

## Deliverance Homework Packet

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*For our struggle is not with flesh and blood but with the principalities, with the powers, with the world rulers of this present darkness, with the evil spirits in the Heavens.*

—Ephesians 6:12

*We cannot simply regard the Devil as a symbol for evil; otherwise, we become sociologists, not exegetes. And those who suggest that we can no longer believe in such things have not thought very deeply about the twentieth century.*

—Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger

*What are the Church's greatest needs at the present time? Don't be surprised at Our answer and don't write it off as simplistic or even superstitious: one of the Church's greatest needs is to be defended against the evil we call the Devil.*

—Pope Paul VI

I came across the term *deliverance* about 17 years ago. After completing my own deliverance, I saw an enormous change in my life, especially in my ability to resist temptation. Habitual sins that I had long been enslaved to and struggled to overcome were suddenly and dramatically defeated by Jesus Christ. It was exhilarating. I saw firsthand that the power of God was real—and that the Devil was no mere metaphor for evil.

Within a few months of this critical turning point, I felt God calling me into this unique kind of ministry. I had seen its positive effects in my own life, after all, but—as is often the case with God—the fulfillment of His calling over me did not come until several years later. After a long period of searching and spiritual preparation, the Holy Spirit removed the scales from my eyes and brought me into the enfolding arms of the Catholic Church. And my conversion might not have been possible without me first experiencing the Lord's deliverance from evil spirits. For I had seen firsthand that God could dislodge demons from any person, no matter the severity of his sins, or the state of his life, or the magnitude of darkness engulfing him. I had witnessed the compelling and mighty hand of Jesus Christ. And His authority was (and forever will be) absolute. "All power in heaven and on earth has been given to me," He said to His Apostles. "Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, until the end of the age" (Matthew 28:18-20).

But having just converted myself, I thought, "How am I going to translate this 'deliverance stuff' into solid Catholic theology?" I mean, literally, I had just finished RCIA. What on earth did I know? Yet, there it was, unmistakably: God's persistent nudging of my heart to move down this particular—and quite peculiar—road.

Well, it just so happened that I met a very devout Catholic deliverance counselor named **Brother Ignatius Mary**. This man had spent 40 years performing deliverance ministry work—first as a Protestant minister, then as a Catholic convert, and finally, as a hermitic Oblate-Regular who had taken private promises of celibacy and poverty. For the next three years, I became one of Brother's final two pupils; his last one was my best friend and ministry partner, retired Army Col. Michael O'Hara. Brother mentored us both one-on-one, teaching us everything he knew about spiritual warfare, deliverance ministry, and most importantly for me, sound Catholic doctrine. (Brother often had to "slap me upside the head," as he called it, to rehabilitate some of my more exuberant Protestant tendencies!)

At Brother's direction, we studied countless books on the subject of deliverance, exorcism, angelology, and the occult from a Catholic perspective. We listened to countless homilies and discussions given by real Catholic exorcists. And we worked over the phone one-on-one with the clients that came to his ministry for help.

The range of these clients' needs was eye-opening, from the mundane (i.e., those needing spiritual direction, conversion guidance, and professional mental health care) to the bizarre (i.e., those seeing objects fly around their

house). There really was a spiritual battle going on in the world. And what was the prize being fought over in this “invisible” war? Nothing less than human souls.

Saint Pio of Pietrelcina put it this way: “Let us always keep before our eyes the fact that here on Earth we are on a battlefield.” But many Christians have forgotten this. The Devil has silenced their voices and suppressed their gifts from ever becoming useful to the body of Christ. They no longer resist the Evil One through prayer and holy living. The black hole of lukewarmness has comfortably swallowed them up—and Satan has drowned them in it. But Christ commends “the victor” who has not “soiled [his] garments; [he] will walk with me dressed in white, because [he is] worthy... and I will never erase his name from the book of life but will acknowledge his name in the presence of my Father and of his angels” (Revelation 3:4-5). Brother taught us that if we wanted to overcome the world and the Devil’s kingdom, we had to take our faith very seriously and act accordingly. And that we always needed to take the threat of Satan seriously, even while keeping our eyes fixed on Christ.

In December 2019, on the heels of an incredibly successful lecture tour across 11 different universities throughout Europe and India, in which Col. O’Hara and myself had the opportunity to share the scientific evidence supporting our Catholic beliefs with thousands of young college students and faculty members, Brother Ignatius spoke with Michael over the phone—and he warned him about his future. Because of what our recent evangelism efforts likely accomplished overseas, he told Michael, Satan’s coming retaliation against him would be great.

It was the last time either of us ever talked to him. A week later, Brother passed away at home very suddenly. He was 64 years old. At the time of his death, Brother had over half a million website visits per month. And his final warning proved to be chilling and prophetic: Michael experienced great persecution, humiliation, financial loss, and unrelenting spiritual attack over the next three years.

But having emerged from that period, we are now working hard to continue Brother’s incredible legacy—we have taken up his long road march against the spiritual forces of evil, and with renewed vigor. With passionate faith, I believe that God has called us into (and prepared us for) this unique ministry in order to help those who are truly suffering from the diabolical and extraordinary influence of the Devil. And we are so honored that He has asked us to do this. It is a cross that we joyfully bear.

If you are reading this document now, it is very likely that you are suffering from the effects of mortal sin and the oppressive power of the demonic kingdom. But it is our sincere prayer that we fix that soon with God’s help!

But first, your questions.

**What is deliverance?** Actually, in a Christian context, the term *deliverance* has several meanings.

Firstly, *deliverance* can mean being saved by God from some external misfortune or calamity. You see this general sense of the word in the book of Exodus when Moses sings of God’s deliverance from the Egyptians after the Lord drowns Pharaoh’s army in the churning waters of the Red Sea (see Exodus 15). So, if you’re hoping Heaven saves you from a medical illness, a financial crisis, or a family feud, you are praying for God’s deliverance.

The term also suggests our freedom from the eternal consequences of sin, which is death—specifically, the “second death,” when the Devil and his fallen angels will be thrown into the lake of fire for eternity, and all damned human souls right along with them. A believer’s soul, however, might be delivered from Hell by Jesus Christ, who conquered death when He died on the cross for our sins: He descended into Hell, and then rose again from the dead on the third day after His crucifixion. “But now that you have been freed from sin and have become slaves of God, the benefit that you have leads to sanctification, and its end is eternal life” (Romans 6:22).

But *deliverance* has two other potential meanings that are very closely related. It refers to special ministries that privately handle individual cases of extreme demonic influence and extraordinary diabolical activity. More specifically, *deliverance* usually refers to the special prayers that such deliverance ministers say over their clients when performing *minor exorcisms*. And these two final definitions are what we mean when using that term here in the context of this ministry.

The *Catholic Centurion* is the website of our Catholic deliverance ministry. Through it, we offer help, training, and

resources for those seeking freedom from spiritual darkness. Our deliverance team of trained and dedicated laypeople conducts minor exorcisms on those afflicted by the Evil One. This is an “all-volunteer military system.” Much like Stephen ministers, who are lay congregation members trained to provide one-to-one care to those experiencing a difficult life circumstance, *deliverance ministers* (i.e., Christians formally trained in minor exorcism techniques) care for their clients by giving them resources, sound teaching, spiritual advice, and prayer to overcome all forms of spiritual bondage. This is an important work of charity in the eyes of the Church.

Deliverance teams work very hard to help those suffering from severe forms of demonic oppression. They conduct long, exhaustive prayer sessions seeking deliverance for their clients. They offer fasting, almsgiving, time, prayer, and private suffering in the hope that Jesus Christ accepts these intercessory sacrifices and uses them to expel demons actively harming real-world victims. And they are often treated as the nutty, red-headed stepchildren of the Catholic Church—like a merry band of contagious lepers. (But this persecution is just, for it ensures their humility.)

**What is extraordinary demonic activity?** While everybody alive experiences *ordinary* demonic activity—namely, *temptation*, which occurs in a person’s mind or in life’s natural circumstances—there are special cases that arise when Satan’s kingdom has gained a more profound legal right to act in someone’s life beyond merely provoking in him a willful desire to commit a sin. This insidious influence is called *extraordinary* diabolic activity. Evil spirits that have gained such legal rights can wreak havoc and intense suffering upon their victims, destroying their lives. The process of removing these extraordinary spiritual rights—and the demons abusing them—is called *exorcism*.

**What is exorcism?** An exorcism is the spiritual practice of expelling demons from a place or person. There are two kinds of exorcism in the Catholic Church: *minor* (or *simple*) *exorcisms* and *major* (or *solemn*) *exorcisms*.

In 1673 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, a *major exorcism* (or *solemn exorcism*) is defined as one that “can be performed only by a priest and with the permission of the bishop.” This explicitly refers to the *Rite of Exorcism*, which is a special sacramental of the Church. The Rite may only be performed by a priest who has been appointed to be an exorcist by his local bishop. When this happens, the bishop gives the priest *faculties* (or written permission) to conduct the *Rite of Exorcism*. It is the only form of exorcism that may be used on those who are fully possessed by an evil spirit, and it is the only kind where the exorcist may directly converse with a demon. (Laity should never, ever chat with a demon for any reason at all.)

*Minor exorcisms*, on the other hand, do not always require a priest to perform them, nor do they require written permission from the bishop. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Web site describes the two kinds of minor exorcisms available to the Church:

1. A minor exorcism prayer performed over a new Christian during the Easter Vigil. Only the Vigil’s celebrant priest can perform this first kind of minor exorcism. It is reserved for newly initiated members of the Church.
2. A special prayer for minor exorcism that may be used by the faithful (i.e., laypeople).

At last, we come to it! It is these “special prayers” (the second kind of minor exorcism) which are the object of our long quest. They are called *deliverance prayers*. You see, often, the *Rite of Exorcism* gets shortened to just *exorcism* in casual conversation. This is one reason why the term *deliverance* came about: when you hear people talking about *exorcism*, they probably mean the *Rite of Exorcism* (a ritual reserved for exorcists only), but when you hear people talking about *deliverance*, they mean those “special prayers” of *minor exorcism* permitted to all Christians.

**I think you’re wrong! I heard from a priest that layfolk can’t pray deliverance.** There are some individuals who claim that *deliverance* is not a Catholic practice or that it is not allowed to be performed by the laity.

But as Fr. Gabriele Amorth, the former exorcist of the Diocese of Rome who founded the International Association of Exorcists, wrote in his excellent book, *An Exorcist Explains the Demonic*, “After exorcism, the most effective means in the struggle against the demon are prayers of deliverance and healing... Do not be surprised if I speak of laymen. In the Gospel of Mark, before ascending to Heaven, Jesus says: ‘And these signs will accompany those who believe: in my name they will cast out demons’ (Mark 16:17). Jesus gave this power first to the 12 apostles and then to the 72 disciples. This fact indicates that He intended to extend it to those who believe in Him. This is the scriptural foundation for carrying out prayers of deliverance and healing. Whoever it is...matters little. What matters

is faith. The power to drive out demons comes directly from Jesus. No one can deny it or take it away.”

Fr. Amorth says this because the authority to pray *deliverance* is derived from one’s Baptism. It cannot be taken away. If you have been baptized “in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit,” you possess a *general* authority against demons—although you should *never* undertake this activity without considerable training and a direct calling from God. All Christians have this *general* or *limited* authority over the demonic kingdom. Jesus Himself said: “Behold, I have given you the power ‘to tread upon serpents’ and scorpions and upon the full force of the enemy and nothing will harm you. Nevertheless, do not rejoice because the spirits are subject to you, but rejoice because your names are written in heaven” (Luke 10:19-20).

However, this general authority has been restricted in two specific ways since the time of the Apostles by the Pope and Magisterium of the Catholic Church:

- 1) We cannot perform the *Rite of Exorcism* and we cannot attempt to deliver anyone who is fully possessed.
- 2) We cannot converse directly with demons. We cannot ask them their name, from whence they have come, what they are doing, or why they are present in a victim’s life. We cannot have discussions with them at all.

**So, how does a deliverance prayer work?** A deliverance prayer is any prayer made by a Christian to God, Mary, the angels, or the saints asking for an individual’s freedom from Satan’s *extraordinary* activity, influence, and power. These prayers beg God to end a sinner’s spiritual enslavement to the Evil One and implore Jesus Christ to break all legal rights that the Devil has gained over him.

Technically, every time we pray an *Our Father*, we say a deliverance prayer with that famous line “deliver us from evil.” These prayers are permitted to any layperson praying over himself, his family members, or another person asking for his help. This act usually brings about a greater freedom for the client than if the prayers had not been said. It is most effective when the intended beneficiary has first willingly partaken of the Sacraments of Penance and the Eucharist. (These two Sacraments form the twin pillars which, theologically-speaking, uphold the entire ministry of exorcism, making it possible in the first place for a mere human to cast out evil spirits with the name of Jesus!)

In fact, you see a parallel structure that exists between Christian initiation rites and the deliverance process. This is no mere coincidence—*deliverance* is an extension of evangelism.

At the Easter Vigil, when new Catholics are inducted into the Church, all unbaptized initiates receive a minor exorcism from the Vigil’s presiding priest. Taken right from the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: “Since Baptism signifies liberation from sin and from its instigator the devil, one or more exorcisms are pronounced over the candidate. The [priest] then anoints [the new Christian] with the oil of catechumens...and [the initiate] explicitly renounces Satan [and all his works]” (1237). Finally, the new member is triply immersed in the baptismal water, when the priest says, “I baptize you in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (1238-1240). After baptism, the Christian’s initiation into the Church is completed by administering his Confirmation.

Previously baptized Christians who are converting (or returning) to Catholicism undergo a similar process. The new Catholic first attends Confession\* where a priest absolves his sins. Then, at the Easter Vigil, he receives an exorcism, publicly renounces Satan, and then partakes in the Sacrament of Confirmation to finish his initiation.

