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# EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

*Approved by Bishop  
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**DIOCESE OF HAMILTON**

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# an examination of conscience

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HELPS US REFLECT ON OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD.

It highlights the good that we do each day and draws attention to the areas in our lives where we reject, through sin, all that God has made us to be.

As you pray an **examination of conscience**, pay close attention to how you are feeling as you reflect.

You may find yourself being encouraged and led to action as God may use this to draw you closer to him.

Here are three examples of an examination of conscience.

Find the one that is most helpful to you.

# option 1

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

**G. P. S. | If we want to draw closer in relationship to God we must first identify our current location.**

**Gratitude. Position. Sorrow.**

## 1. gratitude

Take time to acknowledge the many gifts God has given to you out of love (these may include your talents, your friends and family, the stuff you have).

- Now, take a moment to feel the gratitude for all you have been given.

## 3. sorrow

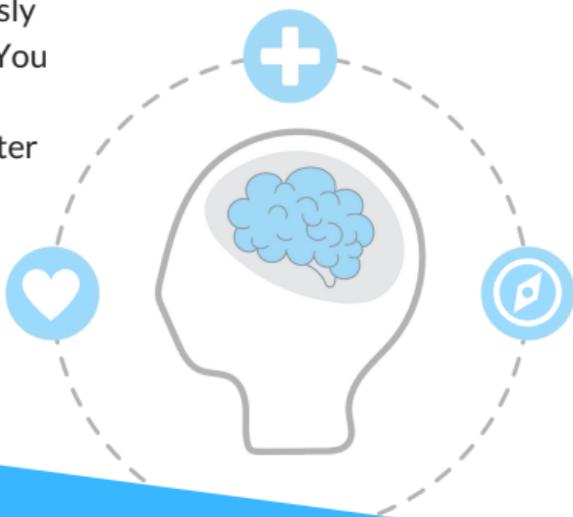
In this moment, courageously bring your failings to God. You may begin to identify ways that you can resolve to better use of your gifts.

- Where you feel sorrow is the beginning of the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

## 2. position

Consider how you have responded to the gifts God has given you. Are there times when you have used them well? Are there other times when you haven't used them for life-giving purposes?

- As you answer these questions, you find your position now in relationship to God.



## option 2

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

**Spend a few moments with each statement;  
there is no rush to get through it.  
If something sticks out, feel free to sit with it in  
prayer for as long as you need.**

**God may be giving you consolation and peace.  
He may be calling you to conversion –  
to make a change in your life.**



**+ In the name of the Father, and of Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit.**

**My God I come before you as your child seeking  
a right relationship with you. Help me to see myself  
as you see me, help me to feel your love.**

**My God, I love you with all my heart, all my strength,  
and my entire mind.**

**I honour you in thought, word, and deed.**

**There is no room in my heart for any other god but you.**

**When I speak your name, it is to honour you.**

**I pray to you often. I pray at home and at school.  
I pray at Mass.**



continued... 

I respect my body and my sexuality as gifts from you.  
I take care of myself in body, mind, and spirit.

**In thankfulness for the great love you have shown me,  
I am inspired to share love with others.**

I consider others before myself.

**I look to help those in need:  
to feed the hungry, clothe the naked,  
shelter the homeless, to welcome the stranger.**

I give freely from all you have given me:  
my time, talents and treasures.

 I try to be content with what I have.

I speak the truth.

**Grant me insight into those parts of my life  
which I have not given to you, and  
call me to change where it is needed.**



**AMEN.**

# option 3

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

## At Mass, the Priest says:

You were sent to heal the contrite of heart.

You came to call sinners.

You are seated at the right hand of the Father to intercede for us.

## And we respond:

Lord, have mercy.

Christ, have mercy.

Lord, have mercy.

Notice that it does not begin with us and all the sins we have committed. It begins with God's goodness and our trust that he is merciful. Then we become aware of how we have missed the mark.

