An Examination of Conscience for Young Adults
Adapted by Fr. Bryan Jerabek, Chaplain of Pope John Paul II Catholic High School
from an examination by Fr. Thomas Weinandy published by the Archdiocese of Boston

Sins can happen in thought, word, or deed. Confessing our sins and receiving absolution (forgiveness) gives us freedom and the grace of God, to help us leave sin behind and live a better life.

Prayer before Confession

Come, Holy Spirit, into my soul and help me know my sins, feel sorry for them, and confess them humbly, so that I may be able to enjoy the Father’s forgiveness. By your light, illumine the darkness of my mind; by your fire, warm my cold heart; by your grace, fill me with your love and power. May I realize the wrong that I have done and the good that I have failed to do. Help me to feel truly sorry for all my sins, strengthen my determination to avoid them in the future; help me to live in your love, your peace, and your joy. AMEN.

Responsibilities to God:
- Have I gone to Mass on Sundays and Holy Days of Obligation? Did I participate in Mass or did I daydream or focus on others?
- Have I prayed every day?
- Have I been rebellious toward God and His commands?
- Have I misused the Lord’s name by swearing and/or cursing?
- Have I been actively trying to overcome my sins and become a better person, with God’s help?
- Have I seriously entertained doubts about my faith?
- Have I participated in anything that is of the occult: ouija boards, fortune tellers, séances, channeling, astrology, palm-reading, psychics?

Responsibilities to others and to myself:
- Have I been rebellious, disobedient, or disrespectful to my parents, teachers, or other authorities?
- Have I lied to my parents or to others? In particular, have I told any big lies, or lies that did harm to others?
- Have I been stubborn or moody?
- Have I talked back to my parents or those in authority?
- Have I gotten angry or nurtured and held grudges and resentments?
- Have I forgiven all who have wronged me or with whom I have had a grudge?
- Have I cultivated hatred?
- Have I engaged in sexual fantasies? Have I tried to control my thoughts?
- Have I looked at others lustfully?
- Have I read pornographic literature or looked at pornographic pictures, shows, or movies?
- Have I committed any impure acts alone, or with others?
- Have I lustfully kissed or sexually touched someone?
- Have I had sexual intercourse?
- Have I gossiped or told lies about others?
- Have I mocked or made fun of others?
- Have I engaged in fights or other acts of violence?
- Have I cheated on schoolwork, games, or in any other way?
- Have I stolen anything? Have I paid it back or returned what was stolen?
- Have I been selfish or spiteful toward others?
- Have I been jealous?
- Have I gotten drunk or taken drugs?
- Have I been patient, kind, gentle, and self-controlled?
- Have I driven aggressively or otherwise tried to intimidate others on the road?
- When my conscience told me to do something good, did I do it or did I ignore it?
- Are there any sins that I deliberately did not confess, or forgot to confess, in previous confessions?

How to Make a Good Confession

Prepare well beforehand by praying with this examination of conscience. Confess your sins honestly to the priest and be sure to ask for help if you need it – he wants to help you. Listen carefully to the penance that you are given and complete it as soon as possible afterwards, so that you don’t forget. Thank God for His mercy and love!