

What is Sin?

Unfortunately, in society today, many people have lost the understanding of sin. Our Holy Father has stated that "it happens not infrequently in history, for more or less lengthy periods of time and under the influence of many different factors, that the moral conscience of many people becomes seriously clouded. . . . Too many signs indicate that such an eclipse exists in our time" *Reconciliation and Penance*, 18). In our day, many people have lost the sense of sin and feel that they can do whatever they wish without considering or fearing the consequences.

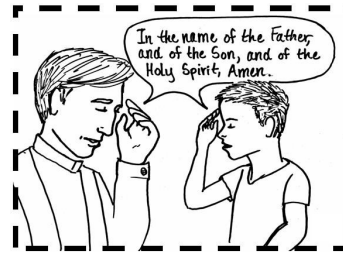
For such people, the term "sin" has no meaning. Yet we know that sin is a terrible evil which all of us must come to understand and with which all of us must struggle. According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, sin "is an offense against God as well as a fault against reason, truth and right conscience. Sin is a deliberate thought, word, deed, or omission contrary to the eternal law of God" (1849, 1853). In other words, sin is willfully rejecting good and choosing evil. In judging the degree of sin, it is customary to distinguish between mortal and venial sins. "Mortal sin," the *Catechism* teaches, "destroys charity in the heart of man by a grave violation of God's law . . . Venial sin allows charity to subsist, even though it offends and wounds it" (1855).



In the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Forgive me, Father, for I have sinned.
It has been (amount of time)
since my last confession.

State your sins. Use your notes on the other side of this brochure as a guide if you want.



Act of Contrition

O my God, I am heartily sorry for my sins with all my heart, and I detest them. 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. Amen.



Examination of Conscience

Helping to prepare you for a good Confession

"O God, be merciful to me, a sinner."

~Luke 18:13

FIRST COMMANDMENT

"I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before Me." (Ex 20:2,3)

- Did I doubt or deny that God exists?
- Did I refuse to believe what God has revealed to us?
- Did I believe in fortune telling, horoscopes, dreams, the occult, good-luck charms, tarot cards, palmistry, Ouija boards, séances, reincarnation?
- Did I deny that I was Catholic?
- Did I leave the Catholic Faith?
- Did I give time to God each day in prayer?
- Did I love God with my whole heart?
- Did I despair of or presume on God's mercy?
- Did I have false gods in my life that I gave greater attention to than God, like money, profession, drugs, TV, fame, pleasure, property, etc.?

SECOND COMMANDMENT

"You shall not take the Name of the Lord your God in vain." (Ex 20:7)

- Did I blaspheme or insult God?
- Did I take God's name carelessly or uselessly?
- Did I curse, or break an oath or vow?
- Did I get angry with God?

THIRD COMMANDMENT

"Remember that you keep holy the Sabbath Day." (Ex 20:8)

- Did I miss Mass Sunday or a Holy Day of Obligation through my own fault?
- Did I come to Mass on time? Leave early?
- Did I do work on Sunday that was not necessary?
- Did I set aside Sunday as a day of rest and a family day?
- Did I show reverence in the presence of Jesus in the Most Blessed Sacrament?

FOURTH COMMANDMENT

"Honor your father and your mother." (Ex 20:12)

- Did I disobey or disrespect my parents or legitimate superiors?
- Did I neglect my duties to my husband, wife, children or parents?

- Did I neglect to give good religious example to my family?
- Did I fail to actively take an interest in the religious education and formation?
- Did I fail to educate myself on the true teachings of the Church?
- Did I give scandal by what I said or did?
- Did I cause anyone to leave the faith?
- Did I cause tension and fights in my family?
- Did I care for my aged and sick relatives?
- Did I give a full day's work for a full day's pay?

FIFTH COMMANDMENT

"You shall not kill." (Ex 20:13)

- Did I kill or physically injure anyone?
- Did I have an abortion, or advise someone else to have an abortion?
- Did I use or cause my significant other to use birth control pills?
- Did I attempt suicide?
- Did I take approve of "mercy killing" (euthanasia)?
- Did I get angry, impatient, envious, unkind, proud, revengeful, jealous, hateful toward another, lazy?
- Did I give bad example by drug abuse, drinking alcohol to excess, fighting, quarreling?

SIXTH COMMANDMENT

"You shall not commit adultery." (Ex 20:14) "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife." (Ex 20:17)

- Did I willfully entertain impure thoughts or desires?
- Did I use impure or suggestive words? Tell impure stories? Listen to them?
- Did I deliberately look at impure TV, videos, plays, pictures or movies? Or deliberately read impure materials?
- Did I commit impure acts by myself (masturbation)?
- Did I commit impure acts with another - fornication (premarital sex), adultery (sex with a married person)?
- Did I practice artificial birth control (by pills, device, withdrawal)?
- Did I avoid the occasions of impurity?
- Did I try to control my thoughts?
- Did I engage in homosexual activity?
- Did I respect all members of the opposite sex, or have I thought of other people as objects?

SEVENTH & TENTH COMMANDMENTS

"You shall not steal." (Ex 20:15) "You shall not covet your neighbor's goods." (Ex 20:17)

- Did I steal, cheat, help or encourage others to steal or keep stolen goods? Have I made restitution for stolen goods?
- Did I fulfill my contracts; give or accept bribes; pay my bills; rashly gamble or speculate; deprive my family of the necessities of life?
- Did I waste time at work, school or at home?
- Did I envy other people's families or possessions?
- Did I make material possessions the purpose of my life?

EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor." (Ex 20:16)

- Did I lie?
- Did I deliberately deceive others, or injure others by lies?
- Did I commit perjury?
- Did I gossip or reveal others' faults or sins?
- Did I fail to keep secret what should be confidential?

OTHER SINS

- Did I fast on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday?
- Did I eat meat on the Fridays of Lent or Ash Wednesday?
- Did I fail to receive Holy Communion during Eastertime?
- Did I go to Holy Communion in a state of mortal sin? Without fasting (water and medicine permitted) for one hour from food and drink?
- Did I make a bad confession?
- Did I fail to contribute to the support of the Church?
- List anything else you would like to confess here.