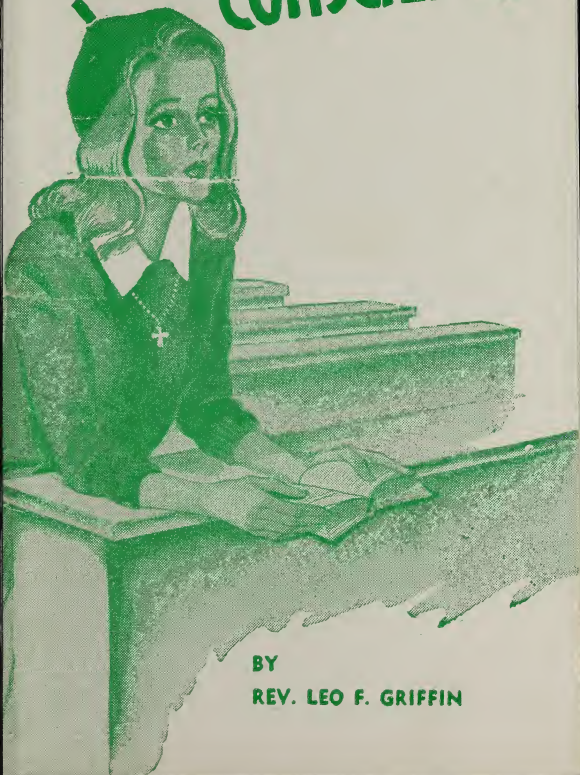


THE CATHOLIC GIRL EXAMINES HER CONSCIENCE

Griffin, Leo F.
The Catholic Girl
ADQ 6244



BY
REV. LEO F. GRIFFIN



Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2016

The Catholic Girl Examines Her Conscience

By

Rev. Leo F. Griffin

No. 126



Thirty-fifth Edition, 195,000

Printed and Published in U. S. A.

January 2, 1957

By

OUR SUNDAY VISITOR PRESS
Huntington, Indiana



Nihil Obstat:

REV. EDWARD A. MILLER

Censor Librorum

Imprimatur:

✠ JOHN FRANCIS NOLL, D.D.

Archbishop, Bishop of Fort Wayne

Deacidified

Frequent Confession

What makes it so difficult for us to get along with others? What causes so much of our unhappiness? Generally the answer is our venial sins. We can gradually and completely rid ourselves of all deliberate venial sins by making frequent and earnest use of the Sacrament of Penance. In frequent confession we come to learn that our venial sins are not to be regarded as though they do not matter very much. They actually pave the way for the commission of mortal sins. Therefore, they must become a matter of concern for every good, Catholic girl.

We can lessen the intensity and duration of our Purgatory by frequent confession. Moreover, the grace of this Sacrament is poured into our lives. Thus we acquire a steady stream of spiritual help in overcoming our faults. We are given additional strength against some powerful temptation which could suddenly rise up and overcome us. Finally, because of the constant help we receive in confession, we can do more easily the difficult things our Catholic life requires of us.

The Retreat Confession

The backbone of a retreat is a good confession. This is the time to make a general

confession of the sins committed during the past year. This annual confession indicates to us our spiritual progress. It shows us whether we have advanced or gone backwards since our last retreat. It helps us to prepare to do better in the year to come.

We should especially examine ourselves in regard to those sins which we see are threatening to become habits. We must eliminate these before they harm our character and prepare the way for more serious sins. We should check up, too, on those sins which we know are causing annoyance and trouble to others.

If you have some real problem do not hesitate to ask the priest about it in confession. "I've been having problems about faith" or "I wish you'd help me in overcoming such-and-such a temptation which I seem to have so often" or "I want to get my vocation in life settled—will you tell me how?"

Mortal Sin

In order for a sin to be a MORTAL SIN, these three conditions must be present:

1. The nature of the sin must be serious.

It must seriously offend God, ourselves or others. If we are not sure whether it is serious we are bound to ask our confessor.

2. We must know what we are doing is a *mortal* sin at the time we are doing it.

3. We must give full consent.

We must *freely and deliberately* choose to commit the act. Hence, we could not commit a serious sin if we were asleep or partially asleep, or forced to act against our will.

We Cannot Remain Ignorant

It is no use to argue over a period of time "as long as I did not think it was a mortal sin I did not commit a mortal sin." God gives us the responsibility of knowing definitely what is mortal and what is not. Anyone who neglects to inform herself on this point is guilty.

Some girls excuse their going with dangerous companions or to places dangerous to their virtue on the grounds "My Mother let me." They excuse their wrongdoing, with: "I know other Catholic girls who act that way."

We cannot fool God, and we must not try to fool ourselves in matters of conscience. We have the duty to ask our confessor about any doubts we might have concerning the seriousness of our sins. We cannot pretend that certain things are right when they really are wrong or that certain things are not as bad as God knows

them to be. It is important that we learn to judge our sins as God judges them.

