## 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?



"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?

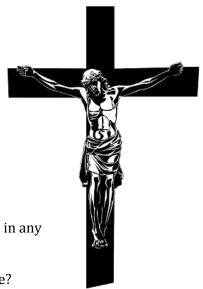
Have I been willing to suffer out of love, in serving others?

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?