

## Questions for Consideration before Making Confession

**Pride:** How have I been prideful? Have I sometimes thought of myself better than other people? Have I gossiped about or slandered or uttered (unnecessary) truths about any of my neighbors? Have I mocked or made fun of anybody else? Have I tried to control and manipulate others to get what I want? How have I been self-willed?

**Anger:** Have I given into anger? Have I been easily irritated? Have I lacked self-control in my life? Have I made the effort to be gentle and peaceful, even when I have had legitimate concerns to express? Have I harbored hatred or resentment against anybody else?

**Lust:** Have I been lustful? Have I overvalued or sought out physical pleasure in inappropriate ways? Have I made the effort to live a pure and holy life? Have I objectified anybody else for my own pleasure?

**Envy:** Have I been envious of others? Have I coveted other people's happiness and blessings or things? Have I been resentful and grieved when I see the blessings others enjoy (or have I, rather, rejoiced with them?) Have I stolen or taken anything from anybody else?

**Gluttony:** Have I been gluttonous? Have I eaten too much? Have I indulged in too much to drink? Have I made an effort to be temperate with food and drink, using the traditional fasting disciplines of the Church as guidelines with eating and drinking? Have I overused or inappropriately used any other substances to affect my mood? (Have I "self-medicated?")

**Avarice:** Have I fallen into the sin of avarice (greed?) Have I been greedy with my things or money? Have I valued money and other earthly possessions beyond their true worth? Have I used my money and other possessions to help others or only to serve my own needs?

**Sloth:** Have I been slothful or lazy? Have I given into laziness and failed, therefore, to love God through diligent service to others? Have I been overly despondent, depressed, despairing? Have I sought help when I need it? In sloth, have I refused opportunities to repent and get up from my "bed of despair?" Have I beaten myself up, indulging self-hatred or self-pity? Have I injured myself? Have I attempted to blot out God's likeness in me by thinking myself worthless or beyond hope?

Other questions to consider:

- **Honoring others:** Have I honored the commitments I have made? To my friends or spouse? Have I honored my parents? Have I shown godly respect for my employer? Have I been faithful in my relationships? Have I given thanks regularly to God for the people in my life?
- **Prayer:** Have I prayed for those for whom I have pledged to pray? Have I sought opportunities to pray? Have I prayed regularly? When I have prayed, do I connect, or are my prayers too often mechanical? Have I rushed through my prayers, Scripture readings, and spiritual readings, or been otherwise inattentive?
- **Prioritizing God:** Have I sought the will of God in all things? Or have I rebelled against what I know to be God's will, and the Christian life? Have I tried to be obedient, constantly surrendering my life to God? Have I tried to be conscious of God's Presence, or not? Have I tried to sanctify my life? Or have I given in to temptation easily?
- **Valuing the Church & Sacraments:** Have I gone to Church, to Confession, and to Communion regularly? Have I at least made real efforts to keep the Fasts and the Feasts of the Church, both by attending divine service and by appropriate observance in my home? Have I complained about trying to live as a Christian?
- Have I **justified my sins** in any way, setting myself up as my own arbiter or own god?
- Finally, is there **one besetting sin** (tendency, predisposition, propensity, failing, lack, trespass, indulgence, excess, immoderation, transgression, weakness, flaw, fault, limitation, etc.) that especially cripples me in my attempts to be a Christian? Is there any virtue that I might develop in the coming days to help me heal from this sin, with the help of God? How might I concretely and meaningfully practice that virtue?

**The Passions (and opposing Virtues):**

Pride (Humility)

*Vainglory (Giving Glory to God)*

Avarice (Generosity)

Lust (Chastity)

Envy (Brotherly Love)

Gluttony (Temperance or Self-Control)

Anger (Meekness)

Sloth or Acedia (Diligence)

**Additional Biblical Preparation Tools for Confession:**

10 Commandments (Exodus 20:2-17)

8 Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12)

I Corinthians 13 (*On Love*)