By carefully examining both of these initiation procedures, we see that the *deliverance* or *exorcism* process requires three basic elements:

1. Forgiveness of sins (through Baptism or Confession).
2. Public renunciation of the Devil and his works.
3. An exorcism prayer.

Basically, this is the same step-by-step process all deliverance models follow, not just ours.

An afflicted client is first advised to pursue Baptism (if he is unbaptized) or told to go to Confession (if he is already baptized). Either Sacrament breaks any spiritual hold the Devil might have over the client due to some sin, as both

Sacraments wash away all sins. Then, the client renounces the Devil and his works during the deliverance prayer session, informing Satan that he must leave because the spiritual rights that let him be there in the first place have been broken. Finally, a minor exorcism prayer is said over the client which, God-willing, forces Satan to leave when he decides that he doesn't want to cooperate. (Which is often.)

**\*Note:** This is why it is so critical that we, as Catholics, attend Confession regularly and pray the acts of penance that our priest assigns us. After being absolved of our sins, when we perform the assigned penitential acts, which often include a series of *Our Father's* and *Hail Mary's*, these prayers weaken and drive out any demons attached to us through the legal rights the priest just broke in Confession.

**You keep mentioning “legal rights,” “spiritual slavery,” and “bondage to sin.” What do you mean by that?**  
Sure. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* defines sin as “an utterance, a deed, or a desire contrary to the eternal law” (1849). When a human being sins, he commits a crime against this eternal law, thereby breaking the laws of the universe implemented by God at the beginning of time. Of course, everyone has sinned. St. Paul wrote that “all have sinned and are deprived of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). Sin and death entered the world through Adam and Eve's first (original) sin, and since their fall, all of mankind after them has been sinning away, breaking laws left and right like a bad Judas Priest song!

But Jesus once said: “Amen, amen, I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a slave of sin” (John 8:34). What on earth could Christ mean by this? To muddy the waters further, St. Paul seems to echo Christ's sentiment in Romans 6:17. Deepening the mystery, he writes: “But thanks be to God that, although you were once slaves of sin, you have become obedient from the heart to the pattern of teaching to which you were entrusted.” Rather helpfully, the footnote for this Scripture passage, found on the USCCB's website (the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops), further tells us that “Christians have been released from the grip of sin, but sin endeavors to reclaim its victims....,” and then later on, their appointed theologian writes: “Throughout this passage Paul uses the slave-master model in order to emphasize the fact that one cannot give allegiance to both God and sin.” Interesting. The U.S. bishops use the word *allegiance* here, which means “loyalty or commitment of a subordinate to a superior.” Again, this line suggests that humanity is living in a state of subordination or inferiority to something.

Now, between these three passages, we see here pretty clearly that St. Paul, the 194 bishops comprising the USCCB, and Jesus Christ Himself all seem to be saying roughly the same thing: that if we are sinning, then we are enslaved to it, and if we are freed from this enslavement, this sin is going to try hard to “reclaim” (or re-enslave) us again, its past “victims.”

So, does this really mean that our human condition is now one of slavery?

Well, St. Paul gives us a more pointed answer to this question in his letter to the Galatians: “Formerly, when you did not know God, you were in bondage to beings that by nature are no gods; but now that you have come to know God, or rather to be known by God, how can you turn back again to the weak and beggarly elemental spirits, whose slaves you want to be once more?” (Gal. 4:8-9). According to St. Paul, Christians have been set free from slavery to sin, and this bondage isn't just a metaphor—we are slaves of “spirits” who are separate from, and weaker than, God.

Well, folks, if we exclude God, what spirits remain? Angels! But angels don't enslave people, do they? Not the good ones. Hmmm. Wait a second—there is that *other* group of angels we're forgetting about. You know, the fallen ones—the demons? So, being enslaved to sin means being enslaved to Satan and his demonic kingdom.

Remember the warning that the Lord gave to Cain in Genesis 4:6-7: “Why are you angry? Why are you dejected? If you act rightly, you will be accepted; but if not, sin lies in wait at the door: its urge is for you, yet you can rule over it.” And then, ignoring God's warning, Cain takes his younger brother out into the field and murders him anyway.

Here, in this passage, sin is almost personified. It's a predator crouched at Cain's door, waiting to pounce on him. And God tells Cain he can rule over it and its wicked urgings. But Cain does not and succumbs to them anyway. The vicious predator takes Cain down right by the throat. And who is this predator? Is it a vague, metaphorical, anthropomorphized concept? No! “Behind the disobedient choice of our first parents lurks a seductive voice, opposed to God, which makes them fall into death out of envy,” instructs our Catechism (391). “By our first parents' sin, the devil has acquired a certain domination over man, even though man remains free. Original sin entails



‘captivity under the power of him who thenceforth had the power of death, that is, the devil’” (407).

The Devil has enslaved us all by our sins. We have fallen under his power, and the power that he wields his death. And when a human sins again—even after Baptism, which means all Christians are included in this statement—he falls back under the power of Satan and his demonic kingdom of death and darkness. The Catechism explains: “This dramatic situation of ‘the whole world [which] is in the power of the evil one’ makes man's life a battle: The whole of man's history has been the story of dour combat with the powers of evil, stretching, so our Lord tells us, from the very dawn of history until the last day. Finding himself in the midst of the battlefield man has to struggle to do what is right, and it is at great cost to himself, and aided by God's grace, that he succeeds in achieving his own inner integrity” (409).

Exorcism and deliverance set us free from this captivity.

**Totally not convinced! I need more proof.** Very well. For further proof of this, we turn to the Book of Exodus in the Old Testament and the remarkable story of God's deliverance of the Hebrews from Egyptian slavery.

As the story tells us, the Israelites (God's people) have been enslaved by a tyrannical king, the Pharaoh of Egypt. But God sends a deliverer named Moses to set them free. He gives Moses great power and authority over the Egyptians, and the Prophet makes a fool of them through God's miraculous wonders. Biblical scholars have noted that the plagues God sends upon Egypt seem to correlate with the pagan gods of the Egyptian pantheon, and while the magicians copy some of Moses's initial miracles (and they gain their magical power from these so-called “gods,” who were, in truth, demons), the Egyptian sorcerers quickly find themselves outmatched. God demonstrates quite handily that he and he alone is the Creator of the Universe. This is another interesting nod at the gap in power between the Kingdom of God and the demonic kingdom. Satan can act upon the world in a limited fashion, but in the end, he is nothing more than a creature. The Devil cannot approach the power of God—not he nor all the combined demons throughout his kingdom!

As the Ten Plagues continue to fall upon the Egyptian nation as punishment for the Pharaoh's disobedience to God and for the mistreatment of God's people, Moses is commanded to have each Hebrew family slay a lamb and mark the lintel of their doorway with its blood. Through this sacrifice, the people are spared from God's wrath that same night when the angel of death passes over each of their homes. But the Egyptians remain unprotected when this final plague strikes, and the firstborn of every Egyptian household is struck dead—even the Pharaoh's oldest son.

In his grief, shame, and humiliating defeat, the Pharaoh frees the Hebrews at last. But a few days after this, the Pharaoh's heart hardens again. He gathers his army and his chariots and pursues the Hebrews, trapping them along the edge of the Red Sea. But God defends his people. He destroys Pharaoh's armies in the waters of the Red Sea, and the Hebrews escape him forever to enter the land promised to their forefathers.

This story is very similar to the current condition of the world in the grip of the cosmic spiritual battle between the Church and the demonic kingdom. It is actually a “type” (or symbol) pre-figuring the victory of Christ.

The entire human race—we who were made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27)—are symbolized by the Hebrews in the Exodus story. We are God's people. But we have been enslaved by oppressive tyrants (sin and its evil master, Satan). To remedy this, God sends a deliverer, his only Son, Jesus Christ, the promised Messiah. Jesus performs many miracles during His ministry on earth, including exorcisms, to show the world His authority over the “god of this age,” just like Moses did when he performed miracles countering the pagan Egyptian gods and demonstrating God's absolute power over them. And finally, at the end of Christ's ministry, just before He entered into His Passion and Crucifixion, Jesus shows the entire world His power over death itself, the most horrific of Satan's works, for when the Devil tempted Adam and Eve and succeeded in convincing them to sin, death was its ultimate result.

Then Christ becomes the sacrifice which protects us from the Second Death or eternal damnation (Revelation 21:8). John the Baptist identifies Jesus as such when he declares: “Behold the Lamb of God, who takes away the sins of the world” (John 1:29). Like those lambs slain by the Hebrews to mark the lintel of their doorways, Jesus becomes the sacrificial Lamb of God through His crucifixion and death at the hands of the Romans. It is Jesus's Precious Blood flowing over and marking us which saves us from the power of the “angel of death.” The power of death can no longer touch us and we are freed from sin and Satan by Christ's redemptive act. While Satan may strike down and

kill others, like those who serve him in the occult, he cannot touch any Christians marked by the Blood of Christ.

But despite his grand defeat and humiliation at Christ's Resurrection, Satan has turned back to pursue and reclaim us, just as the Pharaoh did after the Hebrews fled his evil kingdom. The Devil seeks to re-enslave us, even though we are Christians and have been set free. And he can—but only if we sin, as some of the faithless Hebrews proposed to the Israelites when they saw Pharaoh's huge army descending on them.

**That's not true! Christians are already free from sin. They can't be "reclaimed" by the Devil!** I'm afraid you are mistaken. Despite our status as Christians, we can reject God's plan for our lives with our own free will at any point in time. As the writer of James declares: "You adulterous people! Do you not know that friendship with the world is enmity with God? Therefore, whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God" (James 4:4). Notice that he is writing to baptized Christians here. (The letter of James was written to Christian communities throughout Palestine and Syria.) This writer warns the early Christian communities that they can become enemies of God again by befriending the world through their actions.

And St. Paul agrees with him! He wrote to the Christians in Galatia: "Now the works of the flesh are obvious: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, hatreds, rivalry, jealousy, outbursts of fury, acts of selfishness, dissensions, factions, occasions of envy, drinking bouts, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God" (Galatians 5:19-21). Again, St. Paul is teaching these Christians, who are already baptized, that they will not inherit the kingdom of God if they keep sinning, thereby enslaving themselves to Satan and the demonic kingdom. Those who forget what God has done for them and abandon the race set before them will not attain the crown of eternal life.

And finally, St. Paul further writes: "For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor present things, nor future things, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39). Now, read this passage carefully. Every single thing that Paul lists in this verse is external to ourselves—death is an external force, demons are external creatures, and a physical distance lies outside our bodies. Some might read a line like this and immediately say, "See, Robert! You're wrong. Nothing can keep me from God. No re-enslaving possible!" But when you square this verse with the other two passages (and the many others like them), it soon becomes obvious: there's only one thing that can keep you from God—your own free will choices. Nobody else can keep you from the love of Christ, not Satan nor his horde of demons nor his evil power over death. But you can keep yourself from Him by choosing to return to Egypt (i.e., a life of sin) and by choosing to avoid the long, difficult journey across the uncomfortable wilderness that separates the Nile Delta and the Promised Land (i.e., the lifelong, spiritual journey of sanctification).

And so, pulling himself back together after his grand defeat in your life (i.e., after your Baptism and Confirmation), Satan gathers his demonic army and sets out after you—not because the Devil can bypass or defeat the column of cloud (i.e., God's presence) which guards you, but to lure you away from God's protection by enticing you with sin, thereby fooling you into exposing yourself out in the open where his demons can spiritually kill you.

**Okay, you're starting to convince me. But why does God allow this? Why does he permit demonic bondage in the lives of everyday people, Christians included?** Because God respects our free will. He can't take away the consequences of our actions; otherwise, we are little more than programmed robots unable to think or to love or to choose Him freely. And since God endowed us with free will—gifted to us during our creation—He will not take it back. This requires that He respect our free will choices, even when they lead to death, evil, and suffering.

In sum, the Devil usually gains entry into our lives by our own sinful choices. While you can't stop trials and tribulations from coming your way, you can control your own actions. And this is the secret to living a life of freedom in Christ—by exercising your spiritual freedom to do good and to live according to God's laws, regardless of what's going on around you. (In this context, "freedom" does not mean your right to live without suffering or to do as you please to "make you happy;" in fact, Jesus promised us that we will all experience suffering for His sake and for the sake of the Gospel. And no servant is greater than his master.)

**You're rambling, Robert. Give us the explicit reasons.** Yes, yes, my apologies. Bad habits die hard! Here are just a few reasons why the demonic kingdom might be active in your life.

### 1. You sinned.

The most straightforward and obvious answer. Theoretically, any time that you commit a mortal sin, the Devil could possess you. (Yikes! Did you know that?) However, in 99.9% of most cases, God blocks this from actually occurring. But some sins seem to lead very quickly to demonization more than others—for example: dabbing one’s big toe into the occult waters (or diving into them fully, headfirst), abortion, sexual sins, and hard drug use. The occult, in particular, is always a huge red flag: if you have played with Tarot cards or Ouija boards, if you have cast spells of any kind, if you had parents or other close family members who were heavily involved in the occult even if you were not, if you were consecrated to the Evil One, or if you participated willingly or unwillingly in Satanism in any way, shape, or form, it is likely that you are exhibiting signs of demonization, even if you don’t realize it yet.

### 2. Your ancestors sinned.

The entire human race is fallen now because of Adam and Eve’s original sin. As a result, we are all born sinners. It stands to reason that if our great-great-great-great-great-etc. grandparents sinned 80,000 years ago, and we are still experiencing those effects, well then, it might be possible that the sins of our parents and our grandparents and our great-great-great grandparents could also be having some effect on us. For this reason, renouncing ancestral sins is absolutely critical for anyone undergoing deliverance.

