

## **The Ten Commandments Series**

Beginning in Lent, our priests and deacons will initiate a teaching series on the Ten Commandments at the beginning of each Mass. A handout will be distributed the weekend prior to the presentation for your review.

### **The 10 Commandments (Decalogue)**

- I) I am the LORD your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.
- II) You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.
- III) Remember to keep holy the LORD's Day.
- IV) Honor your father and your mother.
- V) You shall not kill.
- VI) You shall not commit adultery.
- VII) You shall not steal.
- VIII) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
- IX) You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.
- X) You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

### **Where are the 10 Commandments found in the Bible?**

The 10 Commandments appear in the Old Testament, twice. They are found in Exodus 20:2-17 and Deuteronomy 5:6-21. The wording is slightly different, but the meaning is the same.

### **What does the word Decalogue mean?**

Decalogue means "ten words". God revealed these "ten words" to his people on the holy mountain Sinai.

### **Who wrote the Ten Commandments?**

The original Ten Commandments were written with the "finger of God" on two stone tablets. Moses destroyed them in his anger against the Israelites who had fallen into sin while he was up on Mount Sinai for 40 days receiving them. The Lord rewrote the Ten Commandments on a second set of stone tablets to replace the first.

## **What do the 10 Commandments oblige us to do?**

According to the Catechism of the Catholic Church, paragraph 2072:

*“Since they express man’s fundamental duties towards God and towards his neighbor, the Ten Commandments reveal, in their primordial content, grave obligations. They are fundamentally immutable, and they oblige always and everywhere. No one can dispense from them. The Ten Commandments are engraved in the human heart.”*

In other words, the Ten Commandments:

- Are the original, most basic and fundamental of God’s expectations for us.
- Are serious commands of God. They are not suggestions or guidelines; they are commands.
- They will never change.
- They bind all people, always and everywhere, whether or not they are Catholic, whether or not they believe in God.
- God “programs” all human beings with an inborn knowledge of the Ten Commandments, even though an individual might call them something different.

# **The Ten Commandments Series:**

## **The First and Second Commandment**

**I) I am the LORD your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.**

**II) You shall not take the name of the LORD your God in vain.**

The First Commandment ranks first among all the commandments, because it is the most important commandment. Why? Because it commands REVERENCE and LOVE for God. All other commandments are based on reverence and love for God.

### **The First Commandment commands:**

- 1) To offer to God alone the supreme worship that is due Him by acts of faith, hope and love (charity).
- 2) Faith obliges us to make efforts to find out what God has revealed, to believe firmly what God has revealed and to profess our faith openly whenever necessary.
- 3) Hope obliges us to trust firmly that God will give us eternal life and the means to obtain it.
- 4) Love (charity) obliges us to love God above all things because He is infinitely good, and to love our neighbor as ourselves for the love of God.

### **The First Commandment forbids:**

#### **Sins which detract from the honor and worship of God, such as:**

- Neglect of prayer.
- Superstitious practices: divination, consulting fortune-tellers, attaching undue importance to dreams and omens.
- Tempting God by exposing oneself to danger of soul, life or health without grave cause.
- Sacrilege – Profane or superstitious use of blessed objects [Irreverent use of a crucifix, rosary or statue of Jesus, Mary or the Saints.]
- Disrespect or profanation of places or things consecrated to God.
- Receiving the sacraments in a state of mortal sin.

#### **Sins against Faith, such as:**

- Willful doubt of any article of Faith.
- Reading or circulating books or media against Catholic belief or practice.
- Joining in schismatic or heretical worship
- Denying one's religion.
- Neglecting means of religious instruction

#### **Sins against Hope, such as:**

- Thinking that God cannot forgive your sin.
- Lack of confidence in the power of His Grace to support us in trouble or temptation.

- Presuming on God's mercy, or thinking that I can continue sinning if I continue to perform certain pious or good works.

