Aloysius Religious Education
5th and 6th grade**

A good Catholic examination of conscience can be a great help in making a new start in the life of faith. We use an examination of conscience to help call to mind our sins and failings during a period of quiet reflection before approaching the priest in Confession.

It's important for a good Catholic examination of conscience to be thorough. This guide will help you learn about things that you may not be aware of. It's also a chance to *develop* your conscience.

“Holy Spirit, please help me to remember my sins. Please give me the honesty I need to reflect on my thoughts, my words and my actions, and to confess them and trust in Your mercy. Amen”

Examination of Conscience using the Ten Commandments:

I I am the Lord Your GOD. You shall not have strange gods before me.

This commandment forbids us to worship anyone or anything besides the One, True God—the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. We worship Him by acts of faith, hope and love; by prayer and making sacrifices.

- Have I truly loved God above all else, or have I sometimes given greater importance to things of the world: money, looks, clothes, athletics, popularity or desires?
- Do I remember to pray often, or do I pray mostly when I want something?
- Do I make an effort to know, love and serve God?
- Do I Thank God for his many gifts to me?
- Do I let someone or something influence my choices more than God?

II You shall not take the name of the Lord God in vain.

This commandment forbids us to misuse God's name (God, Jesus, Christ, Lord) in cursing or swearing. We must respect this Holy Name at all times and the names of His holy ones too. It reminds us that we must be pure in our words.

- Have I shown disrespect for God's name by misusing it out of frustration or anger? Have I used curse words?
- Do I continue to learn about God by paying attention in Church, Religious Education Class, Youth Ministry, and paying attention to my Catholic beliefs?
- Behaved disrespectfully in Church?
- Blamed God for my failings?
- Have I watched TV shows or movies, or listened to music that disrespects God, the saints, or what is holy?

III Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

This commandment asks us to attend Holy Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation. It reminds us that any unnecessary work should be avoided on these days. It reminds us too that we should give our bodies the rest they need and to spend quality time with family.

- Do I complain about going to Mass or try to avoid it?
- Do I dedicate myself to prayer prior to Mass?
- Do I participate in the liturgy by praying and singing?
- Have I tried to observe Sundays as family time and a day of rest?
- Set time aside each day for personal prayer to God?

IV Honor your Father and Mother.

This commandment asks us to respect and show loving obedience to our parents and also to honor others in authority over us.

- Am I loving, respectful, and obedient to my parents?
- Do I help bring peace and happiness to my family, or am I disrespectful of others and a source of hurt?
- Do I appreciate the many sacrifices my parents make for me? Do I say THANK YOU and I LOVE YOU often enough?
- Do I complain or speak badly about my parents with my friends?

V You shall not kill.

This commandment forbids not just actual murder (homicide, suicide, euthanasia, abortion), but even those actions that are dangerous to the life of the body and the life of the soul.

- Have I hated anyone or wished evil on someone? Sought revenge or hoped something bad would happen to someone? Delighted to see someone else get hurt or suffer?
- Do I strive to forgive those who hurt me, or do I hold on to resentment and desire for revenge?
- Do I care about justice and the lives of others?
- Been prejudiced, or unjustly discriminated against others because of their race, color, nationality, sex or religion?

- Purposely provoked another by teasing or nagging? Been mean to, quarreled with, or willfully hurt someone?
- Treated animals cruelly, causing them to suffer or die needlessly?
- Belittled others in my speech?
- Do I take care of my body by eating well and exercising?

VI You shall not commit adultery.

This commandment deals with misusing the gift of human sexuality.

- Do I respect my body by dressing modestly, and do I respect the bodies of others by avoiding tempting or lustful thoughts?
- Do I profane the gift of sex by using crude language and jokes?

VII You shall not steal.

This commandment forbids taking what does not belong to us; avoid even the desire to take things.

- Have I stolen at school, by copying, sharing answers or stealing grades by cheating?
- Do I respect the property of others? Have I stolen, damaged or vandalized the property of others? Do I respect the things I have been given?
- Do I seek to share what I have with the poor?

VIII You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

This commandment tells us always to be honest and truthful; it forbids us to say anything that damages the good reputation of others.

- Have I lied?
- Have I gossiped? Do I talk about others behind their back?
- Am I sincere with others?
- Am I critical, negative or uncharitable in my thoughts of others?
- Do I reveal secrets that should be kept confidential?
- Failed to make reparation for a lie I told, or for harm done to a person's reputation?
- Failed to speak out in defense of the Catholic Faith, the Church, or of another person?
- Betrayed another's confidence through speech?

IX You shall not covet your neighbor's wife (or husband).

X You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

These commandments teach us to respect the commitment of others, to respect the rights and property of others. They forbid us to take what does not belong to us and avoid even the desire to take things.

- Do I respect the commitments of others and help them to remain faithful to their promises?
- Am I jealous of what other people have?
- Do I envy the families or possessions of others?
- Am I greedy or selfish?
- Do I treat or judge others based on their material possessions, talents and gifts, or even physical appearance?
- Practiced the works of mercy?
- Deliberately defaced, destroyed or lost another's property?

The second step to a good Confession:

1. Enter the confessional and sit down across from the priest (if going face-to-face) or kneel down in front of the screen (if going anonymous)
2. Make the Sign of The Cross (“in the name of The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit”) saying **“Bless me Father for I have sinned. It has been _____ since my last confession. These are my sins.”**
3. Confess (tell) your sins to the priest. *Start with the one(s) that is/are the most difficult to say.* Conclude by saying, **“ I am sorry for these and all the sins of my past.”**
4. Listen to the priest ... *he will give you some advice on how you can be a better Catholic and open your heart to God and be the person He wants you to be.*
5. The priest will assign you a penance -- *it may be a prayer or some kind of action that will help you to be more thoughtful about areas of sinfulness or failing.*
6. The priest will invite you to tell God you are sorry for your sins by saying the Act of 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.”**)
7. The priest will then give you absolution and offer you Gods forgiveness (“ I absolve you of your sins in the name of The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit.”). Respond **“Amen.”** Bless yourself with the Sign of The Cross (“in the name of The Father, The Son and The Holy Spirit.”) Say **“Thank You”** to the priest.
8. Leave the confessional, if necessary go to the Altar and say your assigned penance... feeling uplifted and energized by God’s mercy and love!