Good Effects

Each time we make a good examination of conscience, we see more clearly the weaknesses of our own particular human nature. How often our duties toward God and our fellow man are neglected because we never think of them. Our conscience is not awake to them. Thus duties which are new to us are disclosed and we are moved to beg God earnestly for the supernatural help we need to perform them well.

Prayer Before The Examination Of Conscience

Dear God,
Who will one day be my Judge,
Help me prepare well
For Confession.
I want to see and know my sins
As You see and know them.
Help my memory
So that I will not fail
To tell anything in which
I have seriously offended You.
I shall try to recall how often
I have committed these sins.
Above all, dear God,
Give me true sorrow for my sins,
To acquire this I need Your help.

Remind me of the Happiness of Heaven,
Which I deserve to lose by my sin,
And the terrors of Hell
Which I have merited.
I want to learn to hate sin
And to avoid it
Because You are so good and sin is so evil.

Examination Of Conscience

We have the obligation to make a serious and not-too-prolonged examination to determine what sins we have committed. We must try to find the words to express them clearly and openly.

As an aid to accomplish these ends, this examination has been prepared. It is divided into certain virtues of the Christian life. Our attention is called thereby not only to our faults, but also to the virtues we should develop. We are reminded in an intimate way of the fundamental qualities which every Catholic must cultivate to lead a truly Christian life.

The penitent will find it profitable to center her attention for one month on the first virtue, namely faith; the second month, hope and so on through all the virtues.

Faith

Do I accept fully and completely *all* the truths God has revealed through His Church?

Have I neglected any opportunity which has come to me to strengthen the faith of others, or to encourage others to learn about our faith?

Have I endangered my faith by reading articles contrary to certain truths which the Church teaches?

Have I made light of or even ridiculed certain doctrines or laws of the Catholic religion as if I knew more than Christ or His Church?

Have I neglected my duty in learning the truths of my religion and the reasons for them so that I can ably defend them to others?

Do I endanger my faith by associating with companions who have no faith or an erroneous one? I thus place myself in the danger of accepting their rule of values and of disregarding my own true values. My values of life are based on faith; theirs upon worldly considerations.

If I have doubts about certain truths at times such as free will, existence of God, etc., do I try to remove these doubts by consulting those who can inform me intelligently?

Have I been afraid to make the ordinary public acknowledgements that I am a Catholic, as for example, greeting a priest; bowing as I pass a church; refusing to eat meat in non-Catholic company on days of ab-

stinence; saying grace at meals in public places?

Have I consulted a fortune-teller or joined fortune telling games in the belief that I could learn something about the future?

Have I been irreverent in the use of sacramentals, such as holy water, the Sign of the Cross, medals, etc?

Hope

Do I make frequent enough use of the Sacraments of Penance and Eucharist as my own individual spiritual needs require? I cannot rely solely upon my own strength to overcome temptation.

Do I neglect my morning and evening prayers?

Have I neglected to pray in time of temptation?

Have I deliberately entered a serious and unnecessary occasion of sin, thinking that God would miraculously preserve me from sin or graciously forgive me if I fell?

Have I said or thought that it was impossible for me to overcome a certain passion or sinful habit?

Have I said "it's no use to try to be good" or permitted discouragement to take possession of my heart because of my frequent faults or my lack of progress in virtue?

Have I deliberately neglected any opportunities for prayer and devotion which would have made me stronger in virtues?

Have I stopped praying or given up hope of obtaining my requests just because my prayers were not answered quickly?

Am I convinced that whatever happens to me beyond my own deliberate action is permitted by God for my own good, corporal or spiritual?

Love Of God

Have I missed Mass on a Sunday or a holyday without a sufficient reason?

Have I without reason come late to Mass, missing the Offertory, or have I left before the Communion of the Mass?

Have I performed my external duties to God, such as hearing Mass, saying my prayers, receiving the Sacraments in a distracted, impersonal, halfhearted manner?

Have I received Holy Communion when I knew that I had a mortal sin on my soul, or which I did not tell in confession because of shame or fear or plain deceit?

If I have had the misfortune to fall into mortal sin, did I say an act of contrition immediately afterwards and resolve to go to confession as soon as possible?

Did I spend a reasonable amount of time in thanksgiving after Communion, thus

using well these most precious moments of the day?

Have I disturbed or caused annoyance to others at Mass?

Did I make the necessary effort to say my morning and night prayers in a proper manner?

Did I knowingly eat meat on Friday or some other day of abstinence?

Have I failed to give some of what I earned to the church?

Have I been disrespectful towards those whom God has placed over me and who represent God?