### 3. Others sinned against you.

If someone has abused you (verbally, physically, or sexually), if someone has cursed you or used witchcraft against you, if someone has betrayed you (like a spouse), these actions must be renounced during your deliverance session.

### 4. Satan received permission from God to harass and torment you.

Now, this last reason harkens back to Job, St. Paul, and St. Peter. In the book bearing his name, Job is described by God himself as being “blameless and upright, fearing God and avoiding evil”; “no one on earth [is] like him.” But Satan replies to God, “Is it for nothing that Job is God-fearing? Have you not surrounded him and his family and all that he has with your protection? You have blessed the work of his hands, and his livestock are spread over the land. But now put forth your hand and touch all that he has, and surely, he will curse you to your face” (Job 1:9-11). Satan claimed that Job was only obedient and holy because God was blessing him. He wanted to prove that Job didn’t really love God, that he only worshipped him to obtain and retain his great number of possessions.

I’d like to draw your attention to a very telling admission given by Satan (verse 10a) during this exchange between him and God. It reveals that the Devil can’t touch Job because—*drum roll, please*—Job never sins! Satan admits that God has surrounded Job with his divine protection, and by extension, he can’t touch him. And why has God done this? Because, as God says a few lines earlier, Job is “blameless and upright, fearing God and avoiding evil” (verse 8). Because Job avoids sin! And as a result of the man’s obedience to God’s eternal law, big bad Satan is helpless to do anything to him.

This is a good lesson to take away from that book: if you avoid sin, there’s not much Satan can do to you unless he gets permission from God to test you. Righteous living creates a “hedge of protection” that the Evil One cannot hope to penetrate.

**But why would God allow Satan to do this to Job? Or—even worse!—to me?** Well, the Lord has many good reasons to allow this to happen: maybe God wants to discipline you; maybe God is allowing the consequences of your past actions to play out because He respects your free will and how you used—or in this case, misused—it; maybe God wants to test you in order to see if you are really going to “stay the course”; maybe God wants to teach you something important of a spiritual nature before he sets you free and this is the best way to teach you; maybe God wants to let you serve as a witness to others concerning His saving power when He delivers you from the Evil One’s hand; maybe God wants to increase your holiness; maybe God wants to give you a chance to suffer for the sake of Christ’s kingdom; or maybe several of these answers are correct all at the same time!

In fact, even St. Paul wrote in the New Testament that he was sent an infernal messenger, “a thorn in the flesh” (or “an angel of Satan,” as he describes it). It appears this demon was assigned to St. Paul “to beat [him]” and “to keep



[him] from being too elated” or prideful due to the spiritual gifts God had bestowed upon him (2 Cor. 12:7).

Or consider St. Peter’s three-time denial of Christ which led to him falling into terrible despair and internal agony for a brief period of time. Jesus warned Peter before this happened that “Satan has demanded to sift all of you like wheat” (Luke 22:31). Who is Satan “demanding” this from? Well, God! Like Job long before the Apostles, Satan has come before the throne of God, like an angry prosecutor before a judge seeking his legal right to attack them. But notice how, with all of the Apostles (who were all sifted as wheat in their own time), their trials and tribulations only led to their greater and greater holiness. Though they were scourged, beaten, exiled, and killed with the utmost brutality, St. Peter and the other Apostles benefitted from this harassment—and so did the entire world, in fact, when they spread the Gospel message throughout it. We would likely not be Christians now without the suffering God permitted Satan to inflict upon them\*.

St. Padre Pio wrote, “Jesus permits these assaults of the Devil, because Jesus’ compassion makes you dear to Him, and He wants you to resemble Himself in the torments He endured in the desert, in the garden, and on the cross.”

Wise words to ponder and live by.

**\*Note:** This sentence is in no way meant to suggest that Satan is somehow our savior. Like Job, he seeks to “sift” us as wheat in order to discredit the Body of Christ, not to propagate it. The Devil is certainly not trying to evangelize anybody! In fact, as explained rather compellingly in his excellent book, *Evidence of Satan in the Modern World*, the Rev. Monsignor Léon Cristiani shares how part of Satan’s punishment is to slowly undo his own kingdom by the accomplishment of his countless evil works—for it is written: “He digs a hole [of iniquity, mischief, and deception] and bores it deep, but he falls into the pit he has made. His malice turns back upon his head; his violence falls on his own skull” (Psalm 7:15-17). Thus, it is with the Devil and those who submit to his kingdom of darkness. On their own heads will their wicked plots fall in the end.

**Let’s back up. You said occult participation was a big red flag for demonization. Why?** Well, if you decide to “dance with the Devil in the pale moon light,” to quote Jack Nicholson’s character in *Batman* (1989)—choosing to play with Ouija boards, buying the spells of witches and sorcerers, visiting psychics, using Tarot cards, hosting séances, or attempting to wield magic yourself—you are using your own free will to dive right into Satan’s sandbox, whether you realize it or not. These activities are grave sins.

But unlike other sins, these particular occult sins are literally inverse “prayers” in the most perverse sense: you aren’t just sinning against God by them. You are calling on the Devil to give you something in exchange for something else. This transactional process goes something like this:

You pay a psychic\* to tell your future (or to communicate on your behalf with someone who is dead); the psychic gets the information from a demon and then shares it with you; and then the demon instantly gets power over you—a legal right, in other words. And, later on, at some point in your life, the demon may exercise this legal right to influence you in an extraordinary manner above and beyond mere temptation. (The limits of this activity are set by the “judge,” who is God, when the legal right is first obtained.) Of course, you had no idea about this little exchange when you visited the psychic, but the demon doesn’t care about that. He’s a shrewd lawyer, and he gave you something, and you signed his spiritual contract via your actions. Even if you don’t like what he gave you or didn’t understand the terms of the contract that you unknowingly signed, according to the spiritual laws of the universe, *you owe him now*. And the Devil always takes more from you than he ever gives—in fact, he usually takes back even those worthless things he initially gave you, as well!

Let’s take another example: you buy a Ouija board or Tarot card deck because it was in the toy section at your local retail store. It doesn’t matter that these are real occult items re-branded as toys and you didn’t know that; you bought them, so by extension, you own them—and all the attached demons that they entail! Even worse than this, you throw a party at your house and whip these “toys” out to entertain your gathered friends. But by simply “playing” these games, you are submitting to their function. A Ouija board is a modern form of automatic spirit writing—the practice of letting spirits control the movement of your hands to spell out words while asking them questions. It is a form of divination. And it is a “double yes” to the spiritual world: the word *Ouija* is a literal combination of the French and German words for *yes*, so in essence, when you use this “toy” talking board, you are twice agreeing to the influence of the (very real) spirits gathered around you in the air!

None of this even begins to broach what occurs to you when you knowingly perform an occult activity with the full knowledge of who you are conversing with or beseeching, like practicing black magic or consecrating one's self to Satan or carrying out even more heinous acts of blasphemy and inhumane degeneracy. Some of the most horrendous cases of exorcism involve those individuals who enthusiastically practiced an occult "way of life" over many years. The legal rights that these poor, misled people have intentionally given up to their cruel, tenacious masters are considerable and incredibly difficult to fully sever. These exorcisms can take years before full freedom is granted.

**\*Note:** Psychics are usually frauds. Like parasites, they prey on your false hopes to swindle you out of money. But some are "legitimate"—they really do know things that would be impossible for any human to know. This is not because they have a special gift. It is because a demon told them that secret information in their mind. But never let yourself be under any illusions about psychics, diviners, necromancers, and their ilk: at best, any information or secrets gleaned from these professional deceivers are little more than kernels of truth wickedly wrapped in a thick web of lies. The kernel of truth is planted there for two reasons: 1) so the demon can claim that it fulfilled its end of the contract when demanding its legal rights to harm you later in life, and 2) so the demon can give the psychic's uttered lies a certain credibility with her gullible victim, to better fool him.

**But if I never agreed to anything with a demon, if I didn't even know it was there, how could it possibly have gained a legal right over me?** This is a common objection that I hear. Let me ask you: if a slick, dashing cell phone salesman approaches you in a parking lot, and he starts talking really fast (100 miles per minute!), and you only discern two details—"no money down" and "\$5 a month"—would you sign a contract with him?

Now, some of you would, actually! But for those of you who wouldn't, what if the salesman responds by whipping out a shiny new model of your favorite cell phone, and then he lets you hold it and play with it for a few minutes while saying things like, "Man, that looks like you and that phone were made for each other!?" Then, he says, "You know, you can take this phone home with you right now if you just show me your I.D. and sign this paperwork!" Of course, the paperwork is a whopping 24 pages of boring, mind-numbing legalese typed up in very fine print. On top of that, your stomach is growling (you just happen to be in a Chick-Fil-A parking lot of all places, and the smell of fried chicken and waffle fries is everywhere!), and the salesman is using all the code words and psychological tricks to subtly suggest that you just sign the last page of his packet so "everything you want is yours"!

At this point, a few more of you would likely be walking out of that parking lot carrying a brand-new cell phone, with no idea what you just signed or how it might pan out. (The rest of you holding out are probably New Yorkers! God bless you!) But—whether you fell for this trick or not—I would argue that every single one of you knew on some level what was happening to you. Somewhere in the back of your mind, you all understood that it was not very wise to sign a contract without reading it first. But you shrugged and took the chance anyway. Yet, if the contract turned into something really vile for you down the road, would you be legally responsible for it at that point? Yes! You almost certainly would. Unless you could prove that the salesman lied to you in some way (which would be pretty hard to do), you are most likely on the hook for signing that contract and whatever was included inside it.

It's the same thing with occult contracts. Except the "paperwork" and your "signature" doesn't appear in the form of blank white paper and fine black penmanship (your John Hancock). When you visit a psychic or diviner and pay her for hidden knowledge that you couldn't possibly discover on your own, you just spiritually signed a demon's contract in order to obtain the desired forbidden information—not with a pen, but with your action and intent. In a similar way, when you cast a spell and perform the motions and steps involved, you are signaling to the spiritual world "I am doing these specific actions in order to get a particular result from a demon, and in exchange, I am signing over certain legal rights to that demon," whether you understood that while you were doing it or not!

Literally, the word *occult* means "hidden," "concealed," or "a secret not divulged." God clearly forbids this activity in the Scriptures and in the teachings of the Catholic Church. The Catechism states: "All forms of divination are to be rejected" (2116). In fact, there are so many Scripture passages supporting this view on the subject that it isn't worth listing them all here. (If you want to know the truth, just do a Google search!) So, if God forbids these practices, which He certainly does, then clearly, He doesn't support them! Nor would He permit His angels or saints to support them either. This means that any revealed knowledge or magical effects that are legitimately gained from these forbidden practices can only have one source: Satan and his demonic kingdom.

Ultimately, all forms of divination and magic—no matter where they claim to originate from—are a “recourse to (or asking the help of) Satan or [his] demons” (Catechism 2116).

Therefore, a demon gains power over you any time you participate in such detestable practices, even without your full knowledge of their actual source, because that’s literally the only way they work. And if the spell produced an effect or the psychic told you something she couldn’t have possibly known (that you can verifiably confirm she could never have guessed), then I’m sorry to inform you but: you gave something up to get it!

**Is deliverance guaranteed to work?** Nope, it isn’t! There are *no guarantees* in this ministry. I cannot promise that every problem you experience, spiritual or otherwise, will simply go away at the conclusion of this process. (If you ever hear a deliverance minister promise something like this to you, or if he ever asks you to pay for his services, run the other way.) That’s because God is in control of all that transpires during this process.

Do not attach yourself to a particular outcome! Let the Holy Spirit determine the speed at which you find freedom from spiritual bondage. He is the Great Physician of our souls and is the only real expert in healing us from any spiritual wounds we have received in this life. Put your faith in Him that He knows what He is doing. Keep your eyes focused on Him!

One final word: Remember, the best defense against the demonic kingdom is to live a victorious life in Christ. This consists of attending Mass and Eucharistic Adoration as often as possible, participating in Confession regularly, praying and reading Scripture daily, fasting and almsgiving, and avoiding anything that might lead you into temptation—for example, avoiding the internet at night if it always results in your watching pornography, or avoiding a group of friends who are always out drinking if you struggle with alcoholism.

Your ultimate goal should be to transform yourself into the likeness of Job in the Old Testament: he was so holy, righteous, obedient, and God-fearing that Satan had to ask the Almighty’s permission to attack him in any meaningful way because a hedge of protection always lay around Job and the Devil couldn’t break through it! If you can live your life in this way, then Satan can only attack you if God grants him permission. And if God grants him permission, then rejoice and “boast in hope of the glory of God” and “boast of [your] afflictions”! For not only will they produce “endurance” and “proven character” and “hope” in you, but by offering up your sufferings to Mary, the Virgin Most Powerful, in order to advance God’s Kingdom, she will turn all the harm the Devil has inflicted on you into “enormously powerful” “weapons” “capable of destroying” Satan’s mightiest “fortresses” that he has founded across the face of the earth (Romans 5:2-5, 2 Cor. 10:4)!

May God bless you and your family and deliver you from all forms of evil!

Peace in Christ,  
Robert

## **An Instructive Parable on Deliverance**

Many Catholics and Christians don't understand the deliverance process. Very often, for example, I get asked by my clients, "Wait a second—why do I need to renounce these sins again? I've already gone to Confession and a priest absolved them! Aren't you in theological error?" At other times, I hear Christians mixing up these two terms (renunciation and Confession) in regular conversation as if they are synonyms. They will use one when they really mean the other, and vice-versa, as if both terms are one and the same thing. But they are most definitely not!

