

From Heart of Stone to Heart of Flesh

A Lenten Checklist for a Clean Heart



This gentle, prayerful checklist helps you examine what is shaping your heart. Use it to invite the Holy Spirit to purify, soften, and reorient your heart toward God's love. Lent is not solely a season of sacrifice. It is a season of transformation, calling us to open our hearts.

Is This for You?

You may benefit from this heart-check if:

- ♥ You desire a deeper, more integrated spiritual life
- ♥ You sense your heart is divided, distracted, or spiritually tired
- ♥ You long for purification and alignment with the will of God
- ♥ You want your Lenten practices to truly reshape your interior life

Understanding the Heart

The Catechism reminds us that the heart is our hidden center—the place of decision, covenant, and encounter. It is deeper than emotion. It is where we meet God. It is where we choose life or death (CCC 2563).

Pope Francis explains that “The journey from a sick heart, from a sinful heart, from a heart that cannot see things well because it is in sin, to the fullness of the light of the heart, is the work of the Holy Spirit.” Becoming clean of heart goes beyond personal discipline and self-improvement. This renewal is made possible when we turn to God and cooperate with His grace.

What Hardens Our Hearts?

A distracted or “unclean” heart is not always about obvious sin. Often, the heart becomes clouded by:

- ♥ Subtle attachments
- ♥ Divided loyalties
- ♥ Habitual distractions
- ♥ Pride disguised as independence
- ♥ Spiritual routines without thoughtful attentiveness

Final Encouragement

Purifying your heart is not about becoming someone new. It is about allowing God to give you the heart He created you to have. This transformation is quiet. The Holy Spirit does the deep work.

A Simple Lenten Practice

Add this petition to your daily prayer: “Lord, form my heart. Remove what divides it. Cleanse what stains it. Pour Your love into its hidden places. Grant me a heart that sees You clearly, loves You faithfully, follows You freely, and radiates Your love consistently. Amen.”

*Alleluia*nyc*

The Clean Heart Checklist

Move slowly. Pray through each section. Let truth—not judgment—lead.

1. Orientation of the Heart

- Do I consciously place God at the center of my decisions, or only in theory?
- When I feel anxious or overwhelmed, where does my heart instinctively turn first?
- Is my prayer more about speaking—or listening?

Prayer Prompt:

Lord, show me what occupies my heart.

2. Interior Clarity

- Am I aware of what consistently distracts me from prayer or peace?
- Do I confuse busyness with faithfulness?
- Have I allowed noise (media, opinions, expectations) to crowd out silence?

Scripture to Contemplate:

"Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God" (Matthew 5:8).

3. Attachments & Resistance

- Is there something I cling to that prevents deeper trust in God?
- Do I resist God's will in certain areas while obeying Him in others?
- Have I grown comfortable with spiritual lukewarmness?

Reflection:

What feels like a "heart of stone" right now?

4. Love Received

- Do I truly believe God's love has been poured into my heart?
- Do I live as someone loved—or as someone trying to earn love?
- Do I make space to receive God's love through the Sacraments?

Scripture to Contemplate:

"The love of God has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit" (Romans 5:5).

5. Love Given

- Does God's love flow outward through me to others?
- Do I recognize Christ in the poor, difficult, or inconvenient?
- Is my love marked by sacrifice, patience, and courage?

Quote Attributed to Saint Francis of Assisi:

"Remember that when you leave this earth, you can take with you nothing that you have received—only what you have given: a full heart enriched by honest service, love, sacrifice, and courage."

6. Desire for Renewal

- Do I desire a new heart—or merely a more comfortable life?
- Am I willing to let God remove what hardens me?
- Do I trust God's promise to give me a heart of flesh?

Scripture to Contemplate:

"I will give you a new heart, and a new spirit I will put within you. I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh" (Ezekiel 36:26).