

Living in the Kingdom

Lesson 9: The Ten Commandments

(Exodus 20, Deut 5)



CCC 1952-53

"From the beginning, God had implanted in the heart of man the precepts of the natural law. Then he was content to remind him of them. This was the Decalogue."
(St. Irenaeus, CCC 2070)

CCC 1954-1959

CCC 1961-1964

CCC 1965
CCC 1984-85
CCC 1972-1974
"Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Mt 5:48)

CCC 2012-2029

"I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing." (Jn 15:5)

CCC 2030-2040
CCC 2046-47

"If you would enter life, keep the commandments."
(Mt19:16-19)

CCC 2052-2068
Deut. 6:4
Mt 22:37-40

CCC 2084-2094

CCC 2095-2103

1. Moral law prescribes rules of conduct that lead to eternal beatitude and proscribes ways of evil. Its fullness is in Christ.
 - a. Eternal law- the source, in God, of all law.
 - b. Natural law- man's participation in the eternal law
 - c. Revealed law (Old Law and New Law)
 - d. Civil and ecclesiastical laws.
2. Natural Moral law is the light of understanding placed in us by God; through it we know what we must do and what we must avoid. God has given this light or law to all men.
3. The Old Law (10 Commandments/ Torah) was revealed to Israel, but it is imperfect. It is a preparation for the Gospel.
4. The New Law (the Gospel) is the perfection on earth of the divine law. It fulfills and surpasses the Mosaic Law. It was expressed in the Sermon on the Mount; uses the sacraments to communicate grace to us.
5. Grace is the help God gives us to respond to our vocation of becoming his adopted sons by keeping his commandments. All Christians are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity.
6. The Church as mother helps us to grow in holiness, providing us the example of the saints and of the Virgin Mary, and providing nourishment in the liturgy and sacraments. The Church teaches with the authority of Christ through the magisterium (the Pope and bishops).
7. Keeping the commandments is our response to God's love who redeemed us first.

I. I am the Lord you God; you shall not have strange gods before me.

- a. The first commandment embraces faith, hope, and charity.
- b. Sins against faith: Voluntary doubt, incredulity, heresy, apostasy, schism. Against hope: despair, presumption. Against charity: Indifference, ingratitude, lukewarmness, hatred of God.
- c. Him only shall you serve. How? Adoration, prayer, sacrifice, fidelity to vows and promises.

<p>CCC 2110-2128</p>	<p>d. Offenses against the 1st Commandment: Superstition, idolatry, witchcraft, sorcery, magic, worshiping other gods or demons, atheism, irreligion.</p>
<p>CCC 2129-32 Deut 4:15-16 Num 21 Ex 25:18</p>	<p>e. By becoming incarnate, the Son of God introduced a new 'economy' of images; Catholics do not "worship statues" or pray to them. The honor paid to sacred images passes to the person portrayed in it.</p>
<p>CCC 2142-46</p>	<p>II. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.</p>
<p>CCC 2147-55</p>	<p>a. The name of the Lord is holy. Man must never abuse it. He should only use it to bless, praise, and glorify it.</p>
<p>Gen 2:2-3 Ex 20:8-11 CCC 2168-73</p>	<p>b. Offenses against the 2nd Commandment: blasphemy, false oaths, and perjury.</p>
<p>Mk 1:21 Mk 2:27-28 Mk 3:4</p>	<p>III. Remember to keep holy the Sabbath.</p>
<p>Mt 28:1 CCC 2174 Acts 20:7</p>	<p>a. The Sabbath rest recalls creation and God's covenant with humanity.</p>
<p>CCC 2177-88</p>	<p>b. Jesus always respected the holiness of the Sabbath. He declared the Sabbath for doing good rather than harm, for saving life rather than killing.</p>
<p>CCC 2197-2206</p>	<p>c. Sabbath or Sunday? Jesus rose from the dead on the "first day of the week". Because it is the "first day" it recalls creation and symbolizes the new creation – though it has not abolished the Sabbath. Early Christians celebrated the Eucharist on the first day of the week - the Lord's Day.</p>
<p>CCC 2207-2246</p>	<p>d. The faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on Sundays. Just as God "rested on the seventh day from all his work," Christians should refrain from work on Sunday to cultivate their familial, cultural, social, and religious lives.</p>
<p>CCC 2261-68</p>	<p>IV. Honor your father and mother.</p>
<p>CCC 2263-65</p>	<p>a. God wills that we should honor our parents to whom we owe life and who have handed on to us the knowledge of God. This also concerns the extended family. It also extends to the duties of pupils to teachers, employees to employers, subordinates to leaders, citizens to their country, and to those who govern it. The promise for those who obey the 4th commandment: peace and prosperity.</p>
<p>CCC 2261-68</p>	<p>b. The family is the basic cell of society. Parents are responsible for creating a loving home for their children, providing for their needs, educating and evangelizing them, and helping them to grow in virtue.</p>
<p>CCC 2261-68</p>	<p>V. You shall not murder.</p>
<p>CCC 2261-68</p>	<p>a. The deliberate murder of an innocent person is gravely contrary to the dignity of the human being, and to the holiness of the Creator.</p>
<p>CCC 2261-68</p>	<p>b. Legitimate defense: someone who defends his life is not guilty of murder even if he is forced to kill his aggressor.</p>

