

# MISSIONARY DISCIPLESHIP

## EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE (SUMMARY)

Before partaking in the Sacrament of Penance, one should prepare with an examination of conscience, which involves reflecting on times in life when one's thoughts, words or actions somehow lead to sin, or a severing rift in the relationship with God, others and even oneself. An examination of conscience should be done in a prayerful context with thoughtful and honest recognition of past failings or struggles. In an examination of conscience, we recall areas of weakness in our lives and prepare our hearts to encounter and receive God's healing, mercy and renewing grace. In the Missionary Discipleship Examination of Conscience, we assess our Christian lives through the lens of discipleship, specifically considering 9 key themes. In quiet meditation, consider your responses to some of the questions under each theme and open your heart to listen to the Holy Spirit as you prepare to encounter God's mercy in the Sacrament of Penance.

### Encounter/Nurture a relationship with Jesus Christ

- Where do you recognize Jesus in your day-to-day life?
- What gets in the way of nurturing your relationship with Jesus?
- How can you better imitate Christ in your life?

*"Remain in me, as I remain in you. Just as a branch cannot bear fruit on its own unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you remain in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Whoever remains in me and I in him will bear much fruit, because without me you can do nothing." John 15: 4-5*

### Prayer

- What are the challenges to your prayer life?
- How could you better listen to the Holy Spirit as you pray?
- How can you tweak your prayer life to better nurture your relationship with Jesus?

*"Rejoice always. Pray without ceasing." 1 Thessalonians 5: 16-18*

### Discernment

- What distracting clutter fills your life? What needs to change so you can better hear the *whisper* of God's Spirit?
- When have you found it difficult to trust God? How did this effect your life? How can you better place your trust in God?

*"And this is my prayer: that your love may increase ever more and more in knowledge and every kind of perception, to discern what is of value, so that you may be pure and blameless for the day of Christ, filled with the fruit of righteousness that comes through Jesus Christ for the glory and praise of God." Philippian 1: 9-11*

### Perception/Confronting Illusions and Idolatry

- When have you placed something or someone at the center of your life instead of Christ?
- When have you bought into the false claims for fulfillment of the various illusions of culture and society over the truths of the Gospel?
- In what ways have you objectified others for your own false fulfillment?

*"When I was a child, I used to talk as a child, think as a child, reason as a child; when I became a man, I put aside childish things. At present we see indistinctly, as in a mirror, but then face to face. At present I know partially; then I shall know fully, as I am fully known. So faith, hope, love remain, these three; but the greatest of these is love." 1 Corinthians 13: 11-13*

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### Detachment and Clinging to Christ

- What do you need to let go of in order to more tightly cling to Christ in your life?
- How have you challenged others to cling more tightly to Christ in their lives?

*"I have told you this so that you might have peace in me. In the world you will have trouble, but take courage, I have conquered the world." John 16: 33*

### Joyful Accompaniment/Presence

- When have you struggled to joyfully accompany others? What can you do to be a more joyful presence to those you walk with in faith?
- When have you not listened with your heart to those you accompany in your walk of faith? How can you become a better listener?

*"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." Matthew 18:20*

### Community

- Who helps you in your walk of faith? Who hinders you in your walk of faith?
- How can your presence in the community better touch hearts and bridge distances that exist for those who are hurting or yearning for more?

*"So that there may be no division in the body, but that the parts may have the same concern for one another. If [one] part suffers, all the parts suffer with it; if one part is honored, all the parts share its joy. Now you are Christ's body, and individually parts of it." 1 Corinthians 12: 25-27*

### Stewardship and Service

- When have you failed to cultivate and share your gifts to build God's kingdom?
- As a missionary disciple, how do you advocate for those with no voice (the poor, the vulnerable, the elderly, the unborn, the immigrant, those imprisoned, the economically depressed, underemployed and unemployed, etc.)?

*"In every way I have shown you that by hard work of that sort we must help the weak, and keep in mind the words of the Lord Jesus who himself said, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" - Acts 20: 35*

### Sharing the Good News of Christ (Kerygma)

#### *Telling OUR story with great joy!*

- When have your actions not preached the good news of Jesus Christ?
- Have there been times in your life when you've been silent with the Gospel of Jesus Christ because its message was counter-cultural? How can you courageously commit to share the Gospel, especially when its message goes *against the grain* of society?

*"Then Jesus approached and said to them, 'All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age.'" Matthew 28: 18-20*