Reverence For God

Have I used the name of "God" or "Christ" or "Jesus" or "Lord" as a by-word, or as an expression of impatience?

Do I use swear words?

Have I laughed at others' profane use of God's name or other irreverent speech, as if I thought it amusing?

Have I repeated the profanity of others as something amusing and clever?

Love Of Neighbor—1

Have I refused in my heart to forgive a person who has injured me?

Have I over a considerable period of

time refused to talk to or acknowledge someone who has wronged me?

When I myself was guilty of doing evil against my neighbor, have I refused in word or in deed to show that I was sorry and wished to be forgiven?

Have I said unkind and uncharitable things about others?

Have I called others unkind names?

Have I held a grudge against others, even though I did make an effort at forgiveness?

Have I acted hurt and cool towards others?

Have I tried to turn certain girls against others?

Have I blamed others for my own mistakes or wrongdoing?

Have I given bad example, especially to younger girls, by cursing in their presence, by quarreling, by impure talk?

Have I neglected opportunities which came my way to perform any of the *corporal* works of mercy?

- 1) To feed the hungry.
- 2) To give away unneeded clothing to relief agencies or those who could use them.
- 3) To visit the sick.
- 4) To attend the wake of some deceased neighbor or associate or friend.

“Amen, I say to you, as long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me.” (Matt. 25, 40)

Have I neglected any opportunity I may have had of performing the *spiritual* works of mercy?

- 1) To admonish the sinner.
- 2) To instruct the ignorant.
- 3) To counsel the doubtful.
- 4) To comfort the sorrowful.
- 5) To bear wrongs patiently. “Two wrongs never make a right.”
- 6) To forgive injuries “Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us.”
- 7) To pray for the living and the dead.

Love Of Neighbor—II

Have I induced another to sin to satisfy my own passion?

Have I given occasion to evil thoughts in others by being careless about my dress; by assuming immodest postures?

Have I permitted jealousy of another who was preferred to me to show itself in my conduct?

Have I told my friends the unkind remarks of others made about them, thus creating more trouble?

Have I made unkind, sarcastic remarks to others?

Have I contributed to the venial sins of others by unreasonably teasing or annoying them?

Have I prevented others from performing a good work by telling them not to do it?

Have I been moody, gloomy in the presence of others, thus making them uncomfortable and unhappy?

Have I said or done anything to injure the good name of my neighbor?

Have I made an effort to repair the damage?

Even though my neighbor has done wrong, she has a right to her reputation among those who do not know of her faults. Have I sinned in telling others of these faults?

Have I lied in important matters?

In light matters?

Have I actually continued to steal small amounts at regular intervals and so taken a large sum over a period of time?

Have I wilfully injured the property of another to a serious extent?

Have I used the property of others without their permission?

Have I damaged things belonging to others by carelessness and misuse? This

includes property of the school I attend, or the company for which I work.

Have I borrowed things from others, such as books, articles of clothing, etc., and never returned them?

Have I kept lost articles of small value when I knew or could find the owner?

Have I lied my way out of small debts and obligations?

Have I obtained honors and prizes in school by deceptive means such as cheating or copying, especially if in this way I deprived others of them?

Have I been guilty of cheating in games of chance, thus gaining by dishonesty?

Have I failed to reveal to others the mistakes they made in giving me too much change or more of an article than I paid for?

Have I given full time service to my employer? To accept pay otherwise is stealing. NOTE: *Restitution is to be made upon advice of the confessor in the above cases concerning stealing.*

Chastity

Have I deliberately taken delight in impure thoughts and images in my mind after I recognized them to be evil?

Have I been slow and half-hearted in trying to banish bad thoughts and desires?

Have I failed to check vigorously impulses and daydreams of unruly love and affections?

Have I knowingly consented to a desire for impure experiences, without any effort to suppress the desire?

Have I told suggestive stories?

Have I listened to suggestive stories?

Have I sought out or continued companionship with others whom I knew to be inclined to evil jests and words?

Have I read suggestive books or looked at filthy pictures which were apt to cause serious temptations to sins of impurity?

Have I read books or magazines that were dangerous to my holy purity?

Have I violated my Legion of Decency Pledge by attending movies listed as objectionable?

Have I allowed my eyes to wander in curiosity over dangerous objects knowing that my passions would be aroused?

Have I touched myself or others in an impure manner?

Have I taken part in prolonged or frequent kisses and embraces?

Have I permitted decent expressions of love or friendship for another to be prolonged to the point of danger of lust?

In dancing have I held my partner too tightly or allowed him to hold me too tight

ly? I must never be the cause of sin in others.

Have I been careless about my clothing, posture, appearance, thus exposing others to danger?

Have I exposed others to grave danger by impure signs, actions or exposure?

Have I gone to parties or accepted dates which I knew would be the occasions of serious temptations against my virtue?

