

MARRIAGE CONSCIENCE

Examen

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hen we understand that we have fallen short in our marriages, the best place to start is always the sacrament of reconciliation. We must have the grace of God provided in this sacrament to change the spiritual course of our marriage. But before you go to reconciliation, spend some time in prayer and, if possible, explore this challenge with your spiritual director. Ask Mary and Joseph (the models of the perfect family) to pray for you, to help you see your shortcomings, pray for God's light as you ask yourself a few tough examen questions we have provided for your reflection:

- Have I neglected the spiritual care of my spouse?
- Have I allowed the busy-ness of life to crowd out my primary responsibility of caring for the spiritual needs of my spouse?
- Have I put my own needs and desires ahead of the spiritual needs of my spouse?
- Have I done anything that distracts my spouse from his/her spiritual development pursuits?
- Have I failed to nurture the spiritual interests of my spouse?
- Have I allowed my own fears or feelings of inadequacy to hinder spiritual activities with my spouse (e.g. praying together)?
- Have I been impatient at the lack of spiritual growth in my spouse and allowed despair to rise, or my hope in Christ to wane?
- Have I stopped praying and making sacrifices for my spouse that they might come to know Christ or to know Christ more fully?
- Have I stopped working on my own spiritual progress in holiness toward my spouse because of offenses that I nurture?
- Have I failed to forgive my spouse as Christ has forgiven me?

Divine Intimacy
in Marriage