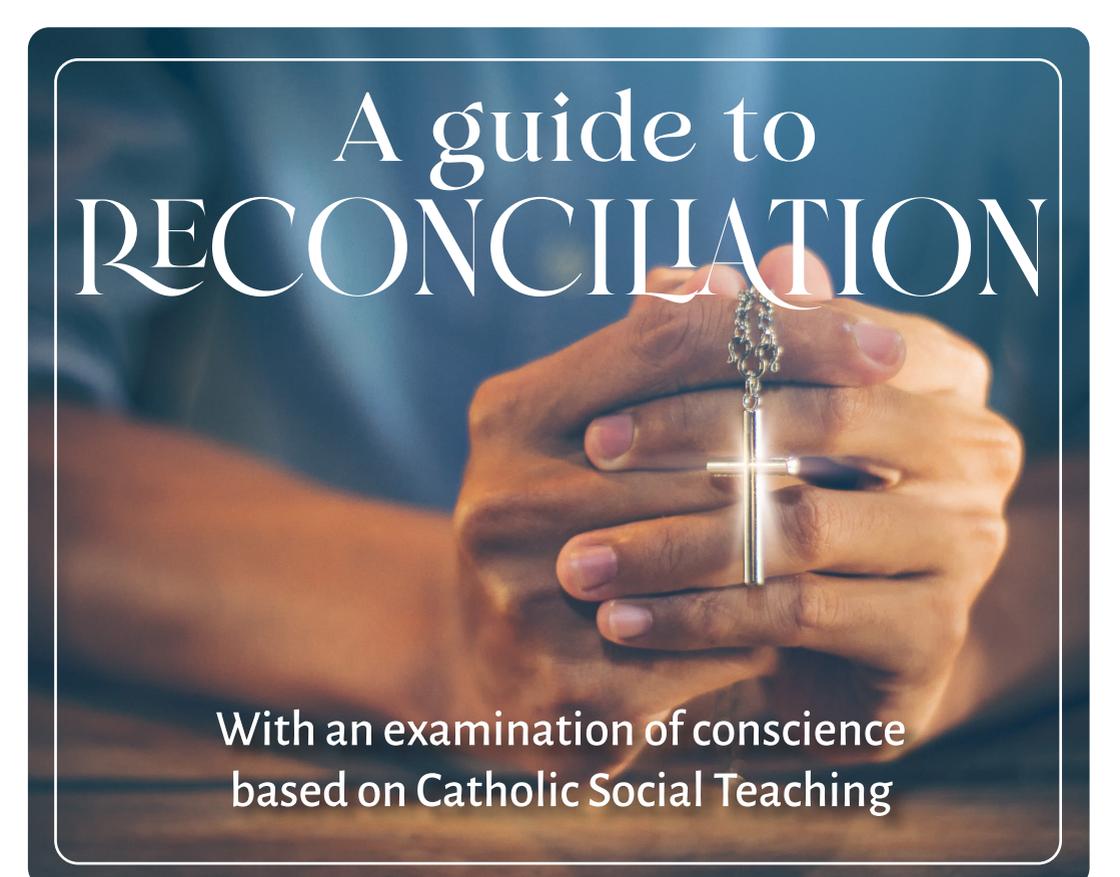


# A guide to RECONCILIATION



With an examination of conscience  
based on Catholic Social Teaching

## From the Bible

*Here are some things that Jesus said that can help you to reflect on reconciliation:*

The Pharisees and their scribes were complaining to his disciples, saying, “Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?” Jesus answered, “Those who are well have no need of a doctor, but those who are sick; I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.” (Luke 5)

Then the son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’ But the father said to his slaves, ‘Quickly, bring out a robe – the best one – and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get

the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate; for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!’ And they began to celebrate. (Luke 15)

But the tax collector, standing far off, would not even look up to heaven, but was beating his breast and saying, ‘God, be merciful to me, a sinner!’ I tell you, this one went down to his home justified rather than the other; for all who exalt themselves will be humbled, but all who humble themselves will be exalted. (Luke 18)

For if you forgive others their sins, your heavenly Father will also forgive you; but if you do not forgive others, neither will your Father forgive your sins. (Matthew 6)

# Preparing for Reconciliation

## Examination of Conscience based on Catholic Social Teaching

*In this sacrament, we ask Jesus to forgive our sins.*

*It is good to prepare for reconciliation by praying something like this:*

Lord Jesus, shine your light into my heart,  
and help me to trust in you.  
Let me see those things in my life that stop me  
from loving like you do, and free me from them. Amen.

