

# An Examination of Conscience

It is good for us to, from time to time, sit and examine our conscience. Some people do this now and again, others do it for a few minutes each evening, and we are all called to do it before we go to Confession (Reconciliation). There are many sample examinations available online and in print for adults, teens, married people, children, etc. Many examinations are based on the Ten Commandments, which are particularly helpful for grades four and up. The examination below is well-suited to young children. It can be helpful to remind them that sins (bad choices) are different from mistakes or accidents. Also, that God loves us very much no matter what sins we may have committed.

To make an examination:

- Set aside some quiet time for reflection
- Start by praying to the Holy Spirit, asking for help in making a good examination
- Read through the items on this list and reflect on your behavior for each item
- If necessary, take this list or some brief notes to Confession to help you remember things

*In Mark's Gospel, Jesus says, "Let the children come to me and do not prevent them." Through this examination of our conscience, we will prayerfully think about what we have said and done. Then with our confession, we can freely come to Jesus who loves us very much.*

## How am I as a child of God?

- Do I pay attention and participate in Mass?
- Do I try to learn about God from my parents, my teachers, from going to Mass, and reading the Bible?
- Do I pray for myself and for others?
- Do I take opportunities to help others?

## How do I act in my family?

- Have I disobeyed or lied to my parents?
- Do I always try to get my own way?
- Do I help with family chores?
- Have I mistreated my parents and sisters and brothers?
- Am I grateful for my family and all they do for me?

## What kind of friend am I?

- Do I play fairly and allow other children to share my toys and games?
- Do I speak badly or gossip about others?
- Do I defend the people that others talk badly about?
- Am I welcoming of others?

## What kind of student am I?

- Do I try my best?
- Do I cooperate with the teacher and with my classmates?
- Do I do my homework and other schoolwork the best I can? Do I ever cheat or disrupt the class?

## What other faults might I have?

- Do I purposely lie or take things that are not mine?
- Do I make up stories about others to get them in trouble?
- Do I purposely do things that I know my parents would not approve of?
- Do I destroy my own belongings or those of others?
- Do I say bad words?