

Examination of Conscience for Secular Franciscans

Our Way of Life:

- Do I daily direct my life using the teaching of Christ that He is the way, the truth, and the life (Art. 4)?
- Christ is the center and meaning of everything, how do I apply this to my everyday life? – the videos I watch? the TV programs I enjoy? the books I read? the conversations I have (Art. 5)?
- As a Secular Franciscan, how do I commit myself to “rebuild the Church”? Do I cooperate with the stated aims of the Church’s teaching on social justice? (Art. 6)?
- Do I conform my thoughts and actions to those of Christ by the radical interior change which the Gospel calls “conversion”, making use of the sacrament of reconciliation on the way to renewal (Art. 7)?
- In my daily prayers, do I follow the expectation of the Catholic Church that I use three expressions of prayer: vocal, meditative, and contemplative (Art. 8)?
- Do I imitate the Virgin Mary’s complete self-giving in her openness to your every word and call? Knowing that in Mary’s life joys co-existed with suffering, how do I find joy even in the sufferings and problems of daily life (Art. 9)?
- Do I faithfully fulfill the duties proper to my circumstances in life? Am I aware of times I faithfully fulfill these duties... Of times I do not? And in each of these circumstances, can I honestly say: “I witnessed to Christ today by...” (Art. 10)?
- Do I seek the proper spirit of detachment and purify my heart from every tendency and yearning for possession and power? Do I distinguish between my “needs” and my “wants” in practical daily events (Art. 11)?
- Do I have the purity of heart necessary to set myself free to love God and my brothers and sisters (Art. 12)?
- Do I accept people with differing personalities and people of diverse cultural backgrounds as God’s gift and an image of Christ (Art. 13)?
- Do I exercise my responsibilities competently in the Christian spirit of service? Do I neglect fulfilling the needs that I should be responding to in my fraternity? My region? Can I be more sacrificing for the sake of others than I presently am (Art. 14)?
- How does the testimony of my life put me in the forefront of promoting justice? What do I do? What more can I do (Art. 15)?
- Do I just tolerate having to work or do I esteem work as a gift and as a sharing in the creation, redemption and service of the human community (Art.16)?
- Do I cultivate the Franciscan spirit of peace, fidelity and respect for all life in my family, community, and fraternity striving to make it a sign of a world already renewed in Christ (Art. 17)?
- Do I respect all creatures, animate and inanimate, “as bearing the imprint of the Most High”, and see them as my brothers and sisters? What am I doing, to experience that kinship with all of creation (Art. 18)?
- Using the “Peace Prayer” as a guide, how do I behave as a peace-maker? Am I a bearer of peace and messenger of perfect joy in every circumstance? How often do I review the situations in this Prayer, one by one, and consider how each applies to my present living? Do I use this list as a daily guide (Art. 19)?

Life and Dignity of the Human Person

- Do I respect the life and dignity of every human person from natural conception through natural death?
- Do I recognize the face of Christ reflected in all others around me whatever their race, class, age, or abilities?
- Do I work to protect the dignity of others when it is being threatened?
- Am I committed to both protecting human life and to ensuring that every human being is able to live in dignity?

Call to Family, Community, and Participation

- Do I try to make positive contributions in my family, my community, and my fraternity?
- Are my beliefs, attitudes, and choices such that they strengthen or undermine the institution of the family?
- Am I aware of problems facing my local community and involved in efforts to find solutions? Do I stay informed and make my voice heard when needed?
- Do I support the efforts of poor persons to work for change in their neighborhoods and communities? Do my attitudes and interactions empower or *disempower* others?

Rights and Responsibilities

- Do I recognize and respect the economic, social, political, and cultural rights of others?
- Do I live in material comfort and excess while remaining insensitive to the needs of others whose rights are unfulfilled?
- Do I take seriously my responsibility to ensure that the rights of persons in need are realized?
- Do I urge those in power to implement programs and policies that give priority to the human dignity and rights of all, especially the vulnerable?

Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

- Do I give special attention to the needs of the poor and vulnerable in my community and in the world?
- Am I disproportionately concerned for my own good at the expense of others?
- Do I engage in service *and* advocacy work that protects the dignity of poor and vulnerable persons?

The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

- As a worker, do I give my employer a fair day's work for my wages? As an owner, do I treat workers fairly?
- Do I treat all workers with whom I interact with respect, no matter their position or class?
- Do I support the rights of all workers to adequate wages, health insurance, vacation and sick leave? Do I affirm their right to form or join unions or worker associations?

- Do my purchasing choices take into account the hands involved in the production of what I buy? When possible, do I buy products produced by workers whose rights and dignity were respected?

Solidarity

- Does the way I spend my time reflect a genuine concern for others?
- Is solidarity incorporated into my prayer and spirituality? Do I lift up vulnerable people throughout the world in my prayer, or is it reserved for only my personal concerns?
- Am I attentive only to my local neighbors or also those across the globe?
- Do I see all members of the human family as my brothers and sisters?

Care for God's Creation

- Do I live out my responsibility to care for God's creation?
- Do I see my care for creation as connected to my concern for poor persons, who are most at risk from environmental problems?
- Do I litter? Live wastefully? Use energy too freely? Are there ways I could reduce?
- Are there ways I could change my daily practices and those of my family, school, workplace, or community to better conserve the earth's resources for future generations?

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Lady Poverty Region

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An Examination of Conscience based on the Rule of the Secular Franciscan Order and the Church's Social Teaching