

1. Do I walk resolutely along the path that God points out to me in my prayer and in spiritual direction, and through the unfolding circumstances of my life? Do I view life with the certainty that God has chosen me for some purpose? With the grace of God, am I decisive in rejecting the occasions of sin?

2. The prodigal son was humble: "I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you'" (Luke 15:18). Do I reach out humbly for the hand of God if I have had the misfortune of separating myself from him? Do I realise that more than anything else it is pride that keeps me from being true to my Christian commitments? In my interior life, do I give excessive importance to my defeats?

3. "For the gate is narrow and the way is hard, that leads to life, and those who find it are few" (Matt 7:14). Do I have a realistic view of the Christian's warfare, knowing that the way is arduous, but accessible, if I keep hold of the hand of God? Do I focus on one particular point of struggle each week?

4. "A man is justified by works and not by faith alone" (Jas 2:24). Do I show my love for Christ with deeds? When do I pause every day to examine myself to see if I have been responding to the will of God, and to say sorry?

5. Do I renounce deliberate venial sin decisively? Do I realise that in order to experience true happiness in this life and to enjoy the eternal rewards of heaven I have to be wholehearted in responding to God's call?

6. "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you" (John 14:27). Do I ask the Lord to give me his peace? Do I realise that pride, selfishness, sensuality, superficiality and meanness can only yield sadness? Do I work at lifting the spirits of those around me?

7. True love means being strong, loyal, with one's heart filled with the virtues of faith, hope and charity. Is my love strong enough to persevere in all my resolutions? Do I realise that true love involves sacrifice and self-denial, and that in the end it will make me happy?

8. Do I pray for the virtue of fortitude? Do I reflect on the example of our Lady and of so many Christians who were not afraid to give their lives for Christ?

9. Do I practise fortitude at home and at work, making sure that I am punctual, helping the people around me, smiling rather than complaining, demanding of others with kindness, not putting off the things I don't feel like doing at the moment, etc.?

10. Do I regard my aptitudes and talents as something God has given to me in order to fulfil a mission here on earth? Am I committed to using my talents for the good of others, in the hope that God will say to me: "Well done, good and faithful servant; you have been faithful over a little, I will set you over much" (Matt 25:21)?

11. Is my demeanour pleasant, without succumbing to vanity or love of comfort? Have I given up the desire to cut a brilliant figure in social or professional life, since it is more important to me to find God in everything? Am I willing to sacrifice personal success for the sake of my family?

12. Have I tried to promote among my work colleagues some initiative to help the needy? Do I give them an example of serving others?

13. "Standing by the cross of Jesus were his mother..." (John 19:25). Do I turn to Mary, teacher of the hidden and silent sacrifice, to be strong in the face of difficulties that arise in my life?