CCC 2266-67

CCC 2270-2291

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you. (Jer 1:5)

CCC 2297

Mt 5:21-22

Mt 5:9

CCC 2331-50

God created man in his own image...male and female he created them. (Gen 1:27)

Mt 5:27-28

CCC 2351-59

Mt 19:4-6

CCC 2361-63, FC 11

CCC 2364-65

CCC 2366-72

CCC 2373-79

CCC 2380-86

CCC 2387-91

CCC 2402-06

CCC 2409

CCC 2419-36

- c. The state has the right to curb the spread of harmful behavior and to inflict due punishment, even capital punishment, *however*, today the cases in which the execution of the offender is an absolute necessity are very rare.
- d. Offenses against the 5th Commandment: abortion, euthanasia, suicide, disrespect of human body, murderous anger, hatred, and in some cases, war.

Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains for ever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being. (CCC 2258)

VI. You shall not commit adultery.

- a. The union of man and woman in marriage is a way of imitating in the flesh God's generosity and fecundity. This commandment requires Chastity: the successful integration of sexuality within the person (bodily and spiritual being).
- b. Offenses against the 6th Commandment: Lust, masturbation, fornication, pornography, prostitution, rape, and homosexual acts.
- c. The spouses' union achieves the twofold end of marriage: the good of the spouses and the transmission of life. The two cannot be separated; they require fidelity and fecundity.
- d. In marriage, man and wife give themselves definitively and totally to one another. They are no longer two but now form one flesh.
- e. It is necessary that each and every marriage act remains open to the procreation of human life. The use of artificial means of contraception is always wrong.
- f. Children are a great blessing. Couples who are sterile suffer greatly, yet techniques of artificial insemination and fertilization are always gravely immoral.
- g. Between the baptized, a ratified and consummated marriage cannot be dissolved by any human power or for any reason other than death. Adultery and divorce are grave offenses.
- h. Other sins against the dignity of marriage: polygamy, incest and sexual abuses, 'free unions', pre-marital sex.

VII. You shall not steal.

- a. Man has a legitimate right to ownership of private property.
- b. Offenses against 7th Commandment: theft, business fraud, paying unjust wages, forcing up and artificially manipulating prices, corruption, work poorly done, tax evasion, forgery of checks, excessive expenses and waste.

CCC 2443-49
Mt 27:34-35

*Let your 'Yes' be 'Yes,'
and your 'No,' 'No.'*
(Mt 5:37)
CCC 2464-74, 2505

CCC 2476-92

CCC 2493-2503

*Every man who looks at a
woman lustfully has
already committed
adultery with her in his
heart. (Mt 5:28)*
CCC 2514-33

Mt 5:8

CCC 2534-37
*Blessed are the poor in
spirit, for theirs is the
kingdom of God. (Mt 5:3)*
*For where your treasure
is, there will your heart be
also. (Mt 6:21)*

CCC 2553, 54

*Those who are Christ's
have crucified the flesh
with its passions and
desires. (Gal 5:24)*

- c. Everyone has the right to employment and just wages.
- d. Love for the poor, the giving of alms, and works of mercy are a witness to charity and a work of justice pleasing to God.

VIII. You shall not bear false witness:

- a. Forbids misrepresenting the truth in our relations with other. We have the vocation to bear witness to God who is the truth.
- b. Offenses against the 8th Commandment: Lying, false witness and perjury, rash judgment, gossip, and calumny, flattery, adulation, duplicitous speech, and boasting.
- c. The communications media are responsible for providing information based on truth. Art gives form to the truth of reality in a language accessible to sight or hearing.

IX. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

- a. This commandment warns against lust or carnal concupiscence.
- b. The struggle against carnal lust involves purifying the heart and practicing temperance. Modesty protects the intimate center of the person by refusing to unveil what should remain hidden.

X. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

- a. This commandment forbids *greed* and the desire to amass earthly goods without limit.
- b. Offenses against the 10th Commandment: avarice, envy, and greed.
- c. We must combat envy through good-will, humility, abandonment to the providence of God, and detachment from earthly riches.

Questions for Discussion

1. Do I see God as my loving Father who has my best interests at heart?
2. What is my understanding of the Ten Commandments in light of the New Law?
3. Does the Law of Love render the Ten Commandments less or more important? How?
4. How does our culture challenge the first three commandments?
5. Do I struggle to keep any of these commandments? What must I do to change?
6. Why is it necessary to go to church on Sabbath/Sunday? How well do I keep the Sabbath holy?
7. Which of the last seven commandments seems most challenging to you? Why?
8. Which commandment is most challenged by our society? Why?
9. Are God's absolute commandments and true human freedom compatible concepts?