

An Examination of Conscience based on the Seven Deadly Sins

by Fr. Dylan James, 14-12-13

5 STEPS FOR A GOOD CONFESSION

1. Examine your conscience -recall the sins that you have committed since your last good confession.
2. Be sincerely sorry for your sins.
3. Confess your sins to the priest.
4. Make certain that you confess all your mortal sins and the number of them.
5. After confession, do the penance the priest gives to you.

ACT OF CONTRITION

O my God, I am heartily sorry for having offended You, and I detest all my sins because I dread the loss of Heaven and the pains of Hell, but most of all because they offend You, my God, Who are all good and deserving of all my love. I firmly resolve, with the help of Your grace, to confess my sins, to do penance, and to amend my life. Amen.

Sins of omission: "In what I have done, and in what I have failed to do"-sins of omission may be more serious than sins of commission

- e.g. Have I omitted to say my prayers?
Have I omitted to look for and respond to the needs of family?

Thought: "In thought, word, and deed"

- e.g. Even if I did not gossip in word, did I judge someone in my thoughts?

Each area of my life should be considered:

- e.g. My family, my friends, my work, my prayer, those I work and live with etc.

Anagram: PLACES-G (the seven deadly sins):

Pride, Lust, Anger, Covetousness, Envy, Sloth, Gluttony

Pride (ST II-II q162)

Pride is the mother of all sin

- Have I refused to admit my own weaknesses?
Have I dwelt on the failings of others?
Have I **judged** others, in my thoughts or words?
Have I ranked myself better than others?
Have I borne **hatred** for another?
Have I refused to learn from others?
Have I been **stubborn**? Refused to admit I was wrong? Refused to accept that another person had a better idea?
Have I been **arrogant**?

Have I held others in contempt?

Pusillanimity—the opposite of pride:

- Have I neglected to use the talents that God has given me?

Vanity (ST II-II q132)

Vanity is excessive concern about what others think of me—not just what they think of my appearance

Have I been overly concerned about what others think of me? Have I allowed this to motivate my actions?

Have I lied or exaggerated to make myself look good?

Have I wasted undue time and money on clothes and appearance?

Have I been content with my lowly position, or have I resented the role that Christ asks of me?

Lust (ST II-II q.153; CCC 2351)

Lust is disordered desire for sexual pleasure, isolated from its procreative and unitive purpose (CCC 2351).

Custody of the Eyes: "Whoever looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Mt 5:28)

Have I viewed other people as mere sexual objects rather than as persons to be loved?

Pornography: On internet? or TV?

Impure Thoughts:

Have I entertained impure thoughts?

Impure Acts:

Alone, or with another?

Anger/Wrath (ST II-II q158)

Anger is undue desire for vengeance—undue in cause or in amount.

Have I harboured resentment, grudges, and hatred in my thoughts?

Have I nurtured imaginary angry conversations?

Have I been slow to forgive?

Have I lost my temper?

Impatience:

How have I carried my cross?

Have I been impatient with people, family, events, sufferings, sicknesses?

Covetousness/Avarice (ST II-II q118)

Avarice is the excessive love of possessing things

Have I been overly concerned about my own comfort and well-being?

Have I been resentful of my lack of money?

Have I been generous in giving? Have I given with a cheerful heart?