


We examine our conscience.

WE GATHER

✝ Holy Spirit, open our ears, minds, and hearts to hear your voice.

 What might people think as they rate their own performances after each of the following?

- a musical recital or play

- a martial-arts or fitness class

- a sporting event

(Add an event and question of your own.)

- _____

Why is it important for people to look back on what they have done?

WE BELIEVE

No matter how busy we are, it is important to think about the things we do and say every day. An **examination of conscience** is the act of determining whether the choices we have made showed love for God, ourselves, and

others. Examining our conscience helps us to realize how much God loves us. He always forgives us if we are truly sorry.

Examining our conscience can help us to think about what we will say and do before we act. The more we examine our conscience the easier it is to hear and follow our conscience.

But how can we examine our conscience? First, we try to think about the ways we have loved God and others. We think about the ways we are living as disciples of Jesus and as members of the Church.

Next, we ask ourselves whether we have sinned, either by *doing* things that we know are evil, or by *not doing* the good things that we could have done. We ask the Holy Spirit to help us to judge the goodness of our thoughts, words, and actions.

As Catholics...

We do not form our conscience alone. The Church helps us in many ways. One way is through her teachings. The pope and the bishops have the authority to teach us in Jesus' name. They rely on Scripture and Tradition to help Catholics form their consciences.

What are some things that the pope and bishops teach us?