I have heard Catholics claim that we do not have the right to perform deliverances and I have also heard some deliverance ministers (who are usually Protestant evangelical) claim that deliverance always works 100% of the time, and if it doesn't, that's because the client must be doing something wrong. But all of these claims are false. And, unfortunately, there are a lot of misconceptions about deliverance prayers and the unique ministry of liberation in general. But I'm hoping to clear some of that up with this document. To give you sound teaching and answer any potential questions you might have about this special ministry, allow me to tell you a story—a parable, in fact.

## **The Parable of the Beach House**

Let's say you inherit a **house**. And let's say that this house is a valuable piece of property on a beach or a mountain lake, or whatever place that you imagine to be nicest. (Me? I'm a beach guy, so let's just go with that!)

You know that the property's value is rising over the next few decades. Developers up the coast are gentrifying the area and—as we speak—they are headed your way. In 5-10 years, your house will likely have doubled, tripled, or even quadrupled in its value. So, you want to hold on to this house. You don't want to sell it quite yet and you want to maintain it. But you don't want to let it just sit there either, so in the meantime, you decide to rent it out. Wanting to squeeze every last dollar out of this property that you can, you decide to put an ad in the paper seeking a tenant

The next day, you get a phone call from the first person answering your ad. She is an elderly retired woman named **Holy Holly**. Now, she is a really sweet old lady. Her credit is impeccable. Her list of references—all prior landlords—is pretty darn impressive. You suspect she's worth a fortune but can't prove it because she's just so humble, she doesn't buy anything flashy for herself. And all she ever does is talk about her cat (who she named "Saint Cateri") and the little women's group she meets up with three days a week at her parish to pray the rosary with. Holy Holly offers you a modest amount on rent. Her price is fair. But short-term, it isn't the biggest score you can make on this rental property. However, you are certain that, long-term, she's a solid, dependable renter.

But while you are considering her offer, you get a second phone call about your advertisement. And it's none other than the infamous **Slick Steve**. He rolls up to your house appointment riding a big old Harley Davidson. Steve's got a black leather biker jacket, tattoos on every inch of his body, and black shades that he ALWAYS wears when he's talking to you, even inside. Steve's a big dude, too. Ripped. A total bad boy. And he's got a bit of a reputation. He's had some trouble with the law over the years. He's got a reputation for being a womanizer and a big party animal, too. And his credit isn't exactly top-tier, either, so he's not exactly Mr. Reliable.

But wouldn't you know it? That Slick Steve is pretty darn slick. He whips out a thick **Wad of Cash** from his wallet, offering you triple what Holy Holly did—and he's even willing to make a significant down payment right now. In fact, not only will he pay you more than Holy Holly, he says, but he will pay you every single month in cash, so you don't even need to report the income to that pesky IRS.

"Man," you start thinking to yourself. "I know this is risky, and I really shouldn't do this, but this might be too good of an offer to refuse." And against your better judgment, without taking much time to think it over, you agree to let Steve sign the lease with you.

With a devilish smile, he hands over that thick wad of cash and says, "But I'd prefer to use my own **Leasing Agreement**, if you don't mind. It's just like yours, I promise! All written up by the finest lawyers. Trust me on that. And it even offers you more protection than that copy you're using right there."

As you start to read over the very fine print in his legal document, your eyes can't help but drift their way down to that hefty stack of dollar bills firmly gripped in your hand. "Oh, very well! Here you go!" You quickly sign his version of the lease and give him the **House Key**.

“I’ll take good care of it,” Steve says, and then he rides off.

Now, the first few months of the new lease go by and things seem to be going great. You’re making way more money than you ever could have with a modest tenant like Holy Holly. You’re getting ahead in life. But after six months pass, you start hearing minor complaints from your old neighbors. About the late-night parties. About the strange company Steve keeps. And about the noise and his inappropriate music.

But eventually, their murmurings turn into more disturbing reports: the belligerent behavior towards your other neighbors, the physical altercations and domestic violence in the front yard, the rumored drug deals and other illicit activity late after midnight, and the nightly visits from very unsavory characters doing very unsavory things.

Then news really takes a turn for the worse: you hear about the house itself being trashed all the time and even being visibly damaged. You don’t want to believe it—after all, Slick Steve did make you a promise, and he has been paying you so well—but at this point, you decide it best not to jump to conclusions. You’ll just visit Steve yourself and confirm that all of these reports are untrue.

But lo and behold: when you arrive, the situation is much worse than anyone had told you. The entire first floor has been wrecked. A horrible smell lingers throughout the property. (You aren’t really sure if it’s molding food, illegal drugs, or the loads of unwashed biker armpits.) Huge holes have been punched here and there in the home’s once-beautiful walls. Graffiti coats the long hallways. Heaps of empty beer bottles and other questionable paraphernalia lie stacked upon Steve’s cheap and broken furniture. Random strangers sleep on bare mattresses amid filthy piles of clothing. And lots of weird **Biker Dudes** are splayed out across every slimy and dirtied surface, reeking of Lord-knows-what.

Furious, you wake Slick Steve up off the stained and stinky couch that he obviously dragged into your living room, and yell at him, “Look: this was *not* a part of our agreement! You said you’d take care of the place! You said you’d keep your word! The damage here is more than everything you paid me *combined*, Steve!” While you rant at him, the other hungover drifters sleeping throughout the household start waking up. “Our deal is over, Steve. I want you out of the house. NOW.”

As all this is happening, Steve stands up and puts on his jacket. He grabs his shades and slips them over his eyes. Then he tosses some water in his hair to “slick” it out again. And just as you catch your breath after finishing your little self-righteous monologue, he turns to you and smiles. “No,” he says. “I don’t think I’m going anywhere.”

“But—! I’m the owner,” you shout at him. “You **HAVE** to go! Now give me back my house key.”

Suddenly, you realize that all of Steve’s biker dude friends have surrounded you. And every single one of them is far bigger than you. As they block your escape, Steve walks right up to your face, towering over you. “I don’t think I will,” he says, sneering. Without another word, the gang proceeds to beat the absolute snot out of you. Although they don’t kill you, they do give you a good thrashing, and after they finish having their fun with you, they toss you right outside your own front door as they fire up another big party.

Totally helpless and unable to stop Steve and his gang, you limp back to your car, get out your phone, and call the cops. When they show up, you tell them what happened and demand that Steve be removed from the premises. You even show them the damage and point out all the unsavory people inside. The **Police Officers** are sympathetic to your case, but when they knock on the front door, Slick Steve walks right out holding a thin stack of papers. “Why, officers,” he says, clearing his throat. “I have here a leasing agreement that this landlord signed, and because of our legally binding agreement, not only is this house all mine to do with as I please for the rest of our agreed upon term—which is forever—but all of these visible damages are as irrelevant as this landlord’s unfounded accusations!”

The officers inspect the document and realize that it is legit. They turn to you and say, “Unfortunately, this tenant is correct. He has a legal right to be here. Since you signed this contract and let him live here, we can’t remove him at all. You’ll have to go through the eviction process now, because only the Judge can grant your request and give you an eviction order.” And the cops leave as Slick Steve grins at you.



It gets worse. At the first of the month, you visit Slick Steve to collect his monthly rent. But when he answers the door, he refuses to pay you. “After the way you treated me last time we saw each other, I think I’m gonna skip the rent this month. Sound fair to you guys?” And from the living room, you can hear all his buddies laughing at you.

Now you’re really panicking. Every moment Slick Steve is living inside your home, its value is decreasing as more and more damage accrues. And all the money you were supposed to get is going to vanish when you get the repair bill! Desperate, you try to set an appointment with the **Judge**. But this isn’t as straightforward a process as you first think. You have to hire an attorney to navigate your state’s laws and explain to you how the eviction process legally works there. You’ve got to gather all your evidence together and file the proper legal documents with the courts. There might be preliminary court hearings you have to attend. You might even have to notify Slick Steve that you intend to evict him long before you can file your paperwork. (Each state has its own laws for this, after all! And they’re all pretty complicated.)

But finally, after completing every legal task required of an inconvenienced landlord, the Judge sets a firm date for you to appear in court. But even your court date is many months away. And the costs are considerable. Not counting the damages Steve has already caused your home, you have to pay a lot of money out-of-pocket just to cover your attorney fees and court filing costs. It dawns on you that, even if you win this case, you will lose far more than you ever gained from Steve by the time it’s over.

“I should have leased to Holy Holly,” you lament at night on your bed, “and that cute little Saint Cateri!”

But at your big court hearing, things start looking up: you finally get a chance to stand before the Judge and plead your case. You lay out all the facts and express regret at having ever let Slick Steve into your home as a tenant. You admit to the Judge that you knew better than to trust Slick Steve, but his promises seemed too good to pass up. Now you know they were all lies. And you lay out all the damage he has done to your home and successfully prove its current dilapidated state.

The Judge listens to your case earnestly and renders you an **Eviction Judgment**, deciding that the tenant in your home is unlawful and ordering his eviction. As He does this, He gently remarks that He hopes you have learned a lot from this hard lesson, which you tearfully agree that you have. Then, you thank Him for His incredible generosity, knowing He could have rejected your claims if He had wanted to.

Now, with the court’s official judgment in hand, you run back to your house and bang on the front door, waking up Slick Steve and his buddies. He comes out groggily and sees what you’ve got there. “Take a look at this, Steve! You have no legal right to be here anymore!” Handing him an **Eviction Notice**, you joyfully proclaim that Steve has to vacate the premises as soon as the Law allows. (Again, the exact conditions and time frame of Steve’s departure all depend on your particular state’s eviction laws.) After skimming the Judge’s legal order, Steve looks concerned and then promptly shuts the door.

After the final eviction notice period ends (which, again, varies from state to state), you come back to your house expecting to find Slick Steve and his biker buddies all gone. But to your surprise, they are not! While some of his less-than-courageous biker friends have already slipped away from your house (fearing that the police might arrest them for other outstanding warrants), Steve himself and his closest allies are all still inside, tearing the place up with a massive block party. Even worse, they’ve not only been damaging your property non-stop, but they have ripped out every last one of your home’s appliances and sold them off on Craig’s List! (What a bunch of jerks!)

Again, you confront Steve and demand that leave immediately. But just like last time, as you finish saying this, Slick Steve stands up to his full height, and flexes all his rippling muscles. “Oh yeah? Make me!”

Not wanting to get another beat-down, you get out of there and **Call the Cops** right away. The officers arrive soon, but this time, they ask if you have an eviction notice. You show it to them and they nod. “Very good. Now we can take care of this for you. Step aside, please!” And then the police storm the front doors. They firmly **Cuff, Arrest, and Remove** Slick Steve, along with all of his buddies, and escort the entire gang off your property.

At last, Steve is gone!—and you are left with a completely trashed house. You’ve got to replace all the appliances that were stolen. You’ve got to go in and fix each mechanical system that might have been damaged by Steve and his

drunken friends. You've got to paint the walls and replace the flooring. You've got to replant the entire yard and re-do all of the landscaping. It's an incredible mess that saps even more of your time, your energy, and your money.

But remember: this home will be very valuable one day. And despite all these losses, you know that any expense paid now will be well-worth it.

## Interpretation of the Parable

Okay, so a bit of an involved story, but it really paints the right picture for how deliverance cases typically progress. Even more importantly, this parable helps us to distinguish between what we mean in deliverance ministry when we use the word “renunciations” versus “Confessions,” which is one of the major points of this little article. While this is not a perfect illustration, the parable really helps clients understand the basic elements involved with a typical deliverance case. It's a lot like an eviction process, but with a few caveats.

Now it's interpretation time!

The **House** that you inherited is your life and everything in it: your body, your mind, your heart, your interior and exterior goods, etc. When I say this property is becoming more valuable, what I mean is that, throughout the course of your life, the “works” that you do will be stored up. But after your death, on the day of judgment, your life will be examined and the works that you performed in life will undergo the “testing of the fire.” Those works that are not good shall burn away as a loss, but those works which survive this testing shall endure forever as an eternally profitable gain. If you devote your life to God and perform good and charitable works in obedience to Him, growing over time in holiness, one day, with God's grace and help, you will have a great store of riches in Heaven. Your “house” will be incredibly valuable! (And this is why your house is still worth keeping even after Steve destroys it.)

The two tenants in this parable represent what you fill your “house” (or your life) with.

**Holy Holly** represents the things of God—charitable works, the holy virtues, prayer, regular Mass attendance, etc.

On the surface, it doesn't seem to offer us as much benefit in the short-term, especially when we are young; in fact, it might even seem like a total loss! (The religious lifestyle doesn't exactly embrace the world's wisdom.) But over time, we begin to realize the long-term value of these things that will keep our life in a holy and obedient condition so that, when the market ripens and the time to sell is at hand (at the end of our lives), our things are in order and our lives are an impressive return of great value for the Kingdom of God.

Obviously, **Slick Steve** represents Satan and the **Biker Dudes** are stand-ins for his demonic buddies. When you sin and let the bad tenants (the demons) into your life, you grant the demons legal rights to dwell there. These rights are not easily broken. Very often, demonic legal rights require a lengthy process of eviction before you can finally break them and legally evict (or exorcise) the bad tenants (or demons) from your property (or life).

Now, that **Wad of Cash** the Devil offers us symbolizes the sinful pleasures that seem to fulfill our immediate desires and make us happy in the short-term. Sin always entices us for that very reason: we think that, because it brings us some surface-level of happiness right away, in the *now*, it must be the better choice over the Holy Way of God. But the happiness these sinful things bring—fornication, impurity, sorcery, jealousy, anger, selfishness, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like—never lasts. And in the end, we lose far more than we ever gained. This is particularly true of those who participate in occult practices: anything the practitioner gains by using magic is eventually stolen back by the Evil One who grants it. But he never stops there—he always steals much, much more, including the practitioner's very life and soul.