*Ask the Holy Spirit for his light to help us recognise where we've fallen short, based on the seven principles of Catholic Social Teaching.*

### 1 Life and Dignity of the Human Person

In Luke 10 is the story of the good samaritan. A man, stripped, beaten and bruised is left on the side of the road. A priest passes by. A levite passes by. But a Samaritan stops.

**Do we stop? Do we recognise the dignity of all our brothers and sisters, as being made in the image of God?**

### 2 Call to Family, Community, and Participation

1 John 3 - "If someone who has worldly means sees a brother or sister in need and refuses them compassion, how can the love of God remain in them?"

**Everything we own - our entire lives - belongs to God. Do we use them how he would want us to - in strengthening our families and working for justice in our communities?**

### 3 Rights and Responsibilities

James 2 - "Faith of itself, if it does not have works, is dead."

**Do we bring our faith into action?**

### 4 Option for the Poor and Vulnerable

Matthew 25 - "Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for me."

**What do we do for the least among us?**

## 5 The Dignity of Work and the Rights of Workers

Luke 3 - "Even now the axe lies at the root of the trees. Therefore every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire."

**When we work, do we work diligently, seeing it as participation in God's creation? Do we fight for the rights of workers?**

## 6 Solidarity

Imagine a world with: "No daylight to separate us. Only kinship. Inching ourselves closer to creating a community of kinship such that God might recognise it. Soon we imagine, with God, this circle of compassion. Then we imagine no one standing outside of that circle, moving ourselves closer to the margins so that the margins themselves will be erased."

**Are we working to build this world in our communities and beyond?**

**Do we see all members of the human family as our brothers and sisters?**

## 7 Care for God's Creation

God gave us the world and declared that it was good.

In Genesis, God commands us to care for it.

**What do we do or not do to care for what God has made?**

*It can be overwhelming to realise how many areas we could grow in to uphold the life and dignity of all human beings, created in the image of God.*

*After you have spent time pondering the good and bad things in your life, then you are ready to meet Jesus in the Sacrament of Reconciliation.*



# A guide to RECONCILIATION

You

Father

1 *Begin with the sign of the cross:*

In the name of the Father,  
and of the Son,  
and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

2 *Then you say:*

Bless me father for I have sinned.  
It has been \_\_\_ weeks/months  
since my last time. My sins are...

*Tell your sins simply and sincerely...*

*Finish by saying:*

For these and all my sins,  
I am truly sorry.

3 *Express your sorrow:*

Lord Jesus, Son of God,  
have mercy on me  
a sinner. Amen.

*You can also pray in your own words,  
use the prayer below,  
or another prayer that you may know.*

*The priest may reply*

May you know God's love for  
you, and may God shine the  
light of his love on every area of  
your life, especially where you  
need healing today.

*He may give you some advice*

“... ..”

*He will offer a penance - something  
that will draw you closer to God.*

*In the name of Jesus, the priest will pray:*

I absolve you from all your sins,  
in the name of the Father,  
and of the Son, and of the  
Holy Spirit. Amen.

*He then invites you to go in peace,  
having been forgiven by God.*

O my God I am sorry that  
I have sinned against you.  
You are good, and with  
the help of your grace,  
I will not sin again. Amen.

## After Reconciliation:

Spend some time resting in God's love for you.

Let Jesus sit with you. Let him look at you.

Let him love you and forgive you. Let Jesus heal  
and take away any wounds that you may have.

Let him fill you with his goodness and anything  
else that you need to grow to be more like him.