

A Pro-Life Examination Of Conscience

A Pro-Life Examination of Conscience: Putting the Ignatian Examen into a Pro-Life Perspective and Making Espiritu Santo Church and School a Pro-Life Parish in the Fullest Sense of The Word.

40 Considerations From Our Pastor, Father Len.

1.) Am I a person of peace? Do I strongly advocate for peace-making, collaboration, dialogue, inclusivity, tolerance and unity building? Do I engender healthy, vibrant and loving conversations? Do I build bridges that join people together or walls that separate?

2.) Do I understand the Church's varied reflections on war and peace? Have I looked into the "just war theory" and whether it is applicable today and if so in what cases and to what degree? Do I respect the lesser known Catholic tradition of "Christian pacifism"? Do I realize and teach that violence and killing are not solutions to world problems and should be used only as a last resort when all else has failed and when dire consequences may result otherwise? In such hopefully rare cases, are the acts carried out with assuring the minimum of casualty or harm to innocent others? Am I saddened and prayerfully regretful when there is no other choice?

3.) Do I begin my peace-making in the country and world by building peace in my own family and among my friends? Do I need always to win an argument or can I pause and patiently wait until another more opportune moment to raise or deal with a more controversial matter? Am I willing to listen to and learn from others?

4.) Am I a person who imposes a narrow or fundamentalistic static view of "truth" (only my version) on others without respecting their life experiences and situations? Can I work to make the difficult lives of some of my brothers and sisters easier or do I make difficult lives even more difficult imposing on others what I would not impose upon myself if I were in their situation?

5.) Do I join with Pope Francis, our great Jesuit pope, in proclaiming a gospel of joy? Do I choose to walk with others and not apart from them? Do I understand, articulate and live a theology of accompaniment? Do I really sense a solidarity of common humanity with all people and therefore cherish their lives as much as I cherish my own life? Do I see their life as valuable as I see my own life?

6.) Am I a person who cares about those who struggle with infertility, the loss or death of a child, the collapse of a marriage in divorce, the struggle to rebuild one's life after such misfortune and suffering and the strength our Catholic faith can provide in such moments? How do I show that I care about such persons in these difficult life situations?

7.) Am I supportive of the Church's efforts to address child abuse or the abuse of vulnerable teens or other persons? Do I support societal efforts to do the same in sports, scouting, politics, religion, business and other areas of life? Do I understand that abuse can take many forms and often impedes the life of someone long before their physical death?

8.) Am I a bully? Do I call other people names and label them so that it is easier to de-humanize them and therefore persecute or harm them? Do I support people who do such things without remorse?

9.) Do I have a greater solidarity with the powerful or the powerless? Do I care more about the people society esteems as valuable or more about those people society discards as having less value as a human being created in love by God and in God's image and likeness?

10.) Do I love my enemies as myself? Do I pray for persecutors? Do I return evil for evil? Do I realize that killing others is never a solution to any problem? Do I see the birth of a child as a joy or a problem? Do I see the care of the terminally ill as a privilege or a burden?



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11.) Am I working to save the earth and the environment from the massive environmental destruction underway worldwide? Am I trying to be a good steward of creation? Do I see myself as a part of nature rather than just being apart from nature?

12.) Am I seriously looking into the very large amount of scientific and scholarly data warning the world about the dangers of global warming and climate change? Have I seen what rising ocean temperatures are doing to the coral reefs and marine life?

13. Do I notice the destruction of the rain forest, the melting of the polar ice caps, the plastic garbage dump the oceans are becoming, deforestation and the impending extinction of plant and animal species?

14.) Do I work for the worldwide and national abolition of the death penalty as intrinsically evil and immoral? Do I support prison reform and prison ministry?

15.) Do I value the dignity of every human person and the sanctity of their life from womb to tomb?

16.) Do I support pregnant poor and single mothers in difficult economic and social situations? Do I favor legislation which assures them of adequate health care, pre-natal care and after-care? Do I support medical leave for pregnant women especially those in low paying jobs?

17.) Will I give the necessary financial help to a family in need because of the enormous health care costs of a sick child? Am I interested in the work and ministry of Catholic hospitals, nursing homes, and other Catholic health care institutions? Do I join with those who are not Catholic in these important moral and human endeavors?

18.) Am I wasteful of the earth's resources? Do I condemn the growing gap between the very rich and the very poor? Do I have a "preferential option for the poor" in my spirituality and moral decisions? Do I have special concern for tribal, marginalized and indigenous persons?