This is reflected in Slick Steve's cunning **Leasing Agreements** that he always orchestrates for his victims to “sign,” whether they realize it or not. In reality, you don't usually sign these leasing agreements with a pen. You sign them with your actions and your intent. You sign them by sinning.

Again, this is especially true of occult practices—using Tarot cards, casting spells (or paying for others to cast them on your behalf), employing psychics, paying for Reiki sessions, etc. In fact, by participating in these sinful activities, you are signaling to the spiritual entities throughout the universe that you have willingly “signed” a particular contract with the Devil in exchange for his aid, even if you never saw a tangible contract or read the fine print of

such a legal agreement. And through this contract, you grant him legal rights to act in an extraordinary way in your life. (In this case, “extraordinary” means above-and-beyond the normal temptations that we all experience every single day.)

If you foolishly take Satan up on any of his sinful offers, the Devil gains a legal right to take up residence in your life in some limited way. Now he’s got the **Key** to your “house,” which represents his legal right to be there, and he moves very quickly to invite more of his friends inside until things quickly get out of hand. You won’t realize this at first, of course. In the beginning, everything seems fantastic. You’re getting what you want and so is he. There doesn’t appear to be a loss in any noticeable measure by the world’s standards. And he keeps offering you more and more without any consequences.

But one day, when you least suspect it, the scales fall from your eyes, and you realize that your life has completely fallen into spiritual disarray. The Devil has erected many strongholds throughout your home and destroyed everything valuable between them. Now your life is a total mess. And it goes without saying: once Satan has the key to your house, he isn’t going to give it up without a fight. Plain and simple! (He’s invested far too much time and effort to walk away from his “investment” that easily!)

Of course, the **Police Officers** represent the Heavenly Angels who respond to our prayers for liberation (i.e., when we **Call the Cops**). But if Satan has a legal right to be active in your life (i.e., you have signed a spiritual “leasing agreement” giving him the legal right to “dwell in your house,” whether you realized it or not at the time), then the Angels can’t do much to the Devil in that difficult situation. He gets to stay there and keep beating you up internally (or in some cases, externally!), doing more spiritual damage to you, his duped victim.

Now, obviously, in this parable, the **Judge** represents God. Through the Sacrament of Confession, He forgives us of our sins and renders an **Eviction Judgment**, nullifying Satan’s legal right to continue dwelling in our lives in some extraordinary manner by forgiving us of our sins. Because your former sins are absolved, they can no longer grant Satan the legal standing he once had to influence your life beyond ordinary, everyday temptation.

But Confession isn’t the same thing as a renunciation: that’s actually the **Eviction Notice**, which we are now able to give to the Devil once our sins have been totally forgiven and his extraordinary legal rights have been broken.

Often times, once the priest absolved your sins in the Sacrament of Confession, the demons immediately flee after losing their legal rights to your life. And by simply following the priest’s instructions for penance, saying a few *Our Father*’s or *Hail Mary*’s, you are actually driving out the evil spirits—the *Our Father* prayer has that famous line, “deliver us from evil,” which is literally a “deliverance” or minor (simple) exorcism prayer; while the *Hail Mary* prayer begs the Queen of Heaven for Her perfect intercession over you: “Holy Mary, Mother of God, pray for us sinners, now and...” Since Mary understands your spiritual state when you pray this to her, she can direct her own intercession towards expelling these demons, even without you realizing you need it in that moment! (God is good all the time, isn’t He? And all the time, God is good!)

In other words, the average Catholic is going through a minor deliverance every single time he/she attends the Sacrament of Confession and says the directed penitential prayers immediately afterward.

But sometimes, the Devil doesn’t flee our “house” after losing his legal rights to be there. Like Slick Steve in the parable, he resists the eviction process (i.e., the exorcism process). In these special cases, Satan forces us to go through the entire deliverance process in painstaking detail. He prefers dwelling in our comfortable home and ransacking the place, and he doesn’t want to leave. So, to ensure that he does, we must serve him an Eviction Notice (or pray aloud a renunciation) that is legally based off the Judgment (or the absolution of our sins) rendered by God (through the Sacrament of Confession). This is what we mean by a *renunciation prayer*: you are telling the demonic kingdom, “Hey, I might have committed this sin back in the day, and I know that gave you legal rights to come into my life, but I have confessed this sin to God and He has forgiven me. And as a result, you have lost your right to be here anymore. I am ordering you to leave!”

Now, often, that’ll do the trick. Slick Steve and his buddies will hurriedly pack their bags and get the heck on out of Kansas before the cavalry arrives—but sometimes, even that rough threat of calling the cops just isn’t enough. Sometimes, the Devil digs in stubbornly and refuses to leave. And since he’s much too big and far too powerful for

us to expel on our own, we have to get someone else to do it for us—this is when **Calling the Cops** (or saying an exorcism prayer that directly casts the Evil One out from your life) becomes so critical. An exorcism prayer of any kind is asking God to send His Holy Angels (the **Police Officers**) to remove the demons from your life. When that prayer is answered, the angels show up, wrestle the demons down, bind them up, cast them out of your life for good, and take them away to the courthouse to face the Judge (or God).

So, how does this look during the deliverance process? It goes something like this:

**1. You participate in the Sacrament of Baptism for the very first time (or if you’ve already been baptized in the past, you participate in the Sacrament of Confession and the priest absolves your sins).** In other words, the Eternal Judge renders a Divine Judgment, breaking the Devil’s legal rights to your life. Many demons will depart at this point, especially after you finish saying your acts of penance as given by the priest—but not always. And the vast majority of the time, this departure occurs without incident (as in, you wouldn’t notice the demons’ leaving by their manifesting in any obvious way). This is why most Catholics don’t realize what is actually happening in the spiritual realm when they are receiving absolution for their sins.

**2. You say a prayer of renunciation, announcing to the demonic kingdom that the rights gained through your past sins have been lost and ordering any demons to leave.** In other words, you give the Devil his Eviction Notice. At this point, his time operating in your life in an extraordinary manner is (very likely) short. Some demons that refused to leave at first will depart at this point.

**3. You (or a deliverance minister, clergyman, or exorcist) perform(s) a prayer of exorcism, asking God to expel the demons.** In other words, you call up God and ask Him to send His Heavenly Angels and they show up at your house’s front door and remove the illegal spirits, binding them up and taking them to the foot of the Holy Cross of Christ to receive an immediate sentence from the Lord Jesus. When this happens, the demons can cause a bit of a stir as they make their exit. (This is why we always ask before the deliverance begins to prevent this from happening unless it is his will.)

There it is: the deliverance process in a nutshell!

But in actual practice, this three-step process only looks like two steps to the untrained eye: Confession, which absolves your sins, followed by a combined renunciation-exorcism prayer. (Often the renunciation-exorcism prayers get woven together into a single prayer, depending on the particular ministry you are attending.) Such a combined prayer sounds like this:

*“In the name of Jesus Christ, I **renounce** any hold that Satan has on my life because of (the named sin). Oh Lord, **please remove all evil spirits attached to me** because of (the named sin) and free me from all influence of the demonic realm in my life. Send your Holy Angels to **seize every demon** and vanquish them to the foot of your cross, that they might receive your immediate judgment.”*

You can see here how the first sentence is very clearly a renunciation prayer, while the third sentence is obviously a minor exorcism prayer, but the second (middle) sentence acts as both. And if you go around and check out many different prayers of liberation, you’ll see that they are very often structured as in the example above. This is part of the reason why the renunciation prayers get confused with the Sacrament of Confession. Most people think you just Confess your sins and say a deliverance prayer (because it appears that way). But technically, there are three steps:

- **Confession** (the absolution of your sins);
- **Renunciation** (giving the Devil notice that he can’t be in your life anymore and needs to leave);
- and **Exorcism** (calling on God to send His angels to remove the offending spirits that refuse to depart).

And every step in this process is critical to finding spiritual freedom. This is why I like talking about the Easter Vigil early in the homework document: it’s a lot more explicit about these three basic elements.

If you are not renouncing your sins when you are suffering from demonic bondage in your life—even after you gone to Confession and had them absolved by a priest—this might be why the bondage doesn’t end: the eviction laws in your state require you to give your “bad tenants” an Eviction Notice before getting rid of them. Just because you

have the Eviction Judgment doesn't mean you've followed all proper legal procedures. And since Satan is a legalist in every negative sense of that term (no offense intended to any reading lawyers!), he won't leave until all required conditions have been fully met.

So, even if you have already confessed most of the sins on your homework lists, you still need to renounce them out loud during a deliverance session. Renouncing is not confessing, and vice-versa.

Now, it is worth mentioning here that, just like in the parable, in order for you to successfully complete the eviction process (exorcising the Devil from your life), you have to do all of that preliminary work to get an audience with the **Judge** first in order to convince Him to render an **Eviction Judgment** in your favor. This involves you getting to the point that you realize you need to change your life and your behaviors (because you have suffered enough from them to no longer want to see the rest of your life's value plummet right down into the toilet). Depending on your state in life, this "preliminary work" (read: conversion work) might lead you to a conversion decision and to rejecting your old lifestyles, or it might lead you to returning to your Catholic faith if you fell away from it in the past. In either case, you'll be doing a lot of spiritual work—for example, if you are converting, you'll need to join RCIA and get Baptized; but if you are a lapsed Catholic, you'll need to go to Confession and get absolved of your sins; yet, in both cases, you'll need to start regularly attending Mass, praying daily, doing charitable works, and removing anything from your life that is sinful. Such changes might require you to destroy any occultic item or materials that you've purchased. They might even require you to humbly reach out to someone you betrayed or abandoned and ask this person for forgiveness. Much like the preliminary work of a court case, none of this "conversion" business is easy. But we have to dig in and really change our ways if we want to "finish the race" and "win the crown of life," as St. Paul said. It requires hard work, discipline, and commitment.

There are a few more "real-life" issues that need to be discussed concerning deliverance. Let's start with each state's "eviction laws." As you likely remember, I mentioned in the parable that the specific conditions of the eviction process—how long Slick Steve has before he must vacate the premises after receiving his Eviction Notice, and what other conditions must be met for the process to be finished—will likely "vary from state to state." In other words, they depend on your unique spiritual state. What do I mean by this? Well, as you likely know, in certain U.S. states, evictions are much easier for a landlord to do (like in Indiana) than in other states (like Oregon or New York), where evictions heavily favor the tenants and are much harder to pull off. This can be very true in your own life, too.

You see, when the Devil is given a legal right to operate in your life in an extraordinary manner (i.e., beyond mere ordinary temptation), God sets the exact parameters for his departure and the extent to which Satan may directly influence your life until those conditions are met. You see this happen in the Book of Job. Satan can't legally affect Job at all because, at that time, he's the most righteous man on Earth, and since Job doesn't sin (which would let Satan into Job's "house" to muck things up), the Devil has to come before God's throne and get permission first to attack the man. It's the only way he can do it! You also see this happen in the Gospel narratives when Jesus warns Peter and the Apostles that Satan has asked to "sift them all like wheat."

For example, let's say that you played with a Ouija board back in college (which is a grave sin), and as a result, Satan gained the legal right to cause bouts of uncontrollable anger in you throughout the day and even cause you to scream out profanities against other people, the saints, Mary, and Jesus. But when Satan gained this legal right, God might have told Satan, "Very well. But you may only manifest in this way three times per day and do these particular wicked things while affecting this person until he/she confesses playing with the Ouija board to a priest; at that point, you must depart immediately without making a sound."

In the same way, whatever legal right Satan gained over you has been set with very specific conditions that are unique to you based on God's perfect will for your life. (And just because God permitted this evil doesn't mean he caused it: you did through your willful sin!) These specific conditions not only tell the Devil what he can and cannot do to you, but they also tell the Devil exactly when and how he loses these same rights and must depart from you. So, maybe God told Satan he can only manifest in your life a certain number of times per day and in a certain manner. Maybe God told him that he can afflict you in this way for a certain length of time and then it's over. Or until you learn a certain spiritual truth. Or until you repent of a certain sin. Or until you repent of a certain sin AND renounce it AND learn two particular spiritual truths. Or until you repent of a certain sin, renounce it, learn four spiritual truths, pass four tests, AND have a minor exorcism prayer said over you by Bob Jones or Amy Johnson. Or until a certain person gives you a message that God has prepared him/her to deliver to you when the time is right and



THEN you repent, renounce, and have an exorcism prayer said over you. Etc.

Sometimes, God sets a simple set of parameters which will force the Devil to make his exit right away. Maybe you just need to go to Confession and nothing “special” is required. But other times, especially when generational occult activity is involved (or open Satanism), the deliverance process will be long, difficult, and costly—in these cases, finding freedom might take weeks, months, or even years.

There are some other factors to consider, as well. Sometimes Slick Steve really doesn’t want to leave your life, so he puts up quite a fight. Not only does he entrench his buddies in your house, but he doesn’t answer the door when the police come knocking. He changes the locks. He hides when the cops show up and slips out a back window, only to come back after the police go away. And sometimes, he pulls out his guns and fights to the last man, refusing to give up his stolen turf. In these last and most difficult cases, you can’t just call the regular cops. (You can’t just use a normal deliverance prayer.) You have to call in the big guns—you have to call in a SWAT team: and this is represented by a deacon, priest, or even in the most extreme cases, an exorcist wielding the Rite of Exorcism.

Another note that should be mentioned: sometimes when you inherit a piece of property, the previous owner might have already signed a lease with some bad tenants and let them in before you ever came along, and because of the state’s particular eviction laws, you are stuck with them even if you didn’t do anything wrong yourself. This situation translates into the real-life problem that we often see with deliverance clients where they never did nothing wrong on their own (at least, initially), but their parents or some other authority figures in their lives abused their spiritual authority over the client as a child and gave the demons the right to invade. For instance, sometimes we see parents who consecrate their children to the Devil (like the perverted inversion of an infant Baptism). Or sometimes parents curse their own children for all kinds of reasons, none of them ever good. Or a trusted caretaker who secretly practices magic gives the child a Ouija board or Tarot card deck. Etc.

