

AN EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE

Reflecting on Christ's example of Love on the Cross

By Father Dylan James, with modifications

"The Cross exemplifies every virtue" (St Thomas Aquinas)

How do our lives compare with what Christ has shown us?

Christ loved us on the Cross: "Greater love than this has no one than to lay down his life for his friends" (Jn 15:13)

How have I fallen short in responding to His love?

Christ put our needs before His own, that we might be saved

"Each of you must think of others' needs before your own" (Phil 2:4)

Have I been attentive in responding to the needs of my family and of others?

Have I been generous in giving to others and prompt in helping those in need?

Have I used people to my own advantage?

How has my conversation been self-centered? Has my language or humor been insensitive in any way?

My Family:

How does my conduct toward my family compare to Christ's example of self-sacrificial love?

How have I been more focused on myself than on the needs of others?

How have I spent time with my family? Have I manifested concern for them? Have I been forgiving of them?

Have I caused scandal through a bad or lazy example?

Punctuality and Discipline:

Have I wasted other people's time by being late? Have I fulfilled my commitments punctually, as Christ the Worker would?

Christ forgave His murderers, even as He hung on the Cross, saying, "Father, forgive them" (Lk 23:34)

Have I at least desired to forgive others when I have been wronged, inspired by Christ's forgiving love on the Cross?

Have I been slow to forgive others or harbored resentment, grudges, and hatred in my thoughts?

Have I nurtured imaginary angry conversations or borne hatred for another? Have I lost my temper?

Gossip:

How has my thought toward neighbor reflected Christ's love for them?

Have I refrained from judging others uncharitably?

Have I damaged the reputation of another person by my thoughts, words, or actions?

Have I repeated accusations that might not be true? Have I exaggerated?

Have I failed to defend the reputation of others? Have I failed to keep secrets? Have I lied or exaggerated the truth?

Christ did the will of the Father, saying, "Not my will by Yours be done" (Lk 22:42)

Have I sought God and His will above all else, or have I put other priorities ahead of him? (e.g. seeking control in relationships, friendships, ambition, ease, pleasure)

Have I made created things idols, by failing to go beyond them and recognizing God, our ultimate end?

Have I endangered my faith/piety by associating with people who do not edify or through unedifying reading or entertainment?

Christ was patient on the Cross, bearing it for our sakes

Christ exhorts us to take up our cross in following after Him: How have I carried my cross out of love for Him?

Have I been willing to suffer out of love, in serving others?

Have I grumbled or complained? C.f. "Do everything without grumbling or arguing" (Phil 2:14)

Have I been impatient with people, family, events, sufferings, sicknesses?

Christ trusted in the Father, even as He died on the Cross, saying, "Father, into Your hands I commend my spirit" (Lk 23:46)

Have I had child-like trust in God, especially in times of difficulty, just as Jesus perseveringly trusted in the Father?

Have I blamed Him for my problems?



Christ “despised earthly riches”, becoming “poor for our sake” (2 Cor 8:9)

Do I value Christ & Him Crucified as my greatest treasure?

Have I valued money and riches too highly? Have I been resentful of my lack of money?

Have I been overly concerned about my own comfort and well-being?

Have I cheated, stolen, or failed to pay my bills on time? Have I wasted money?

Have I envied or been jealous of the abilities, talents, ideas, appearance, intelligence, clothes, possessions, money, friends, family, of others?

Christ “despised earthly pleasures” that He might give Himself in love for us

Have I sought all my pleasure in God and in the things of God?

Have I been overly attached to pleasures of food or sex?

Have I eaten more than I need? To what extent?

Have I spent excessive money on food?

Have I drank alcohol excessively? Have driven after drinking?

Have I eaten greedily and with little consideration for those at table with me? Have I given money to help the hungry?

Have I regularly practiced fasting and self-denial, especially on Fridays? Have I abstained from meat on Lenten Fridays?

Have I demonstrated love for the Eucharistic Jesus by keeping an hour fast before receiving Holy Communion at Mass?

Christ bears our shame by hanging naked on the Cross

Have I viewed other people as mere sexual objects rather than as persons to be loved?

Pornography: On internet? or TV? Have I read immoral books, or watched immoral movies?

Have I entertained impure thoughts? Impure Acts: Alone, or with another?

Christ prayed, even as He hung on the Cross

Have I refused to foster a continuous love-relationship with Him by neglecting or not prioritizing daily prayer?

Have I entertained willful distractions at prayer? Have I desired to pray?

Do I value God’s presence of sanctifying grace in my soul as the highest priority?

Have I demonstrated love & gratitude by attending Mass every Sunday and Holy Day? Am I aware that missing these

Masses due to negligence or without a very good reason is a serious sin?

Have I ever knowingly received Holy Communion while in a state of serious sin, committing sacrilege? Have I neglected to seek Confession while being in a state of serious sin?

Have I done unnecessary servile work on a Sunday, or bought or sold things on a Sunday?

Have I made a prayerful preparation before Mass and spent time in thanksgiving after receiving Jesus in the Eucharist?

Have I taken the Lord’s name in vain or used other foul language?

Christ allowed Himself to be mocked by the soldiers, spat upon, and publically striped of his clothes

Do I find all my affirmation in God’s unconditional Love for me as a precious and beloved child of His?

Have I been overly concerned about what others think of me? Have I allowed this to motivate my actions?

Have I lied or exaggerated to make myself look good? Have I wasted undue time and money on clothes and appearance?

“Christ was humbler yet, even to accepting death on a cross”(Phil 2:8)

Have I been content with my lowly position, or have I resented the role that Christ asks of me?

Have I refused to admit my own weaknesses?

Have I dwelt on the failings of others?

Have I prided myself in being better than others? Have I refused to learn from others?

Do I despise others of different race, class or culture?

Have I been stubborn or arrogant? Refused to admit I was wrong? Refused to accept that another person had a better idea?

Have I held others in contempt?

Have I neglected to use the talents that God has given me?

Christ endured all things upon the Cross,

Am I aware that all that I have received is a pure gift from God and that I’m also called to be a good steward of His gifts?

Have I persevered in the work God asks of me?

Have I made good use of my time, or have I wasted time needlessly? E.g. internet or forms of entertainment?

Have I made time for and lived recreation well in the manner in which God wills to rejuvenate me mentally, emotionally, physically?

Have I gone to sleep on time, so I that am capable in fulfilling His Will the following day?