19.) Is my faith a "living reality" open to growth and renewal? Do I proclaim compassion and kindness as essential to daily life? Am I empathetic to those who suffer in any way or who live on the edges and peripheries of society?

20.) Have I noticed the plight of new immigrants, undocumented persons, refugees and exiles? Do I see them as my own family and speak out in their defense? Do I acknowledge hospitality, welcome and acceptance as an integral part of my Catholic identity? Can I recognize social sin when it pervades a national or personal psyche?

21.) Am I a just person myself? Do I work for social justice affirming the essential equality of each human person and noticing the special and often intense struggles of minority persons and communities? Am I only interested in "my personal salvation" rather than an evangelizing attitude that is concerned with the salvation of all?

22.) Do I work cooperatively with others laboring in the Church and as Church for the salvation of the global family of humankind?

23.) Do I denounce economic disparity?

24.) Are the concerns of the elderly, the infirm and the dying my concerns also? Do I work to destroy and kill the pain of others without advocating killing those who suffer? Do I understand the fullness of the Catholic Church's teaching on euthanasia and end of life issues?

25.) Am I just anti-abortion or am I truly pro-life in all its fullness? Do I understand and embrace the "fullness" of the Church's teaching on human life in all its many aspects?



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26.) Do I see the entire human family as my own family? Do I have a global mentality or just a personal or nationalistic one? Do I recognize that as a Catholic I belong to a global Church that is world-wide and embraces the entire family of humankind?

27.) Is my life centered on eradicating prejudice, discrimination, social injustice, sexism, homophobia, racism anti-Semitism and all other forms of intolerance and hatred? Do I foster stereotypes or try to eradicate them? Do I acknowledge the positive contributions minorities often make to our lives? Have I forgotten the extreme anti-Catholic bias present in the early days of our own country?

28.) Do I assist people who are grieving due to some very significant loss in their lives? The death of a spouse, child sibling, close friend or colleague? Can I have empathy for someone who has lost their memory, their health or their energy?

29.) As suicides increase, do I notice the many symptoms of depression and mental illness that lead to suicide? Do I encourage or participate in efforts to help eliminate suicide? Do I help survivors of suicide? Do I try to remove the systemic causes of suicide like societal pressures, peer pressure, bullying, misuse of social media to harm others?

30.) Do I have a special concern for the young and vulnerable including those who fall into drug or alcohol addictions?

31.) Do I respect with the utmost care the sacramentality of my marriage covenant? Do I avoid at all costs adultery? Do I look with abhorrence on prostitution, but with love upon those who try to survive by it? Do I recall Jesus' many compassionate dealings with prostitutes?

32.) Am I aware of human trafficking? Do I recognize how prominent this issue is in our own community?

33.) Have I considered adoption for a child in need? Do I fully support those who have adopted children with special needs, health concerns, and disabilities? Do I notice how the blind and deaf manage to thrive or in some cases merely survive in our society? Would I be willing to adopt a very sick child that will need tremendous care after he or she is born so as to prevent an abortion?

34.) What do I say and do that positively contributes to a culture of life rather than a culture of death?

35.) Am I living my Catholic life fully, joyfully, hopefully and meaningfully? Is my life a "life lived for and with others"?

36.) Does my spirituality include a very intimate and close collaboration with Pope Francis, our great Jesuit pope, and Peter's successor? Do I make an attempt to assent insofar as I am able to the Church's full teaching and human life, human dignity and the belief that every person is a beloved child of God destined to eternal life with the Lord forever?

37.) Am I a responsible parent and do I foster responsible parenthood leading by example in a very clear defense of those who are most vulnerable in our society?

38.) Is my prayer supported by penance and reparation on behalf of my own sins and the sins of others? Do I fast for world hunger and clean water for everyone? Do I see the immense and serious deadly harm of water, air and land pollution?

What shapes my environmental ethics? Do I have a real sense of an integral environmental and social concerns for the welfare of others?



39.) Do I live the spirit of the Beatitudes? Carry out the corporal and spiritual works of mercy and faith? Do I know what they are and teach them to my children? Do I do unto others what I would want them to do unto me?

40.) Is love the center of my Catholic life? How is love connected to my proclamation that life is sacred and holy—a treasured gift of God?



*Womb To Tomb * Justice & Peace*