But in other cases, there are illegal “break-ins” while you are away from your House. For example, you didn’t do anything wrong, but another person curses you through a spell or a word-curse, intentionally directing their free will towards causing you misfortune, loss, and harm by calling upon the power of the Devil. Essentially, in these cases, you’ve got a “squatter” issue: someone (a demon at the free will direction of a human being) broke into your house without your permission and is now relying on—and even abusing—state eviction laws that prevent you from kicking it out immediately so that it can cause as much havoc as possible until it is removed.

One final point: after Slick Steve has been kicked out of your house for good, and after you’ve swept up everything in the home and cleaned things so that they are sparkling and back to normal, it’s vitally important that you don’t just leave your house empty and unoccupied. If you don’t track down Holy Holly and invite her to move in, filling your lost ground with holiness after reclaiming it from Satan, it’s only a matter of time before Slick Steve returns, and this time with a lot more of his Biker Dude buddies in tow. When he sees that there isn’t a light on and nobody is home, Steve and his gang of thugs will do what comes naturally to them: they’ll bust down the door and move right back in. And this time, your home will be even worse off than it was before.

For Christ Himself warned His Apostles: “When an unclean spirit goes out of someone, it roams through arid regions searching for rest but, finding none, it says, ‘I shall return to my home from which I came.’ But upon returning, it finds it swept clean and put in order. Then it goes and brings back seven other spirits more wicked than itself who move in and dwell there, and the last condition of that person is worse than the first” (Luke 11:24-26).

After being delivered, if you don’t begin filling your life with the things of God, Satan will return and fill the spiritual void in your heart for you, without your permission.

## **I. Prerequisites for Deliverance**

### **Living the Five Conditions of Christian Living**

To best facilitate deliverance, you need to fulfill the following five criteria in your own life, or be willing to do what is necessary until these criteria are met eventually:

- You must be a baptized Christian. If you are not baptized, you must be willing to convert and you must be taking all appropriate steps to do so. (This is called a Baptism of Desire or Intention.) Without committing to the Christian life, this process will bear little fruit.
- You must be an actively participating member of a local parish.
- You must have a personal relationship with Jesus Christ as evidenced by actively participating in the Faith—attending a local parish’s services, partaking regularly of the Sacraments, having a devotional prayer life, and practicing charitable works.
- You must be living a spirit-filled and victorious Christ-life as best you can.
- You must live in obedience to the Divine Will of God and His Church.

### **Accepting the Seven Elements Required for Deliverance**

For the deliverance process to be effective, seven elements are required of you:

1. You must be willing to submit to God (Romans 12:1, 2).
2. You must have a desire for spiritual freedom from sin and Satan’s influence in your life, and you must be able to vocalize this desire.
3. You must be willing to confront and deal with sin from all sources (Ephesians 4:27).
4. You must be able to demonstrate “*response-ability*,” which means you must be willing and able to respond to God’s plan and Divine Will for your life.
5. You must be willing to accept responsibility for yourself and for your own healing.
6. You must be willing and able to cooperate\* and to participate in the counseling process, and to accept and to work on the recommendations and advice given to you during the counseling process, which is designed to lead to deliverance.
7. You must be willing to truly forgive those who have harmed you. (Forgiveness is a choice, not a feeling or emotion.) You must be willing to repent of your own sins, no matter how grievous.

\*By “able to cooperate” we mean that you are free from any psychiatric, medical, or spiritual conditions or impairments that would make productive counseling difficult or impossible.

### **Destroying & Terminating the Occult in Your Life**

You must terminate all occult activities, associations, friendships, objects, and materials in your life that are not proper or prudent for a Christian.

If you have any relationships with those who openly practice evil, you must end those relationships. (If these relationships involve family members, this might not be entirely possible, but you should limit in every way possible their influence in your life. Download the **Proxy Prayers** document on *The Catholic Centurion* website. To find this document, go to [www.catholiccenturion.com](http://www.catholiccenturion.com). Click on **Free Services**. In the drop-down menu, click on **Resources**. Scroll down a little bit and click on the blue button under **Proxy Spiritual Warfare Prayers**.

If you possess any non-Christian items, objects, books, DVDs, games, etc., you must get rid of them.

If you own any occultic or cursed objects, you must destroy them in the manner described in the “Procedure to Destroy Occultic or Cursed Objects” document on *The Catholic Centurion* website. To find this document, go to [www.catholiccenturion.com](http://www.catholiccenturion.com). Click on **Free Services**. In the drop-down menu, click on **Resources**. Scroll down a little bit and click on the blue button under **Procedure to Destroy Occultic or Cursed Objects**.

## **II. Open Doors Homework**

There are 12 homework assignments, each requiring a list that you must prepare before the deliverance can take place. (I know—it's a lot, but bear with me!) The idea is that we are trying to locate any "open doors" which grant the demonic kingdom access into your life. By locating these doors, confessing any sin attached to them, and then renouncing them in Christ's name, we are able to spiritually "shut" these doors, preparing the way for the deliverance prayers to ultimately cast the demons out of our lives for good.

Take these homework assignments seriously. Do not wait until the last moment to complete them. In fact, it is most likely that these assignments will require several attempts—even days—before you are able to remember everything you need to finish. To help facilitate this process, it is very helpful to pray to the Holy Spirit and ask Him to help you complete your homework. As you go about your week, He will most likely bring this critical information to mind in bits and pieces. Write them down as soon as you can when He does! (If you are unsure whether something qualifies as being a stronghold, just go ahead and write it down anyway.)

Before beginning any of these homework assignments, find a quiet place where you will not be disturbed. (Might I suggest Adoration? Not only is it a holy and sacred time, where you can spend time with Our Lord, but you can also take advantage of His Presence by asking Him to help you complete these assignments!)

When you are ready to begin, say the following prayer:

***Dear Holy Spirit, You were there in the beginning, hovering over the face of the waters of creation, in majesty and glory, and because You are everlasting to everlasting, having proceeded from the Father and the Son, you surely know every path which my footsteps have tread! Please, oh Source of Heavenly Water, oh Spirit of Love and Truth, help me to complete these homework assignments, revealing to me any open doors that allow Satan and his demonic kingdom to operate in my life, whether I am aware of them or not, so that I might obtain the grace of my Heavenly Father's promised deliverance through the Victory of His Son, Jesus Christ! With Your great help, and the faithful assistance of all the Angels and Saints, I want to close these doors and bar Satan from my life forever. Come, Holy Spirit! Fill the hearts of Your faithful, and enkindle in them the fire of Your love! Amen.***

## #1. Unforgiveness

It is very important to forgive anyone who has wronged you (or you have perceived to have wronged you). In the Parable of the Unforgiving Servant, Matthew 18:21-35, the Master forgives his servant for a great debt, but the servant goes out and fails to have pity on another who owes him a much smaller debt. When the Master learns of this, the Scripture says that he *“handed him over to the torturers until he should pay back the whole debt.”* Jesus concludes the parable with this warning: *“So will my Heavenly Father do to you, unless each of you forgives his brother from his heart.”*

One possible interpretation of the word “torturers” in this Scripture could be “demons.” If you fail to forgive another person, no matter how grave the offense, the Devil is legally permitted to harass and torment you, just like the Master’s servant when he was turned over to the Devil for failing to forgive others as he had been forgiven.

This can be a very hard teaching for us to accept. Just remember these five points:

1. Forgiveness is not an emotion. It is an act of will. It is an act of love. You don’t have to feel forgiveness to do it.
2. Forgiveness is letting go of your “right” to be right. It means offering up your anger and letting go of your “right” to revenge, leaving justice to God.
3. Forgiveness doesn’t mean excusing the wrong or saying it doesn’t matter. (If it didn’t matter, you wouldn’t need to forgive it!) Forgiveness is saying, “I know what you did and it hurt me very much. But I won’t hold it against you.”
4. Forgiveness doesn’t mean forgetting. That’s denial. And just because you have forgiven someone doesn’t mean you suddenly have to start trusting him, or let him back into your life when he has seriously hurt or abused you in any way.
5. Finally, never confuse forgiveness with reconciliation. Reconciliation requires repentance on the offender’s part, but forgiveness does not. (For example, even though Christ forgave the whole world, even those who had yet been born, many people have never repented and been reconciled with Him!)

Your first homework assignment is to make a list of every person that you harbor any bitterness or unforgiveness towards, for any reason. Make a note beside each name briefly summarizing why you harbor any unforgiveness towards that person. Include anyone you can think of going all the way back to your own childhood. If you can’t remember the person’s name, describe who he was and what he did as best you can. (For example, the boy with the yellow shirt who called me an idiot in the 4<sup>th</sup> grade.)

It’s probably wise for you to just go ahead and automatically add the members of your immediate family to your list—those closest to us in life tend to be the ones Satan uses to hurt us most.

If you’ve already forgiven someone, you do not need to add them to this list.

Here is a list that might help you get started with this exercise.

- Parents
- Stepparents
- Legal Guardians
- Brothers/Sisters
- Grandparents
- Spouse
- Ex-Spouses
- Boyfriends/Girlfriends
- Children
- Stepchildren

- Cousins
- Aunts/Uncles
- Nephews/Nieces
- Best Friend
- Friends
- Bosses
- Co-Workers
- Employees
- Teachers
- Classmates
- Abusers/Bullies
- Clergymen (Priests, Ministers, Pastors, etc.)
- Authority Figures (Judges, Lawyers, Police, etc.)
- Someone who stole or cheated you out of something
- Someone who caused the death of a person you loved
- Yourself (often overlooked)



## #2. Judgments

It is very important that we release others from judgments we might have rendered against them. As the author of James states strongly in chapter 4, verses 11-12: *“Do not speak evil of one another, brothers. Whoever speaks evil of a brother or judges his brother speaks evil of the law and judges the law. If you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is one lawgiver and judge who is able to save or to destroy. Who then are you to judge your neighbor?”*

For example, maybe someone owes you a significant amount of money, and has owed it to you for years. You might judge that person in a very negative light, remarking or complaining or criticizing him to others, saying things like, “I don’t understand why he doesn’t just get a better job!” or “He’s so lazy and stupid. I wish he’d get his act together.”

These judgments can hold another person and you in a spiritual prison which might actually turn into a form of demonic bondage. When you release that judgment, not only will this other person be free, but you will, too.

Read more about judgments in this excerpt from Romans 14:1-15: *“Who are you to pass judgment on someone else’s servant? Before his own master he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.... Why then do you judge your brother? Or you, why do you look down on your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of God.... Then let us no longer judge one another, but rather resolve never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.... Let us then pursue what leads to peace and to building up one another.”*

While the full context of this passage has to do with differences in Christian practices from one believer to another, it contains some very interesting points about judging others. The words of the Apostle Paul can be easily applied to how we think about our human brothers. As Christians, we must avoid any judgment of a person that tears them down and ultimately serves as a spiritual hindrance to them and also to us!

Your second homework assignment is to make a second list of every person that you hold any judgments over, for any reason. Make a note beside each name briefly summarizing why you hold a judgement towards that person. Include anyone you can think of going all the way back to your own childhood.

People you put down on your unforgiveness list might also appear on this list, too. That’s fine. You might be harboring unforgiveness toward someone, and as a result of what they have done, you’ve also rendered a judgment against them, too. Use the same list of suggested persons on the last page to help you in completing this assignment.

### #3. Occult Activities and Non-Christian Practices

Your third homework assignment is to make a third list of every non-Christian practice in which you have participated during your life, even if it was as seemingly innocent as reading horoscopes. A large (but not fully comprehensive) list of these practices has been outlined below to help you hone in on potential open doors Satan uses to get into your life.

Let me be clear: there is no faster way to suffer demonization than to dabble in or to fully embrace the occult. Some of the worst cases of spiritual bondage and oppression stem from those who have participated in the occult.

Think of it this way: if prayer is humbling one's self before God and surrendering to Him entirely, then the occult is the exact opposite: it is essentially a "prayer" and "surrender" to the archenemy of God, who is none other than Satan. The Devil wants to use those involved in the occult to spread as much misery, death, and destruction in the lives of others as he can, before he turns on his "faithful" servants and drives them to their own deaths, ensuring their souls languish for an eternity in hell.

In terms of non-Christian philosophies, such as humanism and post-modernism, the concepts contained within them, however cleverly buried, are antithetical to the teachings of the Magisterium and can lead one into grave thinking errors, and therefore, into sin and bondage.

And concerning non-Catholic religions: while the Catechism notes that these individual religions may possess some truths that are in alignment with the divinely revealed Truth found in the Catholic Church, these are ultimately "kernels" wrapped in error that, in some cases, can lead not only into serious thinking errors, as noted above, but also into practices that may hasten demonization in an individual.

#### 1. The Occult

Appalachian Granny Magic	Astral Projection	Astrology
Automatic Writing	Ayurveda	Brujería
Buda	Candoble	Centering Prayer
Contacting the Dead	Crystals	Divination
Dowsing	Energy/Faith Healers	Enneagram
ESP	EST	Evil Roleplaying Games*
Fire Walking	Gestalt Therapy	<i>Harry Potter**</i>
Hoodoo	Horoscopes	Human Potential Movement
Huna	Hypnotism	Idol Worship
Juju	Kahuna	Kindoki
Macumba	<i>Magic the Gathering</i>	Magic Rites***
Mediumship	Necromancy	New Age Medicine
New Age Practices	Nkondi	Numerology
Ouija Board	Palm Reading	Past Life Regression
Pentagrams	Prana	Primal Scream Therapy
Psychics	Rebirthing	Reflexology
Reiki	Reincarnation	Rolfing
Sakawa	Satanic Rock	Satanism
Séances	<i>The Secret</i>	Spirit Guides
Spiritualism	Superstition	Tagati
Talismans	Tarot Cards	Temple of Set
Totem Animals	Transactional Analysis	Transcendental Meditation
Voodoo	Water Witching	The Way
Wicca	Witchcraft	Yoga****
Yoruba		

\*In other words, roleplaying games which glorify the occult, tout non-Christian philosophies as the "truth" in their fictional universe, or have you "roleplay" as an evil character.