**Sins against Love or Charity, such as:**

- Willfully rebellious thoughts against God
- Boasting or bragging about sin.
- Violating God's Law or omitting good works, out of fear of offending others.

**The Second Commandment prescribes:** respect for the Lord's name. Among all the words of Revelation there is one which is unique: the revealed name of God. God confides his name to those who believe in him. The gift of a name belongs to the order of trust and intimacy. "The Lord's name is holy." For this reason, we must not abuse it. The Second Commandment is the only commandment that, in the original form in both the Exodus and Deuteronomy accounts, comes with a curse attached:

"... for Yahweh will not leave unpunished the man who utters his name to misuse it." Dt 5:11

" ... for Yahweh will not leave unpunished the man who utters his name to misuse it." Ex 20:7

**The Second Commandment commands:** us to always speak with reverence of God, of the saints, and of holy things, and to be truthful in taking oaths and faithful to them and to our vows.

**The Second Commandment forbids:**

**All irreverence towards God's most holy name, such as:**

- Cursing [calling down evil on someone]
- Profane swearing. [foul and vulgar talk; four-letter words]
- Blasphemy [words of hatred, reproach or defiance against God; speaking ill of God, the Church, the Saints and sacred things; use of God's name to cover up criminal practices, reduce peoples to servitude, to torture persons or put them to death]
- False, unlawful and unnecessary oaths.
- Membership in societies condemned by the Church
- Breaking or deferring lawful vows.
- Irreverence at Mass, and in churches and holy places even when service is not going on.

# **Ten Commandments Series:**

## **The Third Commandment**

### **III) Remember to keep holy the LORD's Day.**

“Jesus rose from the dead “on the first day of the week. ”Because it is the “first day,” the day of Christ’s Resurrection recalls the first creation. ... For Christians it has become the first of all days, the first of all feasts, the Lord’s Day – Sunday.”

The Old Testament **Sabbath** (Saturday) has been replaced by the **Lord’s Day** of the New Testament (Sunday). Sunday is “a day of grace and rest from work.” “The institution of the Lord’s Day helps everyone enjoy adequate rest and leisure to cultivate their familial, cultural, social, and religious lives.” It is also a day “traditionally consecrated by Christian piety to good works and humble service of the sick, the infirm, and the elderly.”

#### **The Third Commandment commands:**

- Worship of God by attending Mass on Sundays, the Lord’s Day, and on Holy Days of Obligation.

#### **The Third Commandment forbids:**

- Missing Mass through one’s own fault on Sundays or Holy Days.
- Doing unnecessary servile (physical) work on Sunday. [Servile work is allowed when the honor of God, our own need, or that of our neighbor requires it. Examples of servile work are cutting the grass, painting the house, changing the oil in the car, house and raking leaves.]
- Making others do unnecessary servile work on Sunday.
- Conducting unnecessary business [or shopping] on Sunday.

# **Ten Commandments Series:**

## **The Fourth Commandment**

### **IV) Honor your father and your mother.**

The Fourth Commandment is the first of the “love of neighbor commandments”, immediately following the 3 “love of God commandments.” No one, except Adam and Eve, has ever come into the world without a father and a mother. God has willed that after Him, we should honor our parents to whom we owe life and who have handed on to us the knowledge of God. We are obliged to honor and respect all those whom God, for our good, has vested with His authority. The Fourth Commandment is addressed expressly to children. However, it likewise concerns the ties of kinship between members of the extended family. It requires honor, affection and gratitude toward elders and ancestors. Observing the Fourth Commandment brings its reward: “Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the LORD your God gives you.”

### **The Fourth Commandment commands:**

The Fourth Commandment commands us to respect and love our parents, to obey them in all that is not sinful, and to help them when they are in need. We are also obliged to respect and obey all lawful authority.