Have I sought the friendship of others just to satisfy vanity or sensuality?

Have I neglected to use special opportunities of grace and prayer when I was passing through a period of more than usual temptations?

Have I fallen for the false opinion of the world that God's law in this matter is old fashioned, impossible or harmful?

Remember that to subdue lust in the hearts of men is the greatest human victory that women can win over men. Such a woman then becomes close to an angel in the eyes of a good man.

Temperance

Have I been temperate in the use of the following: Food, drink, dress, speech, recreation. To use any of these too much is sinful.

Do I seek recreation that is harmful to my health?

Have I taken a dangerous risk or dare?

Do I frequently keep late hours? This is harmful to my body and my soul.

Do I ignore warnings to dress according to the weather, thus, endangering my health?

Have I knowingly broken my fast and then received Holy Communion?

Have I taken more intoxicating liquor than was good for me, even though I did not become actually drunk?

Have I taken intoxicating liquor against my better judgment because I was urged to by others, especially when I felt I would be better off not to take it?

Have I kept company with someone who drinks too much?

Have I jested about drunkenness and so lessened others' hatred of it as a grave sin?

Have I ridiculed others because they do not drink?

Have I failed to develop temperance in myself by neglecting acts of self-denial I could frequently perform?

Obedience

NOTE: *Each of the questions below apply*

equally to parents, foster-parents or guardians.

Have I failed to show love and gratitude to my parents, either by neglecting opportunities to do so, or by positively hurting them in small ways?

Have I failed in the respect due my parents, by being openly ashamed of them, talking harshly or angrily to them, saying unkind things about them?

Have I disobeyed parents when they forbade my going with bad companions, or to bad shows and dangerous places?

Have I upset the home of my parents by frequently disobeying the rules they had a right to make—concerning the persons to be brought into the house, concerning the hours I kept at night, concerning my conduct within the home?

Have I disobeyed my parents in small things that they commanded or forbade?

Have I deliberately given in to hatred of my mother or my father, refusing to speak to them?

Have I been stubborn and peevish and openly resentful against parents?

Have I lied to my parents to avoid punishment?

Have I neglected to ask or take advice from my parents and follow it?

Have I selfishly refused to make life

more comfortable and enjoyable for my parents when I could have done so?

Have I failed to realize in a practical way that the authority of my parents, my teachers, my pastors, comes from God; that when I disobey them I disobey Him?

Have I resented justifiable corrections by those in authority over me?

Have I, as a pupil in school, been disrespectful and disobedient to teachers?

Have I, as a pupil in school, seriously undermined the authority and harmed the work of my teacher by slander, rebellion, etc.?

Have I given serious bad example to my associates by laziness or disobedience?

Have I, as a citizen, disregarded laws made for the safety and well-being of all?

Humility

Have I put up patiently with some disagreeable situation at home or in school out of humility?

Did I bear without complaint rebukes or scoldings even though I did not deserve them?

Do I complain, "Why does this happen to me and not to someone else," thus refusing to accept God's Providence on my behalf?

Do I resent correction?

Have I, with but an ordinary training in religious teaching, presumed to make quick judgment about doctrines I scarcely understood?

Have I refused to forgive someone who wronged me because I considered my honor a more valuable thing than that of God, Who forgave His enemies and commanded me to forgive mine?

Have I rebelled against superiors and the serious commands they gave because I thought my knowledge and dignity freed me from the necessity of obedience?

Have I failed to confess certain mortal sins I had committed because I said they were "my own affair," that "they were no business of the priest"?

Have I bragged about my accomplishments, my virtues, my abilities?

Have I shown my pride in the form of sensitiveness, resentment, pouting, peevishness?

Have I complained about God's providence in permitting me certain trials, as if I were deserving of better treatment from Him?

Do I accept the trials of life in the spirit of Christian courage?

Do I frequently resolve to do good and remain good no matter what others do or what happens?

Have I looked down on others who were less wealthy, less cultured, less learned, less prominent, less gifted than I?

Have I been too proud to take second place in any work or activity, withdrawing from it or hindering it because I could not be first?

Have I neglected daily prayer as if I were strong enough and good enough to get along without God's help?

A Prayer After Confession

Dear God,
I am sorry for my sins.
You have been so good to me
And I in return have shown You
So much selfishness and sin.
Help me to realize
That sin
Can never be an approach to happiness,
That to do what I want to do
At the cost of displeasing You
Must of necessity
Bring me misery.
The defiance of Your Will
Can never get me
Anything worth having,
Because Your Will is always good
And sin is always evil.
I acknowledge my foolishness,
My sinfulness.
Like Mary Magdalen and Saint Peter
I beg Your mercy.
I promise to make every effort
Never to offend You, Dear Lord, again.

Retreat Resolutions