\*\*Some of the spells in J.K. Rowling's book are real, and some of the characters in that series are actually named

after true demons.

\*\*\*For example, spells, hexes, charms, the Evil Eye, white or black magic.

\*\*\*\*Yes, yoga is evil, no matter how good it makes you feel. The Church has already put this information out in a 1989 document, written by Cardinal Ratzinger, titled *Some Aspects of Christian Meditation*.

## 2. False Religions & Philosophies

Agnosticism	Atheism	Baha'i
Black Muslim	Buddhism	Christian Science
Eastern Cults	Hare Krishna	Hinduism
Humanism	Islam	Jehovah's Witness
Kabbalah	Martial Arts*	Marxism
Modernism	Moral Relativism	Mormonism
New Age	One Holiness Pentecostal	Post-Modernism
Santeria	Scientology	Seventh Day Adventism
Sikhism	Spiritism	Taoism
Theosophy	Unification Church	Unitarianism

\*Not all martial arts are problematic, just those with eastern philosophies or other non-Christian beliefs interwoven with—and inseparable from—the martial art form itself.

## 3. Groups Offensive to the Faith

DeMolay	Eastern Star	Freemasons
Hemlock Society	Job's Daughters	NARAL or NOW*
Organized Crime	Planned Parenthood	Rainbow Girls

\*National Abortion Rights Action League or the National Organization for Women

## 4. Errant Groups (or any other heretical or schismatic group)

Call to Action	Catholics for a Free Choice	Feeneyite groups
Sede Vacantist groups	Society of Saint Pius X (SSPX)	
St. Michael the Archangel Chapel		

## 5. Occult Items

All occult items (should be renounced and destroyed); this includes statues of deities from false religions, as they are offensive to God.

## 6. Satanic Rituals

Black mass	Cannibalism during worship	Covenants with Satan
Demonic sex	Giving blood to Satan	Satanic guardians/parents
Signing name over to Satan	Wedding/consecration to Satan	

## 7. Submitting One's Self to Persons Involved with the Occult\*

Fortune-tellers	Hypnotists	Mind-controllers
New Age gurus	Satanists	Sorcerers
Spirit guides	Warlocks	Witches
Wizards	Yogi masters	

\*Becoming the pupil of any of the individuals listed above, or coming to them for services is extremely likely to cause demonization.

## #4. Sexual Sin

This is a big one in our modern culture which has become so heavily saturated with egregiously sexualized advertising, especially when it appears in conjunction with the tide of godless sexual principles that are spamming Americans out of just about every T.V. show, Hollywood film, and song blaring over the radio.

In the Genesis account on Man's creation, the narrative describes how two human beings (a man and a woman) coming together in the procreative act of sex "*become one flesh*," and that this act should only occur between a husband and his wife.

Sex outside of a lawful marriage is a disordering of the conjugal act's purpose. And it can have devastating spiritual consequences. As St. Paul bluntly notes in 1 Corinthians 6:16: "*Or do you not know that anyone who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For "the two," it says, "will become one flesh."*"

If you have shared any type of sexual act with someone outside of a marriage covenant, an open door exists between your soul and any demons attached to this sexual partner for the rest of your life, and you have given permission to these demons to harass and assault you as they want!

To put this into perspective, if you have had sex with just three people, and each of these sexual partners has had sex with another three people, **the demons attached to 12 different individuals** might have a legal right to enter your life and affect you. (It doesn't take much fiddling with these figures to see how heavily demonized you can get when the number of your sexual partners is even higher!)

Needless to say, promiscuity can quickly enslave you.

Your fourth homework assignment is to make a list of every person you have willingly committed an immoral sexual act with in your entire life. (This could include your own spouse if you have both committed immoral sexual acts inside the marital bed, such as spilling your seed outside of intercourse.) Even if you are unable to remember the sexual partner's name, describe this person as best you can and/or the circumstances surrounding how you met him/her.

So, what constitutes an immoral sexual act? First off, any sexual act with someone who is not your spouse is considered to be a grave sin by the Church. Period. This includes passionate kissing, as this act stirs up venereal pleasure, and is therefore gravely sinful. Homosexual acts are always disordered and gravely sinful, as well. However, it's important to note that even married couples can defile the marital bedroom with certain sexual practices. For example, any sexual act in which the man's seed is spilled outside his wife's reproductive cavity is disordered, as it removes the potential for creation life. (The term for this is "onanism.") This includes oral sex, anal sex, masturbation, and any kind of manual stimulation. (The man's wife can arouse him using these practices, apparently, but he cannot finish with them.)

## #5. Broken Contracts, Covenants, Oaths, or Vows

In Biblical times, oaths were taken very seriously and if someone broke his oath, there could be a lasting spiritual consequence. In fact, when God made His covenant with Abraham, He had the Patriarch cut several animals in half and lay them out, and when the Lord appeared as a burning lamp, He passed through the halves of each carcass. This was to signify that, if He, the Lord, did not fulfill His promises to Abraham, the same fate would befall Him (that of being cut in half)! Often in the Old Testament, two men would make a covenant of peace between them by building an altar of rocks, feasting together, and then verbally swearing the oath as they placed their hand under the thigh of the other.

The Second Commandment, “*thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain,*” was speaking, in many ways, about oaths. If you swore an oath, you swore it in the name of the Lord and made the Almighty your oath’s witness (in other words, you made Him the enforcer of the oath’s promise if one party were to break it), so by taking the Lord’s name in vain, you are committing a grave offense and the justice of God requires punishment.

This punishment usually took the form of curses, which could, by their very nature, lead to demonic harassment (or worse). It’s important to never enter rashly into an oath or vow, but if one has thoughtfully considered it and decided to enter into such an agreement (marriage, for example), one should always keep and uphold the sworn vows.

Your fifth homework assignment is to make a list of every contract, covenant, oath, or vow you have broken throughout the course of your life.

## #6. Pride

Your sixth homework assignment requires you to list anything in your life that you are proud of in a sinful way. For example, if you think your marriage is better than others', or if you are full of yourself and feel intellectually or physically or spiritually superior to others, these can become prideful areas of bondage the enemy will certainly exploit. As Proverbs 16:18 warns, "*Arrogance precedes destruction. And the spirit is exalted before a fall.*"

Pride is the root of all sin. It often denies its own existence, and is a fear-based response, in that it masquerades as confidence and authority.

If you are easily offended, prone to exaggeration, or in need of constant recognition/affirmation from others; if you need to always be right; if you need to always be heard; if you are competitive over everything or seek exclusivity; if you are hypercritical or judgmental; if you find that you are constantly rebelling against the Church's teachings, cherry-picking what you believe; these are all strong indicators of strongholds of pride and haughtiness.

St. John Climacus wrote concerning pride, "A man should know that a devil's sickness is on him if he is seized by the urge in conversation to assert his opinion, however correct it may be. If he behaves this way while talking to his equals, then a rebuke from his elders may heal him. **But if he carries on in this way with those who are greater and wiser than he, his sickness cannot be cured by human means.**"

The remedies for pride are: 1) knowing who you are, no more or no less; 2) accepting daily humiliations; 3) avoiding smugness; 4) humbling yourself and acknowledging your own mistakes/faults; and 5) prayer, prayer, prayer (because it is an act of humility before God).



## #7. Rebellion

Your seventh homework assignment requires you to list all areas of open or subversive rebellion in your life, regardless of the particular authority this rebellion is aimed at: civil, Ecclesial, or familial.

For example, if you speed when driving your car, you are committing an act of rebellion. If you are a teenager and you fail to obey your parents and/or school authorities, you are committing an act of rebellion. If you ignore protocols at work because they inconvenience or annoy you, you are committing an act of rebellion.

Satan loves rebellion because it undermines the virtues of obedience and humility!

Our Lord told the Apostles, *“You are My friends if you do what I command you”* (John 15:14). To the Prophet Isaiah (55:8-9), He said, *“For my thoughts are not your thoughts, nor are your ways my ways...for as the heavens are higher than the Earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, my thoughts higher than your thoughts”*—in other words, He knows what He is doing, so we should obey Him! And finally, the Lord told St. Faustina, as she recorded in her diary, *“When you are obedient I take away your weakness and replace it with My strength.”* We cannot defeat the Devil, or sin or death or judgment, in our own power. The only way we can defeat this present darkness is with the help of God, and He has explained to us that the way we gain His help is by obeying Him in everything.

The Church calls us to pray for those who are in authority over us and to submit to those God has placed over us in all things. (However, this does not mean we are to suffer abuse at their hands, such as in cases of parental or spousal violence.) We are permitted to disobey an authority if that authority demands that we commit an act that is against God’s law. (For example, when the Prophet Daniel disobeyed the edict from King Cyrus forbidding prayer to God for a month, or when Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego disobeyed King Nebuchadnezzar and did not worship the golden idol.)

## #8. Thinking Errors, Self-Deceptions, and Self-Defense Behaviors

Your eighth homework assignment is to write down any thinking errors, self-deceptions, and self-defense behaviors that might be contributing to your spiritual problems.

We often deceive ourselves about our position in Christ and our relationship with Him. For example, we may say to ourselves “This isn’t going to work” or “I wish I could believe this but I can’t.” Sometimes we may use deceptions or denials that are even more direct concerning the promises of God for His children. These areas of deception, either coming from yourself or the lies of the Evil One throughout your life, can keep you from knowing or trusting God, or experiencing His love for you.

A sample list of self-deceptions and self-defense behaviors is below, but you should carefully examine any internal theological or thinking errors that you may be harboring within you. They might be causing more spiritual problems in your life than you realize. And if you aren’t sure what thinking errors and self-deceptions you might be suffering from, that’s okay: pray to the Holy Spirit! Ask God to reveal these errors present in your mind and in your heart. He knows you better than yourself!

Self-Deceptions (telling ourselves things that are not true):

- Listening to God’s words but thinking we do not have to do it (James 1:22; 4:17).
- Thinking we have no sin or do not sin (1 John 1:8).
- Thinking that we never express self-defense behaviors.
- Thinking that we never deceive ourselves.
- Thinking that God has abandoned us (Romans 8:35, 37-39).
- Thinking that God does not love us (John 3:16, Romans 8:35-39).
- Thinking that God cannot forgive us (1 John 1:9).
- Thinking we have no sin or do not sin (1 John 1:8).
- Thinking that we are something when we are not (Galatians 6:3).
- Believing that we will not reap what we sow (Galatians 6:7).
- That we can sin and it have no effects on us (Romans 6:23; 1:27).
- Thinking we are wise in our own eyes (1 Corinthians 3:18, 19).
- Believing that the unrighteous will reach heaven (1 Corinthians 6:9).
- Thinking we can associate with bad company and not be corrupted (1 Corinthians 15:33, Galatians 5:9).
- Thinking we are better than we really are (Jeremiah 9:23-24, 1 John 2:16).
- Thinking we are less/worse than we really are (see the “Litany of Who I Am in Christ” under the Catholic Centurion website’s Resources page for a litany of Biblical verses proclaiming how God really sees you).

Self-Defense Behaviors (defending ourselves instead of trusting Christ and taking ownership):

- Denial (conscious or subconscious refusal to face the truth).
- Fantasy (excessive escape from the real world to avoid problems or the truth).
- Emotional insulation (withdraw to avoid rejection).
- Regression (reverting back to a less threatening time in the past).
- Displacement (taking out frustrations on others).
- Anger (lashing out in anger due to things not going as we wish).
- Projection (blaming others or accusing others of things we ourselves have done).
- Rationalization (making excuses for poor behavior).

To counter these and other deceptions we tell ourselves we need to exercise faith. Faith is the response to Truth by making a choice (not a feeling) to believe and to accept the Truth. If we say, “I want to believe God, but I just can’t,” then we are deceiving ourselves. Of course, we can believe God. We know that God does not lie. Faith is something we decide to do; it is not something we feel like doing. As my old mentor, Brother Ignatius Mary, used to say often: “Believing the truth does not make it true; rather it is true, therefore we believe it.”

## #9. Sins/Traumas Perpetrated on Me by Others

Your ninth homework list requires you to list any abuses, crimes, or harms that other people have done to you that you can remember (no matter how small or great). These kinds of abuses or traumatic events can give Satan the legal rights he needs to sink his hooks in you: spiritual bondage results. For example:

**Abusive relationships.** These might involve spouses or boyfriends or girlfriends; parents; children; relatives; friends; school or neighborhood bullies.

**Controlling or manipulative relationships.** These might involve parents who use money and approval to control their adult children; manipulative spouses, bosses, or even clergymen—anyone who exercises their position in your life in ungodly ways.

**Molestation, rape, or other traumatic events.** These involve any physical or sexual acts that were performed on you against your will, such as molestation or rape, or any other similar traumatic experiences, such as being in a combat zone, suffering torture, etc. These traumas often cause demonization.

**Spells or curses.** If you know someone put a spell or curse on you, then you should list that here.

## #10. Idolatry

Your tenth homework assignment requires you to list anything in your life that you have made into an idol. As J. Wilhelm of *Catholic Answers* notes on that website's encyclopedia entry, idolatry "denotes Divine worship given to an image, but its signification has been extended to all Divine worship given to anyone or anything but the true God." (See <https://www.catholic.com/encyclopedia/idolatry> for more details on Wilhelm's article.) In other words, anything that you have treated as being more important to you than God, that you have spent your life pursuing as if it were a god—that is likely an "idol" for you, and it could be a legal point of entry for the Evil One to gain a stronghold in your life and put you into bondage.

