

# An Examination of Conscience for Married Persons

## Responsibilities to my spouse:

- Have I **cared for my spouse?** Have I been generous with my time? Have I been affectionate and loving? Have I told my spouse that I love him or her?
- Have I been concerned about the spiritual well-being of my spouse?
- Have I listened to my spouse? Have I **paid attention to** his or her concerns, worries, and problems? Have I sought these out?
- 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?
- Have I allowed misunderstanding, miscommunication or accidents to cause anger and mistrust? Have I **nurtured critical and negative thoughts about my spouse?**
- Have I manipulated my spouse in order to get my own way?
- Have I **tried** to bully or **overpower my spouse?**
- Have I spoken sharply or sarcastically to my spouse? Have I spoken in a demeaning or negative way? Have I injured my spouse through taunting and negative teasing? Have I called my spouse harsh names or used language that is not respectful?
- **Have I physically abused my spouse?** (*separation cause\**)
- Have I gossiped about my spouse?
- Have I **undermined** the authority and **dignity of my spouse through disrespect and rebelliousness?**
- Have I been moody and sullen?
- Have I bickered with my spouse out of stubbornness and selfishness?
- Have I lied or been deceitful to my spouse?
- Have I misused sexuality? Have I used sexual relations solely for my own selfish pleasure? Have I been too demanding in my desire for sexual fulfillment? Have I been loving and physically affectionate in my sexual relations or have I used sexual relations in a way that would be demeaning or disrespectful to my spouse? Have I refused sexual relations out of laziness, revenge or manipulation?
- Have I refused to conceive children out of selfishness or material greed? Have I used artificial means of contraception?
- Have I had an abortion or encouraged others to have one?

\* Mary's Advocate Note: Yellow highlight shows patterns exhibited by abandoners. Bold underline shows patterns that are grave enough to justify separation of spouses.

- Have I flirted **or fostered improper relationships with someone else**, either in my mind or through words and actions?
- Have I used pornography: books, magazines or movies?
- **Have I committed adultery?** (*separation cause\**)
- Have I misused alcohol or drugs?
- Have I masturbated?
- Have I been financially responsible?

## Responsibilities to children:

- Have I cared for the spiritual needs of my children? Have I been a shepherd and guardian as God has appointed me? **Have I tried to foster a Christian family where Jesus is Lord?** Have I taught my children the Gospel and the commandments of God?
- Have I prayed with them?
- Have I been persistent and courageous in my **training and teaching?** Have I disciplined them when necessary? **Have I been lazy and apathetic?**
- Have I talked with them to find out their problems, concerns and fears? Have I been affectionate toward them? Have I hugged them and told them that I love them? Have I played or recreated with them?
- 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 held resentments against them? Have I forgiven them?
- Have I been of one heart and mind with my spouse in the upbringing of the children? Or **have I allowed** disagreements and **dissension to disrupt the training, educating and disciplining of our children?**
- Have I undermined the role of authority in the eyes of my children by speaking negatively against God, the Church, my spouse or others who hold legitimate authority over them?
- **Have I been a good Christian witness to my children in what I say and do?** Or do I demand one standard for them and another for myself?
- Have I been properly generous with my children regarding money and physical and material well-being? Have I been miserly? Have I been extravagant, thus spoiling them?

From: Weinandy, Thomas, O.F.M. Cap. (Executive director of the Secretariat of Doctrine and Canonical Affairs of USCCB 2005-2013). The Two Shall Become One: The Sacrament of Reconciliation And Marriage. www.usccb.org, 2014.