



An Examination of Conscience Exercise on Mercy

*Mercy is always practical. It always addresses someone. It's not a mere theory hanging in the air above your head somehow, but it is **transmitted** to your hands and feet, through your eyes and smile, in your voice and manner of being present. Therefore, take time to read, think, and pray through the list of **people/relationships** below. Follow the instruction on the exercise. Make notes in the spaces provided. Don't be afraid to give yourself good grades where you deserve them. *(Take about 10 minutes for this reflection)**

| <p>How merciful am I to those people around me.</p> | <p>How well do I offer mercy to these folks? Give yourself a letter grade:</p> | <p>Thoughts & Comments Jot down a note or two.</p> |
|--|---|---|
| <p>How do I speak and act toward my parents who are growing older? Am I acting in their best interests or what is convenient for me? Do I accept them for who they are becoming or do I dismiss them?</p> | | |
| <p>How do I treat my ex-spouse who still has a role in the life of our children? How do I talk about my ex-spouse in front of my children?</p> | | |
| <p>How do I speak and act toward neighbors especially those whom may not get along with me?</p> | | |
| <p>How do I treat or react to my child who hasn't spoken to me in a long time or who acts out against me? Am I making matters worse, or genuinely trying to resolve the issues?</p> | | |
| <p>How do I interact with people I just plain disagree with, especially about important things in life? Do I try to demonize them, concentrating on the bad, or do I try to find some common ground? How do I express my disagreement on Facebook and other social media? Do my written reactions resemble a child of God?</p> | | |
| <p>How do I react to people who do things differently than I would do them? Do I belittle them? Or do I try to respect their way and help them to understand what I would do in the same situation? Do I accept that there may be a better way than "my way"?</p> | | |

How merciful am I to those people around me.

How well do I offer mercy to these folks?
Give yourself a letter grade

Thoughts & Comments
Jot down a note or two.

How do I treat or react to my spouse when he or she is tired, worried, or crabby? Do I nag them and pick a fight? Or do I give them their space and encourage them to talk to me so that we may solve the concerns together?

How do I react to my kids when they're running wild through the house and I'm at the end of my nerves. Have I been impatient and frustrated with them? Have I corrected them out of love in order to teach them what is right and good? Have I treated them with respect? Have I spoken to them in a sarcastic or demeaning way?

Have I allowed resentments and bitterness toward my spouse to take root in my mind? Have I nurtured these? Have I forgiven my spouse for the wrongs he or she has committed against me?

How do I interact with neighbors who aren't very polite in terms of where they park, how much noise they make, or other matters? Do I steam in silence, make demeaning comments or do I have a respectful talk with them?

How do I respond to those who criticize me or talk badly about me to others? Do I respond in kind (criticizing/speaking badly about them)? Do I address the issue with them? Do I hold onto the anger?

How do I connect with siblings of mine with whom I've had a disagreement over the years? Do I still speak with them and try to resolve the matter, or do I let the disagreement continue to fester? How do I speak of my siblings to my children?

Have I fostered or nurtured hatred toward my "political" or "national" enemies, either local, national or international, especially those who seem most hateful to me?

How do I respond or think about people from other religious groups who may not hold the same beliefs ?

“HOW-TO” GUIDE TO THE Sacrament of Reconciliation

THE SIGN OF THE CROSS: Together, you and the priest will make the Sign of the Cross. You may then begin your confession with these or similar words: “Bless me, Father, for I have sinned. It has been [*give days, months, or years*] since my last confession.”

CONFESSION: Confess all your sins to the priest. If you are unsure what to say, ask the priest for help. When you are finished, conclude with these or similar words: “I am sorry for these and all my sins.”

PENANCE: The priest will propose an act of penance. The penance might be prayer, a work of mercy, or an act of charity. He might also counsel you on how to better live a Christian life.

ACT OF CONTRITION: After the priest has conferred your penance, pray an Act of Contrition, expressing sorrow for your sins and resolving to sin no more. You may choose additional Acts of Contrition listed on the next page.

*My God,
I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,
I have sinned against you whom I should love above all things.
I firmly intend, with your help,
to do penance, to sin no more,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.
Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.
In his name, my God, have mercy. (Rite of Penance, no. 45)*

ABSOLUTION: The priest will extend his hands over your head and pronounce the words of absolution. You respond, “Amen.”

PRAISE: The priest will usually praise the mercy of God and will invite you to do the same. For example, the priest may say, “Give thanks to the Lord for he is good.” And your response would be, “***His mercy endures for ever***” (*Rite of Penance*, no. 47).

DISMISSAL: The priest will conclude the sacrament, often saying, “Go in peace.”

If it has been a while since your last confession, remember, “*Do not fear*” (Is. 41:10). The priest will help guide you. Feel free to take this guide with you as you make your confession.

APPROVED ACTS OF CONTRITION/PRAYER OF THE PENITENT

My God,
I am sorry for my sins with all my heart.
In choosing to do wrong and failing to do good,
I have sinned against you whom I should love above
all things.
I firmly intend, with your help,
to do penance, to sin no more,
and to avoid whatever leads me to sin.
Our Savior Jesus Christ suffered and died for us.
In his name, my God, have mercy.

PSALM 25:6-7:

Remember, Lord, your compassion and mercy you
showed long ago. Do not recall the sins and
failings of my youth. In your mercy remember me,
Lord, because of your goodness.

PSALM 51:4-5:

Wash me from my guilt and cleanse me of my sin.
I acknowledge my offense; my sin is before me
always.

LUKE 15:18; 18:13

Father, I have sinned against you and am not wor-
thy to be called your son. Be merciful to me, a
sinner.

OR:

Lord Jesus, you opened the eyes of the blind,
healed the sick, forgave the sinful woman, and after
Peter's denial confirmed him in your love. Listen to
my prayer: forgive all my sins, renew your love in my
heart, help me to live in perfect unity with my fellow
Christians that I may proclaim your saving power to
all the world.

OR:

Lord God, in your goodness have mercy on me: do
not look on my sins, but take away all my guilt.
Create in me a clean heart and renew within me an
upright spirit.

OR:

Lord Jesus, Son of God, have mercy on me a sin-
ner.

OR:

Lord Jesus, you chose to be called the friend of sin-
ners. By your saving death and resurrection free
me from my sins. May your peace take root in my
heart and bring forth a harvest of love, holiness, and
truth.

*From Rite of Penance/Rite for Reconciliation of Individual
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We invite you to receive the gift of God's mercy at our Communal Reconciliation service on Tues-
day, December 15, 2015 at 10am and 7pm. Many priests from around the diocese will be available
to offer you this gift. For more information about the Sacrament of Reconciliations, please visit
our website at: StMaryMagdalen.org/SacramentsAndLiturgies/Reconciliation.htm