### **The Fourth Commandment forbids:**

For children and students:

- All manner of anger and hatred against parents and other lawful authority.
- Provoking [annoying or irritating] them to anger. Grieving them [causing them deep sorrow or distress]. Insulting them [saying something meant to hurt them].
- Neglecting them in their necessity [not helping when needed; not caring from them when they are old].
- Contempt or disobedience to their lawful commands. [Serious disrespect. Acting as if their commands are worthless.]
- Disrespect, disobedience, stubbornness, idleness.

For parents:

- Hating their children. Cursing them.
- Giving scandal [bad example] to their children.
- Allowing children to grow up in ignorance, idleness or sin.

- Neglecting their spiritual well-being and deferring their children's Sacraments (Examples: religious instruction, the company they keep, the books they read, the movies and shows that they see, the video games that they play, the internet sites that they visit, etc.)
- Failing to correct them when needed.
- Being harsh or cruel in correction.
- Failing to provide for the physical and spiritual needs of the children.

For husbands and wives:

- Putting obstacles to the fulfillment of religious duties.
- Lack of gentleness and consideration in regard to each other's faults.  
?? Neglect of duties at home
- Sulkiness [showing resentment and ill-humor by sullen, withdrawn behavior].
- Injurious words.

For employees:

- Not allowing one's employees reasonable time for religious duties and instruction.
- Giving bad example to them or allowing others to do so.
- Not caring for them in sickness; treating them unjustly.

For the employed:

- Disrespect for employers.
- Lack of obedience in matters where one has bound oneself to obey.
- Waste of time. Neglect of work.
- Waste of employer's property by dishonesty, carelessness or neglect.

For professional men and public officials:

- Culpable [blameworthy] lack of knowledge relating to duties of office or profession.
- Neglect in carrying out one's duties.
- Injustice or partiality.

For all:

- Contempt for the just laws of our state and country.
- Contempt for the precepts of the Church.
- Disobedience to lawful authority.

# **Ten Commandments Series:**

## **The Fifth Commandment**

### **V) You shall not kill.**

God controls human life:

“Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains forever 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.”

The unborn are persons:

“Because it should be treated as a person from conception, the embryo must be defended in its integrity, cared for, and healed like every other human being.”

Self-defense is legitimate:

It is legitimate to insist on respect for one's own right to life. Someone who defends his life is not guilty of murder even if he is forced to deal his aggressor a lethal blow. Legitimate defense cannot only be a right but a grave duty for someone responsible for another's life, the common good of the family or of the state.

Capital punishment should be avoided:

“If bloodless means are sufficient to defend human lives against an aggressor and to protect public order and the safety of persons, public authority should limit itself to such means, because they better correspond to the concrete conditions of the common good and are more in conformity to the dignity of the human person.

### **The Fifth Commandment commands:**

The Fifth Commandment commands us to take proper care of our own spiritual and bodily well being and that of our neighbor. The Fifth Commandment obliges us to show love for our neighbor by respecting his person and not injuring him in any way.



### **The Fifth Commandment forbids:**

- Unjust taking of human life – murder, suicide, abortion, euthanasia.
- Kidnapping, hostage taking, terrorism and torture.
- Violence in thought [violent TV shows, movies, Internet sites, video games, songs, etc.], word or act which may lead to unjust taking of human life.
- Exposing life or limb to danger without reasonable cause [dangerous pranks, doing something dangerous to yourself or others because someone dared you to do it]
- Reckless driving.
- Carelessness in leaving medicine, poisons, dangerous drugs, weapons, etc. [where children, especially, may be harmed or do harm to someone else.]
- Desires of revenge, anger [getting even with someone]
- Fighting [physical], quarrels [verbal], hatred [against individuals or groups of people]
- Showing aversion or contempt for others.
- Refusal to speak to someone when addressed [due to anger or hatred].
- Ignoring offers of reconciliation, especially between relatives
- Insults – irritating words and actions.
- Rejoicing at another's misfortune.
- Jealousy at attention shown to others or annoyed by the good fortune of others.
- Tyrannical behavior [harsh, cruel, unjust, oppressive behavior].
- Bad example [causing others to sin by word or example].
- Gluttony [eating too much], drunkenness [drinking too much].
- Misuse of drugs.
- Injury to health by over-indulgence [overdoing it].
- Giving drink to others, knowing they will abuse it.
- Refusing assistance to someone in danger.

