

LENTEN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Pope Francis said: "The best way to guard one's heart is with the daily practice of an "examination of conscience," in which one quietly reviews what bad things one has done and what good things one has failed to do for God, one's neighbor and oneself".

He offers these questions as an examination of conscience during the Lenten Season:

- Do I only turn to God when I'm in need?
- Do I take attend Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation?
- Do I begin and end the day with prayer?
- Am I embarrassed to show that I am a Christian?
- Do I rebel against God's plan?
- Am I envious, hot-tempered, biased?
- Am I honest and fair with everyone or do I fuel the "throwaway culture?"
- In my marital and family relations, do I uphold morality as taught in the Gospels?
- Do I honor and respect my parents?
- Have I refused newly conceived life? Have I snuffed out the gift of life? Have I helped do so?
- Do I respect the environment?
- Am I part worldly and part believer?
- Do I overdo it with eating, drinking, smoking and amusements?
- Am I overly concerned about my physical well-being, my possessions?
- How do I use my time? Am I lazy?
- Do I want to be served?
- Do I dream of revenge, hold grudges?
- Am I meek, humble and a builder of peace?

Catholics should go to confession, the pope said, because everyone needs forgiveness for their sins, for the ways "we think and act contrary to the Gospel." "Whoever says he is without sin is a liar or is blind," he wrote.

Confession is meant to be a sincere moment of conversion, an occasion to demonstrate trust in God's willingness to forgive his children and to help them back on the path of following Jesus.