**Remember, Jesus Christ, Son of God, came to save us.** He came so that we could be in relationship with him and to know his Father in heaven as our loving Father. Ask yourself:

### What are you sorry for?

Where has your conscience moved you to feel regret?

### Where have you not followed Christ?

What choices have you made that have damaged your relationship with God and others?

# why go

## TO CONFESSION?

### ■ It makes us feel better.

- It is very healing to know you're forgiven.

### ■ It gives us a fresh start.

- God knows we sometimes miss the mark, fail to be our best selves, and act in selfish ways. This can hurt our relationship with God and others.
- The Sacrament of Reconciliation makes us reconciled to God; it brings us back into right relationship and helps us to be strengthened.

### ■ Look what Jesus did.

- We hear in the Bible how Jesus forgave people's sins. He listened to their stories of hurt; he healed them; he invited them to follow him.
- He gave his apostles the power to forgive the sins of others.
- This forgiving of sins has continued for almost 2,000 years in the Church.

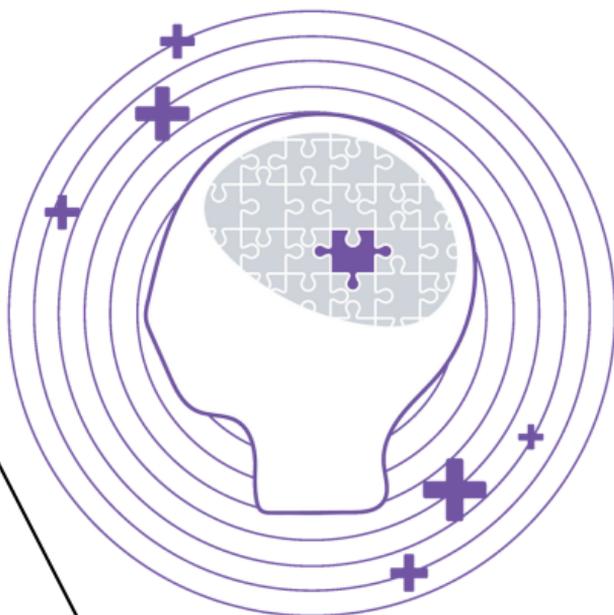
**If your examination of conscience  
has led you to feel sorry for any sins,  
please know that Confession can  
take that sorrow away!**

# the sacrament of reconciliation

( C O N F E S S I O N )

The Church wants you to  
encounter God's mercy  
in this sacrament of healing.

**Remember, when you're ready,  
God is always waiting for you!**



The Priest welcomes you and together you make the Sign of the Cross. + **In the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

You say, **Bless me, Father, for I have sinned.** Say when your last Confession was. Do not worry if it has been a while.

Then, confess your sins. Do not be afraid.  
The priest may talk to you to help you.  
He will give you a penance to perform following your Confession. It may be a prayer or actions or both that will help you to repair your relationships and be strengthened.

You then say an Act of Contrition, to show how sorry you are.

“

Lord God, in your goodness have mercy on me:  
Do not look on my sins, but take away all my guilt.  
Create in me a clean heart, and renew within me an upright spirit.

(from the *Rite of Penance*)

”

Now the priest will speak the words of Absolution.

...may God give you pardon and peace,  
And I absolve you from your sins.  
+ In the name of the Father, and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. You respond: **Amen.**

The priest may say: The Lord has freed you from your sins.  
Go in peace. You respond: **Thanks be to God!**

# common prayers

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## FOR PENANCE

### Our Father, who art in heaven,

hallowed be thy name;  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread;  
and forgive us our trespasses  
as we forgive those who trespass against us;  
and lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

Amen.

### Hail Mary full of grace,

the Lord is with thee.  
Blessed are thou among women  
and blessed is the fruit of thy womb Jesus.  
Holy Mary, Mother of God,  
pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death.

Amen.

### Glory be to the Father

and to the Son  
and to the Holy Spirit.  
As it was in the beginning,  
is now, and ever shall be,  
world without end.

Amen.