## **Ten Commandments Series: The Sixth and Ninth Commandments**

**VI) You shall not commit adultery.**

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

The Sixth and Ninth Commandments work together. What the Sixth Commandment forbids in action, the Ninth Commandment forbids in thought or desire.

### Prevalence of these sins:

“More souls go to Hell for sins of the flesh than for any other reason.”  
Our Lady to Jacinta Marto, Fatima, 1917.

### Chief dangers to the virtue of chastity:

Idleness, sinful curiosity, bad companions, drinking, immodest dress, indecent books, plays, movies, video games, Internet sites, TV shows and even some types of music.

### Chief means of preserving the virtue of chastity:

Avoid carefully all unnecessary dangers and temptations; seek God's help through prayer, frequent confession, Holy Communion, attending Holy Mass and have a special devotion to the Blessed Virgin.

Many fall because they do not avoid dangers. They go to movies, watch shows, read materials, visit Internet sites, play video games, or listen to music which are offensive to the Lord. They try to excuse themselves by saying that they have no bad intentions. Good intentions alone are not sufficient. Human nature is very weak where purity is concerned, and we must keep far from all danger, or sooner or later we shall fall.

### Impure thoughts:

Impure thoughts are not always sinful, but always dangerous. They become sinful when we entertain them. Above all, avoid idleness.

### Purity:

Purity of heart requires modesty. Modesty is patience, decency [exercising proper conduct, speech and good taste] and discretion [being careful about what one says and does]. Modesty protects the intimate center of the person.

**The Sixth Commandment commands:**

The Sixth Commandment commands us to be pure and modest in our behavior.

**The Ninth Commandment commands:**

The Ninth Commandment commands us be pure in thought and desire.

**The Sixth Commandment forbids:**

- All impurity and immodesty in words, looks and actions, whether alone or with others.
- Offenses against marriage: Adultery [sexual relations between married people who are not married to each other], polygamy [having more than one wife] and cohabitation [living together without being married], and divorce.
- Offenses against chastity: Lust, pornography, homosexual or transexual behaviors, and any other form of sexual actions outside of marriage.

**The Ninth Commandment forbids:**

- All thoughts and desires contrary to chastity.

# **Ten Commandments Series:**

## **The Eighth Commandment**

### **VII) You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.**

Christ said “I am the way and the truth and the life.” He died on the Cross for the truth. The Eighth Commandment tells us to love truth and to show love for others by respecting their reputation.

#### Living in truth:

The Old Testament attests that God is the source of all truth. His Word is truth. His Law is truth. His “faithfulness endures to all generations.” Since God is “true,” the member of his peoples are called to live in the truth.

#### Martyrdom:

Martyrdom is the supreme witness given to the truth of the faith: it means bearing witness to the truth even unto death.

#### Lying:

Lying is the most direct offense against the truth. The Lord denounces lying as the work of the devil. One of the names of the devil is the “Father of Lies”.

#### Is it ever permissible to tell a lie?

We may never tell a lie. When people have a right to know the truth, we must tell them the truth, even though we have to suffer for it. When they have no right to know the truth, or when we have to keep a secret, we may answer evasively, or throw them off the track, but we may never directly make a false statement.

#### What must a person do who has sinned by detraction or calumny or told a secret he is bound to keep?

This person must repair the harm done to his neighbor, as far as he is able. The same is true of all sins committed against truth.

#### Is the right to know the truth unconditional?

No. We need to judge, based on the Golden Rule, whether it is appropriate to reveal the truth to someone who asks for it. The good and safety of others, respect for privacy, the duty to avoid scandal and the good of all concerned are sufficient reasons for being silent about what out not to be

known or for making use of discreet language. No one is bound to reveal the truth to someone who does not have a right to know it.

