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Saturday's Gospel: Examination of Conscience and Prayer

Gospel for Saturday in the 34th
Week of Ordinary Time, and
commentary.

Gospel (*Lk* 21:34-36)

“But take heed to yourselves lest your hearts be weighed down with dissipation and drunkenness and cares of this life, and that day come upon you suddenly like a snare; for it will come upon all who dwell upon the face of the whole earth. But watch at all times, praying that you

may have strength to escape all these things that will take place, and to stand before the Son of man.”

Commentary

Today's Gospel offers us two helpful means to be vigilant and prepared for when our Lord calls us to his presence: examining our conscience and prayer.

The Church has recommended examining our conscience right from its early years, in order to live our Christian vocation effectively and to approach with the right dispositions the sacrament of God's mercy, sacramental confession.

Examining our conscience means opening our soul to God's light, invoking the Holy Spirit to help us see anything that separates us from

God and hinders our union with Him, in order to ask for his forgiveness and strive to prevent this in the future.

Our Lord warns us against letting our heart become enslaved by the demands of the senses and pleasure-seeking, and the blindness of soul that results from being concerned exclusively about worldly things. These can make us insensitive to God's grace and mercy, and the need for conversion. The response to God is postponed for a tomorrow that never arrives or is avoided, and one continues immersed in seeking only what is pleasant or caught up the urgency of trying to solve pressing problems only with our own strength.

The second means recommended in this passage is prayer. Personal dialogue with God keeps us in his presence and prepares us to respond

docilely to the gifts of the Holy Spirit and attain their fruits, especially charity. For the judgment when eternity begins for us will focus on how we have grown in love.

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(04/01/2026)