As with any examination of conscience,
begin by recalling God's tremendous love and mercy for you.
Place yourself in the Lord's presence and allow Him
to fill you with His deep love for you.
Rest yourself upon His Sacred Heart and be at peace.

EXAMINATION OF CONSCIENCE—ANGER

~Excerpt from *Bathe Seven Times (A Contemplative Look at the Seven Capital Sins)*
by M. Nadine Brown

Emotions

In general, am I inclined towards anger?

How does anger show up in my life? How do I express it?

Do I often have outbursts of anger? If so, what is the trigger?

In what situations am I tempted to think angry thoughts?

Is the anger I feel a holy anger (concerned about God's honor and glory) or a sinful anger?

In what situations is the anger I feel too strong for the situation?

Do I say things in anger and impatience?

When I feel impatient, what usually happens next?

In what situations do my feelings of anger hinder my ability to reason?

When I feel some injustice has been done to me or to another, do I feel the desire to restore the right order through revenge?

When my ego has been hurt, do I feel the need to strike back? Do thoughts of retaliation bring delight?

How can my feelings of anger be a positive force in my life?

In what ways can I improve the way I handle my anger?

Where do I need to forgive instead of holding onto anger?

Are any of my feelings of anger leading me down the dangerous pathway to hatred?

Relationship with the Lord

Where is my anger bringing about a wicked sadness and weighing down my soul?

Do I feel that the Lord has let me down and not met my needs in any situations?

Is there any buried anger at God for something that has happened in my life?

Am I journaling all my feelings of anger and resentment? Am I afraid to tell God how I feel?

How do these feelings of anger and disappointment with God cause me to run from solitude and intimacy with Him?

As the Lord is purifying me, are there any areas in my life where I feel deprived?

Am I afraid to let go of any of my attachments?

I talked to the Lord about these feelings of fear and deprivation yet?

What is my attitude during times of desolation?

Do I frequent the Sacrament of Reconciliation to help me deal with my anger?

Relationship with Others

Do I have a quarrelsome attitude?

Am I only pleasant and agreeable with the people I like?

Has my anger led me to quarrels, insults, abusive words, or physical attacks?

In what situations am I consistently unreasonable and difficult to get along with?

Do I treat others with a dignified coolness and give them the cold shoulder when I am angry?

On what occasions does anger start to bubble up within me?

What do I do then? Do I blow up quickly and without thought?

Before I react, could I bring this situation to the Lord for His point of view?

Am I critical of others, their work, and their accomplishments?

Do I insist on giving my opinion on everything and murmur behind others' backs when things are handled in a way differently from how I would handle them?

When do I feel that people have really let me down in my life? What can I do to heal these hurts?

When does my anger have a negative effect on those around me? What steps can I take to change this?

Do I pray for my relationship with those who stir up feelings of anger within me?

Do I pray for situations that usually lead me to anger?

Relationship with Self

Do I become angry and disgusted with myself because of my personal weaknesses and sins?

Am I impatient that spiritual perfection is taking so long?

Does my anger and disappointment in myself manifest itself in anger towards others?

Are my feelings of anger towards myself unreasonable and unjustified, demanding perfection?

Having made resolutions to increase my holiness, do I become angry with myself when I fail to achieve them?

Family and Community Life

How do my actions show I care about the happiness of others?

Do I believe that my disposition towards anger can hurt my family / community significantly?

Do I care that my anger has a negative impact upon my family / community?

Am I a cause for division within my family / community?

What am I doing to develop a gentle, meek disposition?

Do I treat each person as I would treat Jesus?

Do my actions or lack of actions cause another to fall into this sin of anger?

The Ministry of Intercession

Do I critique another's every prayer?

When I am praying for another, do I have a judgmental, superior attitude? Do I judge the sinner? Do I love the sinner?

Am I repulsed by and judgmental of the sins of others?

What is my attitude regarding winning graces for the salvation of souls?

Whenever I feel angry, do I remember to pray for all people who are also experiencing anger?

Do I view meekness as weakness or strength?

How is my spiritual journey helping me to embrace Isaiah 53, "The Suffering Servant"?

Consider one or two areas where you struggle with anger the most. Does there seem to be a common thread or reason why you struggle in these areas? Journal any insights and feelings with the Lord. Listen for His words of love, wisdom and counsel. Pray for a deeper trust and confidence in the Lord. Pray for a holy hatred of this sin of anger. Take time to ponder and journal, "Though He was harshly treated, He submitted and opened not His mouth; Like a lamb led to the slaughter or a sheep before the shearers, He was silent and opened not His mouth (Is 53:7).