### **The Eighth Commandment commands:**

The Eighth Commandment commands us to speak the truth in all things, but especially in what concerns the good name and honor of others.

### **The Eighth Commandment forbids:**

- Lies [speaking a falsehood with the intention of deceiving].
- Malicious falsehoods [falsehoods that are intended to harm another].
- Exaggerating or bragging beyond the truth.
- Belittling someone by maliciously mischaracterizing another person.
- Excessive, untrue or insincere praise or adulation [flattery which attempts to control another person], which confirms another in malicious acts or perverse conduct.
- Perjury [lying under oath] and false witness [lying in court].
- Rash judgment [believing something harmful to another's character without sufficient reason].
- Baseless accusations [accusing someone of something that they are clearly not guilty of just to cause them trouble].
- Detraction [making known the hidden faults of another without good reason].
- Calumny or slander [injuring the good name of another by lying].
- Encouraging detraction or slander in others.
- Refusing or delaying to restore the good name we have injured.
- Telling of secrets we are bound to keep. [We are bound to keep secrets when we have promised to do so, when our office requires it, or when the good of another demands it. For example, trade secrets and the secret of the Sacrament of Reconciliation]
- Frauds [deceiving someone into giving up property or money], public and private.

## **Ten Commandments Series: The Seventh and Tenth Commandments**

**VII) You shall not steal.**

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

The Seventh and Tenth Commandments work together. The Tenth Commandment makes it easy to keep the Seventh Commandment by telling us not even to desire the property of our neighbor.

### Danger of riches:

Remember Christ's warning on the danger of riches. Anyone who desires to be rich in having more material possessions than he needs, will find it difficult to respect the property of others. The more we love the things of this earth, the harder we shall find it to love God. "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (Mt 6:21).

### Man's dominion over creation:

God has given man dominion over the mineral, vegetable and animal resources of the Universe. Thus, treating animals with kindness and caring for the resources of the Universe for future generations are required by the Seventh Commandment.

### Human beings can never be considered property:

The moral law forbids the enslavement or the buying and selling of human beings as if they were property.

### Restitution:

In justice, one must return stolen goods.

### Reparation:

In justice, one must repair the damage caused to the property of another.

Not only is it forbidden to steal, but even to buy a stolen article, or to accept it as a gift. If we have a stolen article in our possession, we must give it back to the owner. However, if we bought it, we have a right to the money back from the one who sold it to us.

**The Seventh Commandment commands:**

The Seventh Commandment commands us to respect what belongs to others, to live up to our business agreements, and to pay our just debts.

**The Tenth Commandment commands:**

The Tenth Commandment commands us to detach ourselves from earthly riches.

**The Seventh Commandment forbids:**

- Stealing. Shoplifting.
- Unjust keeping of what belongs to others.
- Keeping of goods known to be stolen.
- Keeping something that was originally borrowed.
- Keeping something that was found without making a reasonable effort to return it or find the owner.
- Unjust, careless or malicious [with evil intent] damage to the property of others.
- Delay in paying lawful debts or in making restitution when able to make it. Neglect to make reasonable efforts and sacrifices to pay back debts or make restitution.
- Cheating in business or at play [or sports].
- Charging exorbitant [unreasonably high] prices. Or falsely accusing, charging, or holding someone responsible based on false weights and measurements.
- Knowingly selling products that contain ingredients that are not listed on the label.
- Accepting of bribes by public officials or those who have influence.
- Concealment of fraud [deceiving someone into giving up property or money], theft or damage when one is duty bound to give information.

**The Tenth Commandment forbids:**

- All desire to take or to keep unjustly what belongs to others, and also forbids envy at their success.
- Greed [desire to amass earthly goods] and avarice [passion for riches and the accompanying power].
- Envy [sadness at the sight of another's goods and the wrongful desire to have them for oneself].