

Daily Conscience Examination

God longs for us to experience life abundantly, joyfully. He knows this will happen when we live our lives lovingly.

We are human. We don't always meet the challenge to live lovingly.

In what ways am I struggling to love? If I share these ways in the sacrament of Reconciliation, I am given the grace to be more loving, and to thus have life more abundantly, joyfully.

Can I give, say, 10 minutes of my day to God in prayer? Can I come to him in the busyness of life, saying "I come here because amidst all this, I am Yours"? Can we ask that "amidst all this," He helps us reflect the fact that we are His?

In this 10 (or however many) minutes, we should review our day. What people traveled through our life today? In what ways did we respond lovingly? In what ways did we fail to respond lovingly? Jot these down. Thank God for the graces. Ask God for help with the struggles.

Review today's jottings. Can we see His love, despite our various failures? His love never stops. He is calling us.

When it comes time for Reconciliation, review everything we have written for this period since last Reconciliation. His love never stops. What do I need to bring to Reconciliation, that I might receive the grace to better reflect that love to the world, and to experience abundant joy?

The tools below are idea starters for ways we might have been unloving in a day. These tools need not be used. Or they need not be used every day. They are idea starters. They are not *the* right tools nor *the only* tools. They are simply intended to help in this dialogue that says to God, "I want to be what you want me to be. I want to love. I want to know the joy of love."

A Tool to Help Children

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed by Thy name.

How often do I think about God?

How often do I say my prayers?

Do I pay attention and participate at Mass?

Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Am I kind to others?

Do I do what Jesus wants me to do?

Do I share with others?

Am I helpful to my family and neighbors?

Do I show respect to my teachers and classmates?

Give us this day our daily bread.

Do I remember to say thank you?

Am I sometimes greedy?

Do I appreciate the good things I have in my life?

Do I think of ways to help those who have no food, clothes, shelter or money? Do I take things that don't belong to me?

Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.

Do I say I'm sorry when I have been wrong?

Do I forgive and forget when someone does something bad to me?

Do I help solve problems between my friends or do I cause more trouble? Do I say bad things about people who have hurt me?

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

Do I play fairly in sports and games?

Do I cheat in school?

Do I tell the truth?

Do I let other kids tempt me to do things I know I shouldn't do? Do I tempt others?

Taken from *Seven Frequently Asked Questions About Children and the Sacrament of Reconciliation*, written for the Archdiocese of Milwaukee by Kathleen D. Beuscher, 2010

1.1 A Tool to Help Teens and Adults

I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.

- Did I fail to give God time in daily prayer?
- Have I been thankful for the good things that God has put in my life?
- Have I asked God for help with the things with which I struggle?
- Have I asked God for help with the things I need?
- Have I put my trust in superstitions or ways of the world?
- Have I offered God any doubts about faith, asking Him to help me understand as he wants me to?

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

- Have I been careful to use God's name only in prayer or to give Him glory?
- When I am angry with God, do I bring that anger to Him in a respectful way, or do I gossip to others about Him?
- Do I curse?
- Have I told jokes that do not give glory to God?

3. Remember to keep holy the Lord's Day.

- Have I deliberately missed Mass on Sundays or Holy Days of Obligation?
- Did I leave Mass early without a good reason?
- Have I tried to observe Sunday as a family day and a day of rest? □ Do I do needless work on Sunday?

4. ***Honor your father and your mother.***

- Have I neglected my duties to my family?
- Have I given my family good spiritual example?
- Do I try to bring peace into my home life?
- Do I respect and give care to my aged and infirm relatives?

5. ***You shall not kill.***

- When I have feelings of anger or jealousy, do I turn to prayer for help, or do I let them drive my behavior?
- When I have hatred in my heart, do I ask God for healing, or do I harbor that hatred?
- Have I had or in any way permitted or encouraged abortion?
- Have I thought about suicide, without fleeing to God and others for help?
- Have I physically harmed anyone?
- Have I abused alcohol or drugs?
- Have I partaken in or supported in any way euthanasia, artificial birth control, or sterilization? If I don't understand these Church teachings, have I shared my struggles with God in prayer, and talked with my pastor?

6. ***You shall not commit adultery.***

- Have I had sexual intimacy outside the bounds of marriage?
- Did I consent to impure glances?
- Was I modest in dress or behavior?
- Did I look at pornography, impure books, magazines, or videos?
- Am I guilty of impurity with self, in the form of masturbation?
- Do I avoid laziness, gluttony, and idleness?

7. ***You shall not steal.***

- Have I stolen what is not mine?
- Have I returned or made restitution for what I have stolen?
- Have I cheated to gain an advantage or to harm others?
- Do I waste time at work, school, and home?
- Have I vandalized (stealing nature's beauty)?
- Have I cheated anyone out of what is justly theirs?

8. ***You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.***

- Have I lied? Have I gossiped?
- Do I speak badly of others behind their back?
- Am I sincere in my dealings with others?
- If I am tempted with critical, negative or uncharitable thoughts of others, do I turn to God with these, or do I let them drive my behavior?
- Do I keep secret what should be kept confidential?
- Have I injured the reputation of others by slanders?

9. *You shall not desire your neighbor's wife.*

- Have I consented to impure thoughts, encouraging them by stares, curiosity, imagining, or inappropriate discussion with others?
- Do I see other people as objects to fulfill my needs?
- When temptation comes to me, as smoke coming in a window at my home, do I close the window?

10. *You shall not desire your neighbor's goods.*

- When I am tempted with jealousy, do I seek from God His unique purpose for me?
- Am I thankful for the gifts (material gifts, time, talent) God has provided to me?
- Do I pray for those with less goods than I?
- Am I critical and uncharitable of others in thought, speech or action?
- Do I pray for the grace to cherish the heavenly above the earthly?

This tool draws from various sources.

Reconciliation Opportunities in Rapid City

1.2 Scheduled Reconciliation Times in Local Parishes

Blessed Sacrament Church

<http://blessedsacramentchurch.org/>

Cathedral of Our Lady of Perpetual Help

<https://www.cathedralolph.org/>

St. Therese the Little Flower

<http://www.sainttheresechurch.org/>

Our Lady of the Black Hills (Piedmont)

<http://www.olbh.org/>

1.3 Reconciliation by Appointment

Priests are also happy to meet with you for Reconciliation via private appointment.

And, something to consider is asking a priest to be an advisor, meeting with him periodically for spiritual advice and Reconciliation. An analogy here are the coaches of, say, Olympic athletes. It is wise to have a physical coach if you want to be as good as you can be at an athletic event. This also holds true if you want to be all you can be spiritually.