Idolatry could be something as simple as football (or other sports that, through your actions, hold a place of greater importance than, say, going to Mass on a Sunday). Your work, your own success, or your career might be an idol. Your money and possessions could be an idol. Your love of pleasurable things might be an idol—impulsivity, sexual acts, living dangerously, etc. Even your spouse and your own children might be idols in your life, if your love of them is disordered because you put them before God. (For those who might chafe at this, remember our Lord's words: "Whoever loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me, and whoever loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me; and whoever does not take up his cross and follow after me is not worthy of me" (Matthew 10:37-38).

Of course, it goes without repeating: if you actually worshipped (or currently worship) an idol in your native religion, then you need to repent of that idol in the Sacrament of Confession and renounce any legal rights the Devil may have over you afterward (a step we will do together during Deliverance Day).

## #11. Other Areas of Bondage

In your eleventh homework assignment, you must list all areas of spiritual bondage that you struggle with in your life beyond those already mentioned in the previous sections. While the list below is fairly comprehensive, it is not entirely so. There might be something you feel is an area of bondage in your life that is not mentioned here. Keep praying about it and ask the Holy Spirit to reveal any hidden areas of bondage that you might be suffering from.

As John LaBriola comments in his book, *Onward Catholic Soldier*, “Satan operates on the principal of toehold, foothold, stronghold. Enticement leads to desire, which leads to sin and left unchecked, eventually, death.” In other words, he starts small, getting his hooks in your life through smaller, venial sins. But like a slippery slope, he gets you sliding until he has a major influence (called a “stronghold”) in your life.

Strongholds (or areas of bondage) include: abortions, addictions, habitual sins, or other unhealthy beliefs, practices, or sources of spiritual bondage that may be present in your life. Here are some examples below.

**Abortions.** This grave evil is universally condemned by the Church. Evidence for this Christian teaching goes as far back as the first-century author, Didache. He wrote, “You shall not procure [an] abortion, nor destroy a newborn child,” and this belief has never changed in the long years since.

**Addictions.** Demons love addictions of any kind, especially drugs and alcohol. In order to successfully participate in the deliverance process, you must be off drugs and alcohol. They impair your mind and your ability to take responsibility for your own life, which is necessary if you are going to address strongholds of personal sin.

**Excessive mourning of the dead.** Grieving the loss of a loved one is normal, but grieving that person for an unhealthy amount of time to the point that you become trapped in a prison of depression and sorrow is not. While mourning times vary depending on particular cultures, a year and a day is a pretty good rule of thumb. If you are still in mourning and it has been years since a loved one died, it’s possible that an area of bondage exists in your life.

**Habitual sins.** Recurring sins, committed so frequently to the point that you feel powerless to resist any temptation in that area of your life, even though you know the sin is destructive and wrong.

**Unconfessed sins.** This is why participating in the Sacrament of Reconciliation on a regular basis is so important in the spiritual life. How can you be free of Satan’s influence when you are not right with God?

To help you with this final homework assignment, you should perform an examination of conscience and then go to Confession. After doing this, sit with the Holy Spirit and ask Him to show you areas of bondage that you need to renounce. Circle, highlight, or underline the areas of bondage listed above (and in the section below) that you are currently struggling with. This will help you prepare for the deliverance session.

Abandonment	Abortion	Accusation	Addiction*
Adultery	Alcoholism	Anger	Anorexia†
Anti-Christ	Anxiety	Arrogance	Arthritis†
Asthma/Allergies/Hay Fever†	Bestiality	Bipolar Disorder†	Bitterness
Blocked Intimacy	Boastfulness	Bondage	Brain Disorder†
Bulimia †	Callousness	Cancer†	Carelessness
Cheating**	Child Molestation	Competition	Compulsion
Condemnation (of Others)	Confusion	Controlling (Jezebel)	Coprophilia
Covetousness	Criticism/Critical	Cruelty	Cursing
Daydreaming	Deaf & Dumb	Death***	Debt
Deception	Denial	Depression†	Despair (or Anguish)
Detachment	Disdain (for others)	Disease	Dishonesty
Disobedience	Distraction	Divination	Divorce
Double-Mindedness	Doubt	Dread	Egotism****
Embarrassment	Emotional Weakness	Envy	Exaggeration
Exhibitionism	Failure	False Humility*****	Familiar Spirit*****
Fatigue	Fear	Fear of Authority	Fear of Man

Fetishism	Fever†	Flirtation	Forgetfulness
Fornication	Gloominess	Gluttony	Gossip
Greed	Grief	Guilt	Hatred
Haughtiness	Headache†	Heaviness	Helplessness
Hindering (can't call on God)	Homophobia	Homosexuality	Hopelessness
Hyperactivity†	Hypochondriasis†	Hypocrisy	Hysteria
Idolatry	Ignorance	Impatience	Impure Thoughts
Impurity	Inadequacy	Incest	Indecision
Independence	Inferiority	Infirmity	Insanity
Insecurity	Insomnia†	Irritability	Isolation
Jealousy	Lack of Focus	Laziness	Legalism
Lesbianism	Lethargy	Loneliness	Lung Disorder†
Lust	Lying	Magic (any kind)	Malice
Manipulation	Masochism	Masturbation	Mental Illness†
Migraine†	Mind-Binding	Mockery	Multiple Personalities†
Murder	Necrophilia	Neglect	Nerve Disorder†
Nervousness	Nightmares	Obesity	Oppression
Ostracism	Pain	Panic Attacks†	Paranoia
Passivity	Pedophilia	Perfectionism	Phobias (any kind)†
Poor Self-Image	Pornography	Possessiveness	Poverty
Pride	Procrastination	Profanity	Prostitution
Pushiness	Rage	Rape	Rape Fantasies
Rash Judgments	Rebellion	Rejection	Resentment
Restlessness	Retaliation	Revenge (Vengeful)	Rushing (or Hurrying)
Sadism	Sadness (Sorrow)	Sarcasm	Schizophrenia†
Secretiveness	Seduction (Succubus)	Seizures/Epilepsy†	Selfishness
Self-Abuse	Self-Centeredness	Self-Deception	Self-Exaltation
Self-Hatred	Self-Mutilation	Self-Pity	Self-Righteousness
Sensitivity	Sexual Perversion	Shame	Sleepiness
Slothfulness	Sluggishness	Slumber	Sodomy
Spirit Guides	Strife	Stubbornness	Stupidity
Suicide	Suspicion	Tardiness (Lateness)	Terror
Theft	Timidity	Torment/Horror	Trances
Trickery	Unbelief	Uncharitable	Unforgiveness
Untrustworthiness	Urophilia	Vanity	Victimization
Violence	Voyeurism	Witchcraft	Withdrawal
Word Twisting	Worry	Wrath	

\*Any addiction: alcohol, coffee, drugs, food, pornography, sex, soda, sugar, tobacco, video games, etc.

\*\*Cheating, as in during an exam or test, or at a game, etc. It could also mean cheating others out of what is rightfully theirs. (Infidelity to a spouse should be categorized as “adultery.”)

\*\*\*The feeling that death might be following you around; others die around you; you feel that death is coming for you, or that you will die young.

\*\*\*\*Thinking more of one's self than one ought to.

\*\*\*\*\*Putting one's self down to be less than what one actually is.

\*\*\*\*\*Familiar spirits are those demons who have been attached to a particular family line. They pass from one generation to the next. For example, when you see a similar fault or weakness in one family member to the next over the course of several generations—this could be evidence of a familiar spirit.

†These are legitimate medical conditions. That being said, **sometimes** these conditions could possibly have a demonic source, or possible “demonic riders” that are aggravating the medical condition and making it worse than it really is. But if the Lord does not heal them, do not make the mistake of interpreting this as a failure on the deliverance process. It probably just means that this is a natural disease or condition and its source is not demonic. In such cases, seeing a mental health professional (who isn't hostile to Catholicism, preferably) would be the best course of treatment.



Final Notes: There is an old story you often hear in deliverance circles. If I am a teacher in a classroom, and two students named Mike and Sarah in the back row are being noisy (talking, goofing off, etc.), which of these actions is more effective in getting them to behave:

- 1) Telling the entire class to be quiet and pay attention; or
- 2) Making eye contact with both Mike and Sarah while saying, "Mike and Sarah, I need you both to be quiet and pay attention, please?"

Obviously, the second one, right? And why is that? Because by calling on them, you are focusing your attention and authority on them (as well as the entire class's attention on them, which creates a peer pressure situation they must conform to). In a similar way, calling out a demon by very specifically identifying it by its exact attribute (e.g., the way in which it visibly manifests) is very helpful in telling it to be quiet or leave so that it doesn't "hide" behind its buddies or anything else that might obfuscate its presence in the client's life.

This is why the homework lists above include terms that seem to be the same thing. In everyday conversational language, these words would be synonyms with each other, and easily interchangeable. But since demons are very legalistic when it comes to their rights in a client's life, we must acknowledge that these terms are, technically, different from each other.

For example, while Voodoo, Brujería, Appalachian granny magic, etc. all fall under the broader term of *magic*, they are all, technically-speaking, *types* (or specific traditions) of magic. *Magic* is a catch-all term for any practice in general that relates to a person attempting to influence people, places, things, and the overall course of events in the natural world by calling upon mysterious or preternatural forces.

As another example: *anger*, *wrath*, and *rage* might seem like the same thing, but if you look at the definitions of each of these three words, *anger* might mean "annoyance," while *wrath* could mean "revenge," even as *rage* implies an "uncontrollable, violent anger." They seem to be a progression, one stronger than the other. You might always be angry, but not always violently raging. Osama Bin Laden provoked the *wrath* of America, which suggests that Americans would vengefully hunt him down for 9/11. Etc.

During deliverance, it doesn't hurt to call these out specifically. In fact, it is not just helpful: it is often necessary.

## #12. Bondages Common to All

For the twelfth and final homework assignment, I just want to say—congratulations! You don't need to actually do anything for this assignment because we always assume that these three potential sources of bondage are common to every person. Since there is no way to know what sins your great-great-great grandmother may have committed or what kind of curse some witch or Satanist may have placed on you from afar, we pray against these in a general sense—just in case.

**Ancestral or generational sins.** These are sins committed by ancestors in your family line. For example, suicide or mental disorder might run in your family. You might not even be aware of these.

**Curses.** These may cause a bondage in your life and take many forms, including: inherited curses, magical curses, or word-curses, just to name a few. For example, calling someone “stupid” or “worthless” over and over again could actually cause bondage in their life. You might not even be aware of these.

**Evil spells.** Similar to curses, evil spells can also be placed on your life if someone targets you for some malicious purpose. You might not even be aware of these.

### **III. Preparation for Deliverance Day (D-Day)**

As your scheduled deliverance approaches, there are a few more actions you will need to take after you have completed your homework lists in order to best prepare you for the process.

1. Every morning, upon waking, you need to say aloud the Daily Spiritual Warfare Prayers that are provided on our website. Go to [www.catholiccenturion.com](http://www.catholiccenturion.com). Click on **Free Services**. In the drop-down menu, click on **Resources**. Scroll down a little bit and click on the blue button under **Daily Spiritual Warfare Prayers**. (Note: You do not need to say the “Heroic Act of Charity” prayer listed there, unless you want to.)

2. Before or after saying these prayers, you should meditate and reflect on at least one of the Scripture passages below for five to ten minutes, asking God to speak to you through them. They will help you in this struggle. (You can change verses each day, if you want.)

- Romans 8:28, 37-39
- 1 Corinthians 10:13
- 2 Corinthians 10:4-5
- Ephesians 6:10-18
- Psalms 22
- Colossians 2:15
- Psalms 91
- 2 Corinthians 3:17

3. You will also need a lighter and a safe place to burn your homework lists after we do the prayers with them. When that time comes, I will give you a chance to walk away from the computer and go do just that, so maybe if you can burn the paper on your patio or outside, somewhere safe. If burning anything is not possible for you, then use a shredder or some other means of destroying the paper in a memorable way.

4. If you don't have one already, you need to obtain a vial of Holy Water before our session. We will be making the sign of the cross many times, blessing ourselves with Holy Water during the deliverance. Demons hate Holy Water.

5. Perform an Examination of Conscience. Then, go to Confession within three days of deliverance and make sure to perform your act of penance. You want to be free from all sin when we begin your deliverance. Repentance and confession of all known sin is the most critical step in positioning yourself in Christ. Without the cleansing and healing power of the Sacrament of Confession and the reconciliation with God and His Church, deliverance is not likely. The foundation upon all that we do in seeking deliverance is built upon our conversion through the Sacrament of Baptism and our maintaining a State of Grace through the Sacrament of Confession. These two Sacraments are the Pillars of Deliverance, upholding our ministry.

6. If possible, try to take the Eucharist before your deliverance begins. For example, if your deliverance is scheduled in the afternoon, try to attend a morning Mass; if your deliverance is scheduled in the morning, try to attend a Mass the day before. Before Mass or during the Prayers of the Faithful, ask Jesus Christ to protect you and deliver you from all evil.

7. On Deliverance Day, you should fast, if possible. As our Lord indicated to His Apostles, some demons only come out by “prayer and fasting,” so even though many evil spirits will come out without it, we should assume they will not just to be certain. A traditional Catholic fast, like on Good Friday or Ash Wednesday, is appropriate: one full meal and two smaller meals that, added together, are not equal to a full meal. But if the Holy Spirit is pushing you to fast in a different way, by all means, follow where He leads you.

We are praying for you.

In Christ,  
Robert