

**Pastor's Column**

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**A Lenten Examination of Conscience**

*Death and time seem to belong together as the conditions under which human beings can learn faith and love. Death helps us to see what is worth trusting and loving, and to see what is a waste of time.*

1. If I were to die tomorrow, have I had joy? Have I cared? Have I had the best of what was available? Have I had any of what it is all for? Where is God in my life?
2. To what extent do I know the value and place of others in my life? Am I aware of and grateful for the roles others have played in making me, for better or for worse, who and what I am? Can I recognize the decisions of family, friends, or companions that have given me the freedom to make choices? Where is God in my life?
3. Am I capable of sacrificing my own desires, pleasures, longings, for the good of others? Can I see and be thankful for the sacrifices of others for me? Do I require praise for my self-giving, or am I willing to make mine an offering "in secret" solely for the good it can produce? Where is God in my life?
4. Who have I thought I loved? Was my motive self-giving or self-centered? When I hear the words "the joy of loving," do I think of what I can get or what I can give to others? How often have I said, in words or deeds, "No Thanks!" to someone who has said to me, "I want to love you"? Does the Golden Rule have any practical place in my life? When have I last prayed for someone who hurt me; acted kindly toward someone who offended me; desired the good for someone who hates me? Where is God in my life?
5. When I pray the Lord's Prayer, do I take seriously the words of the petition "Forgive us...as we forgive"? Am I willing to forgive others the wrongs they have done to me? Am I willing to ask forgiveness of wrongs I have done to others? Where is God in my life?
6. How open am I to being healed? How open am I to exploring and recognizing and admitting those places in my heart and soul that need healing? Am I humble enough to recognize the role of others in the healing process, or does my ego insist that I "do it all myself"? Where is God in my life?

—Based on Neville Ward and Mitch Albom

*As we begin this Season of Lent, take time to reflect upon this examination of conscience and seriously ask yourself, "Where is God in my life?"*

*Fr. Mike*