



Review of Life

Pick a period of time to review. It should be at least the time since your last confession.

Think of the habits of your life during that time. How did you work? What did you do for fun? What responsibilities did you have?

Think of the relationships you had during that time. Which ones were the most significant? Did any change??

Think of any significant events, happy or sad, that occurred to you during this time..

Now ask yourself these questions:

What sinful patterns, whether of commission or omission, crept into the patterns of my life?

What sinful patterns crept into my relationships? Did the changes come because of sin?

Did the events reveal and sin, or cause sin to be hidden??

The Seven Deadly Sins

The seven deadly sins are not sins *per se*, but tendencies to sin. Reflecting on these “areas of sin” often helps us to see where we have failed in more specific ways.

Pride : sins against truth, sins of vanity, sins of arrogance.

Envy: pain in the heart at the good things of another.

Lust : sins against god’s gift of sexuality.

Avarice : sins regarding money and possessions..

Wrath: sins of physical or emotional violence; sins of hate.

Gluttony: sins of things we consume.

Sloth: sins of failing in our responsibilities, of not doing our fair share.

“Somebody Else’s Shoes”

So you can’t think of anything to confess? Here’s a little trick...

Make a list of your primary relationships: spouse, family members, co-workers, and so on.

Now imagine each of those persons being asked to give suggestions as to what you should bring to confession. Would they have any suggestions? What would they be?

Now bring those suggestions to confession.



Fraternal Correction

Sometimes the reason it is hard to think of something to confess is because we are too close to it, so it hides just underneath our nose.

In such cases what can help is to ask someone we trust to journey with us as we engage in an examination of conscience. Doing such an examination with the help of another, especially someone who knows us well, keeps us honest with ourselves. We discover quickly where we feel ashamed, where we would rather some truth not be told. These are good indicators of things to bring to confession.

Priests often have people come to confession who know they need to be there but have trouble thinking of what to confess. Do not be ashamed to ask the priest to help you examine your conscience, even during the sacrament itself.



The Ten Commandments



1. I am the lord your god; you shall not have strange gods before me.
2. You shall not take the name of the lord your god in vain.
3. Remember to keep holy the lord's day.
4. Honour your father and mother.
5. You shall not kill.
6. You shall not commit adultery.
7. You shall not steal.
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour.
9. You shall not covet your neighbour's spouse.
10. You shall not covet your neighbour's goods.

Prayer for Conviction



O HOLY SPIRIT, I CONFESS TO YOU THAT I AM A SINNER.

OFTEN ENOUGH, I MAKE EXCUSES FOR MY SIN. I TELL MYSELF I AM "NOT THAT BAD", OR THAT MY SIN WAS UNAVOIDABLE OR EVEN NECESSARY AT THE TIME. BUT THESE SINS OFFEND GOD JUST THE SAME, AND ALL SIN IS UGLY.

HOLY SPIRIT, LEAD ME AWAY FROM HARDNESS OF HEART.

IF I HAVE FORGOTTEN MY SIN, HELP ME TO REMEMBER.

IF I HAVE EXCUSED IT, GRANT ME THE GRACE OF CONVICTION.

IF I AM TOO ASHAMED TO ADMIT IT, GRANT ME THE COURAGE TO CONFESS.

AND IF I DO NOT WANT TO LET GO OF IT AND CHANGE MY LIFE, GRANT ME REPENTANCE.

O HOLY SPIRIT, REVEAL MY SIN TO ME, THAT I MAY BRING IT TO JESUS THROUGH THE SACRAMENT OF RECONCILIATION. AMEN.