

The Seven Capital Sins

Lenten Examination of Conscience

What is A Capital Sin? A Capital sin or Cardinal sin or Capital Vice is one which is the source of other sins and vices. They are classified as “sins” not so much because they involve voluntary choice, but because they are basic tendencies toward evil, dangerous sources of sin, or habits of vice.

Examination of Conscience There are seven weeks in Lent when counting the shorter weeks of Ash Wednesday and Holy Week. Set aside quiet time through out Lent (e.g. daily or several times a week) to focus on your actions and attitudes using the Capital Sins as a guide. One method is to do the following:

- A. **Definition:** At the beginning of the week spend time reflecting and praying about what that sin means.
- B. **Resulting Sins:** Spend a few days considering the sins it can lead to.
- C. **Remedies:** Conclude the week considering how to remove the sin or sins from your life.

A second method is to spend each day of that week reflecting and examining ourselves as regards the definition, resulting sins, and remedies of that particular capital sin.

PRIDE - ASH WEDNESDAY TO SATURDAY

Pride is the disregard or contempt for ideas and judgments of others than one’s own. Placing oneself above others. Unwilling to submit oneself to God’s will.

Resulting Sins: Pride can lead to

- Placing self above others
- Unwilling to submit to God’s will
- Boasting
- Vanity
- Disrespect

Remedies

- Sincere knowledge of self
- Imitating Christ’s humility
- Stance of respectful listening to others
- Admission of one’s own need to be saved by Christ.
- Acknowledge need to be supported by the gift of others

GREED OR AVARICE - FIRST WEEK OF LENT

Greed (avarice) is the disordered or insatiable longing for possessions or riches.

Resulting Sins Greed can lead to

- Blindness to the needs of others
- Hardness of heart
- Anxiety for the things of this world
- Violence in acquiring riches
- Lying
- Deceit

Remedies

- Recognizing the vanities of this world and its goods
- Acknowledge one’s own dependence on God
- Practice of charitable acts

LUST - SECOND WEEK OF LENT

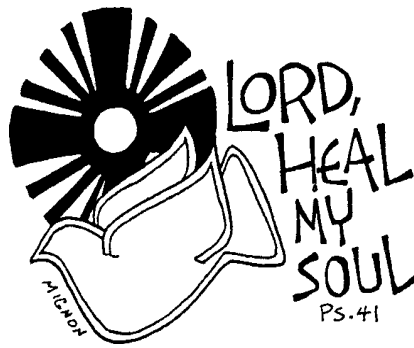
Lust is the excessive or unlawful desire for sexual pleasure that manifests itself in a disrespect for God, self, and others.

Resulting Sins Lust can lead to

- Use and abuse of persons
- Disordered self love
- Hatred for God and His laws
- Adultery
- Indulging in pornography
- Erotic thoughts and acts

Remedies

- Frequent prayer and reception of the Sacraments
- Avoidance of near occasions of sin
- Wholesome reading and recreational activities



ENVY - THIRD WEEK OF LENT

Envy is sadness or displeasure at the spiritual or temporal goods, gifts, or talents possessed by another

Resulting Sins Envy can lead to

- Hatred
- Resentment of others' good fortune
- Joy at others' misfortune
- Telling lies about others
- Spreading rumors about others

Remedies

- Pray for a deeper sense of God's love for us
- Pray for an appropriate compassion for others

GLUTTONY - FOURTH WEEK OF LENT

Gluttony is indulging the body at the expense of the mind and the soul. Being absorbed in one's immediate pleasure or insatiable desire for an activity.

Resulting Sins Gluttony can lead to

- Insensitivity to others
- Abuse of alcohol or other substances

Remedies

- Fasting
- Practice self restraint
- Avoiding near occasion of sin, especially drinking

ANGER - FIFTH WEEK OF LENT

Anger is diverting a good capacity for strong action destructively toward self and others. It is an unbridling, passionate reaction that is often combined with a disordered desire for revenge.

Resulting Sins Anger can lead to

- Blasphemy
- Abuse of others
- Division
- Quarrels

Remedies

- Remove self from provoking situation
- Finding safe outlets for frustrations
- Prayer

SLOTH - HOLY WEEK

Sloth is laziness in the pursuit of spiritual goods which are not easily obtained; faint heartedness in the practice of virtue; running away from the cross.

Resulting Sins Sloth can lead to

- Aversion to love that demands sacrifice
- Wandering toward that which is forbidden
- Infidelity to prayer
- Neglect of Sunday Mass

Remedies

- Be the first to help another
 - Prayer
 - Weekly Mass
 - Do what you would want others to do when things are unpleasant or difficult
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