



EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE FOR PRIESTS

1. *"It is for their sakes that I sanctify myself, so that they, too, may be sanctified by the truth"* (Jn 17:19).

Do I really take holiness seriously in my priesthood? Am I convinced that the success of my priestly ministry comes from God and that, with the grace of the Holy Spirit, I have to identify myself with Christ and give my life for the salvation of the world?

2. *"This is my body"* (Mt 26:26).

Is the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass the centre of my spiritual life? Do I prepare well to celebrate Mass? Do I devoutly celebrate the Mass? Do I make an act of thanksgiving after Mass? Is the Mass the centre of my day in giving thanks and praise to God for his blessings? Do I have recourse to his goodness? Do I make reparation for my sins and for those of all mankind?

3. *"Zeal for your house consumes me"* (Jn 2:17).

Do I celebrate the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass according to the rites and rubrics established by the Church? Do I celebrate Holy Mass with a right intention and according to the approved liturgical books? Am I attentive to the sacred species conserved in the tabernacle and careful to renew it periodically? Do I pay due attention to the sacred vessels and ensure their conservation? Do I wear in a dignified fashion all of the sacred vestments prescribed by the Church? Am I conscious that I act *in persona Christi Capitis*?

4. *"Remain in my love"* (Jn 15:9).

Do I enjoy being in the presence of Christ in the Blessed Sacrament, in meditation and in silent adoration? Am I faithful to the daily visit to the Blessed Sacrament? Is the tabernacle my true treasure?

5. *"Explain the parable to us"* (Mt 13:36).

Do I carefully make a daily meditation and try to overcome all distractions that separate me from God? Do I seek illumination from the Lord whom I serve? Do I assiduously meditate on the Sacred Scriptures? Do I carefully say my habitual prayers?

6. *It is necessary to "pray always and without tiring"* (Lk 18:1)

Do I celebrate the Liturgy of the Hours every day in an integral, dignified, attentive and devout manner? Am I faithful to my commitment to Christ in this important aspect of my ministry, praying in the name of the entire Church?

7. *"Come and follow me"* (Mt 19:21).

Is the Lord Jesus Christ the true love of my life? Do I joyfully observe my commitment to love before God in celibate continence? Am I given to impure thoughts, desires or actions? Do I indulge in improper conversation? Have I allowed myself to be in the proximate occasion of sin against chastity? Do I observe custody of the eyes? Have I been prudent in my dealings with the various categories of persons? Does my life represent for the faithful a true witness to the fact that holy purity is possible, fruitful and joyful?

8. *"Who are you?"* (Jn 1:20).

In my daily life, am I weak, lazy or indolent? Do my conversations conform to a sense of the natural and supernatural that a priest should have? Am I careful to ensure that there are no elements of vanity or superficiality in my life? Are all my actions consistent with my priestly state?

9. *"The Son of Man has nowhere to lay his head"* (Mt. 8:20).

Do I love Christian poverty? Does my heart belong to God? Am I spiritually detached from everything else? Am I prepared to make sacrifices to better serve God? Am I prepared to give up my comforts, personal plans, and legitimate contacts, for God? Do I possess superfluous things? Do I make unnecessary expenditure or am I taken over by consumerism? Do I use my free time so as to be close to God remembering that I am always a priest – even at these times of rest or vacation?

10. *"You have hidden these things from the wise and learned and revealed them to mere children"* (Mt 11:25).

Am I guilty of the sins of pride: spiritual difficulties, susceptibility, irritation, unwillingness to forgive, tendencies to despondency, etc.? Do I ask God to give me the virtue of humility?

11. *“And there flowed out blood and water” (Jn 19:34).*

Am I convinced that when I act “in the person of Christ” I am directly involved with the same Body of Christ, the Church? Can I sincerely say that I love the Church? Can I sincerely say that I strive with joy for her growth? Am I concerned for her interests, those of all her members and for the whole human race?

12. *“You are Peter” (Mt 16:18).*

Nihil sine Episcopo – nothing without the Bishop – was a saying of St Ignatius of Antioch. Are these words at the root of my ministry? Do I receive orders, counsels or correction from my Ordinary with docility? Do I pray often for the Holy Father? Am I in full communion with his teaching and intentions?

13. *“Love one another” (Jn 13:34).*

Have I been charitable in dealing with my brother priests? Does my egoism leave me indifferent to them? Have I criticised my brother priests? Have I supported those who are morally or physically ill? Am I committed to fraternal action so that no one is ever left alone? Do I treat all my brother priests and all of the laity with the charity and patience of Christ?

14. *“I am the way, the truth and the life” (Jn 14:6).*

Is my knowledge of the teaching of the Church as comprehensive as it should be? Do I assimilate and transmit her teachings? Am I conscious that to teach something contrary to the Magisterium, solemn or ordinary, is gravely abusive and causes damage to the faithful?

15. *“Go and sin no more” (Jn 8:11).*

Proclamation of the Word leads the faithful to the Sacraments. Do I regularly go to Confession? Do I frequently go to Confession in accordance with my state of life and because of the sacred things with which I am involved? Do I generously celebrate the Sacrament of Penance? Am I reasonably available to the faithful for spiritual direction and do I set particular times aside for this purpose? Do I carefully prepare to instruct in catechesis? Do I preach with zeal and with the love of God?

16. *“He called those to himself whom he willed and these went with him” (Mk 3:13).*

Am I careful to promote vocations to the priesthood and to the religious life? Do I promote a greater awareness of the universal call to holiness among the faithful? Do I encourage the faithful to pray for vocations and for the sanctification of the clergy?

17. *“The Man came not to be served but to serve” (Mt 20:28).*

Have I sought to devote myself to others and serve them every day according to the demands of the Gospel? Do I give witness to the Lord’s charity by good works? Do I see the presence of Christ in the Cross and do I see in it the triumph of love? Is my daily activity marked by a spirit of service? Do I consider the exercise of authority as a form of service?

18. *“I thirst” (Jn 19:28).*

Have I prayed and generously made sacrifices for the good of the souls entrusted to my care by God? Do I discharge my pastoral duties? Am I solicitous for the Holy Souls?

19. *“Behold your son. Behold your mother” (Jn 19: 26-27).*

Do I entrust myself, full of hope, to the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mother of Priests, through love and to love all the more her son Jesus Christ? Do I practice Marian devotion? Do I say the Rosary every day? Do I have recourse to her maternal intercession in my struggles with the devil, concupiscence, and the world?

20. *“Father, into your hands I commend my spirit” (Lk 23:44).*

Am I solicitous in assisting and in administering the sacraments to the dying? In my personal meditation, in catechesis and in my ordinary preaching, do I give consideration to the Church’s teaching on the Last Things? Do I ask for the grace of perseverance? Do I ask the faithful to do likewise? Do I make frequent and devout suffrage for the souls of the faithful departed?