



"I Am the Lord Your God; You Shall Not Have Other Gods Before Me"

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

"I am the Lord your God; You shall not have other Gods before me." (Exodus 20: 2-3). The first Commandment commands us to adore and worship the one true God who has revealed himself in the Old Testament and most especially in the New Testament in God the Son, Our Lord Jesus Christ. This Commandment summons us to believe in God, to hope in him and to love him above all else. When we accept the first Commandment, we accept God as Lord, as almighty and as all merciful. In accepting God, it follows that we believe what he says (faith), rely on his promises (hope), and respond to him in love (charity) for what he has done for us.

The duty to offer God authentic worship concerns man both as an individual and as a social being. Jesus summed up our duties toward God in this saying: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with your mind." (Matthew 22:37).

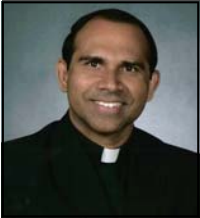
The first Commandment forbids honoring gods other than the one Lord who has revealed himself to his people. It condemns superstition irreligion, atheism and agnosticism.

Sins against the first Commandment:

1. **Superstition:** It attributes the power of God to something other than God. It can even affect the worship we offer the true God, e.g., when one attributes an importance in some way magical to certain practices otherwise lawful or necessary. To attribute the efficacy of prayers or sacramental signs to their mere external performance, apart from the interior dispositions that they demand, is to fall into superstition.
2. **Idolatry:** We commit idolatry if we honor a creature in place of God, whether this be gods or demons, power, pleasure, race, persons, ancestors, the state, money, etc. The Christian veneration of images is not contrary to the first Commandment which proscribes idols. Indeed, "The honor rendered to an image passes to its prototype, and who ever venerates an image venerates the person portrayed in it. The honor paid to sacred images is a 'respectful veneration, not the adoration due to God alone.'" (Catechism of the Catholic Church #2132)
3. **Divination:** It places one's trust for the future in things other than God's providence. We are guilty of divination when we try to discern the future through horoscope, astrology, palm reading, interpretations of omens and lots.
4. **Magic & Sorcery:** The attempt to tame occult powers or satanic powers for the purpose of controlling them for one's own purposes. Their practices are even more to be condemned when accompanied by the intention of harming someone.
5. **Tempting God:** It consists in putting God's goodness and almighty power to the test by word or deed. Jesus opposed Satan with the Word of God, "You shall not put the Lord, your God, to the test." (Luke 4:12)
6. **Sacrilege:** It consists of treating unworthily the sacraments and other liturgical actions, as well as persons, things, or places consecrated to God. It is a grave sin especially when committed against the Eucharist.
7. **Simony:** It is defined as the buying and selling of spiritual things. To Simon the Magician, who wanted to buy the spiritual power he saw at work in the apostles, St. Peter responded: "Your silver, perish with you, because you thought you could obtain God's gift with money." (Acts 8:20)
8. **Atheism:** It rejects or denies the existence of God. It is often based on a false conception of human autonomy exaggerated to the point of refusing any dependence on God. To acknowledge God is in no way to oppose the dignity of man, since such dignity is brought to perfection in God.
9. **Agnosticism:** It assumes that one cannot know whether God exists or not. It can sometimes include a certain search for God, but it can equally express indifference. It is often equivalent to practical atheism.

We follow the first Commandment when we adore God, pray to him, offer sacrifices, especially when we participate in offering the Holy Eucharist, and keep our promises and vows to God.

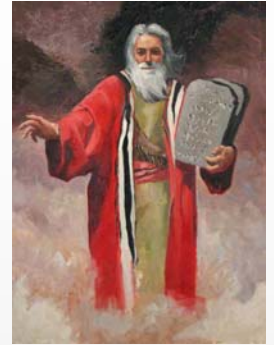
Yours in Christ,
Fr. Abraham George, CMI
Associate Pastor



"You Shall Not Take The Name Of The Lord Your God In Vain" (Exodus 20:7)

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

The second commandment commands us to respect the name of God. Respect for his name is an expression of the respect owed to the mystery of God himself and to the whole sacred reality it evokes. We should bear witness to the Lord's name by confessing the faith without giving way to fear. Preaching and catechizing should be permeated with adoration and respect for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.



We should always use the name of God, of Jesus Christ, of the Holy Spirit, as well as the name of the Blessed Virgin Mary, and of the Saints with respect. We should keep promises we make in God's name. To be unfaithful to them is to misuse God's name and in some way to make God out to be a liar.

Sins against the second commandment:

Profanity- By profanity a person uses God's name from a careless and inappropriate speech pattern.

Blasphemy- By blasphemy, a person either deliberately attacks the honor of God with an intent to insult God or invoke God's name in a curse against another human being. It also includes using God's name to cover up crimes, to enslave people, to torture persons or to put them to death. It is in itself a grave sin. The prohibition of blasphemy extends to language against Christ's Church, the Saints, and sacred things.

False Oaths-Invoking God's name as a witness to a falsehood or a lie.

Perjury- is to take a promise in God's name without any intention of keeping the promise or when after promising an oath, one does not keep it.

Cursing- is to use God's name to with harm on others.

Swearing- is to invoke God's name needlessly for trivial matters.

In the sermon on the mount, Jesus explained the second commandment: "You have heard that it was said to your ancestors, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord all that you vow.' But I say to you, do not swear at all...Let what you say be simply 'yes' or 'no', anything more is from the evil one." (Matthew 5:33-34, 37)

Since God call us by our Christian name given in Baptism, the name of every Christian is sacred. The second commandment demands that we respect the names of others. God calls each one by name. (Isaiah 43:1). The name is the icon of the person. In baptism, the Lord's name sanctifies the person.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Abraham George, CMI
Associate Pastor



Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

Both the OT and NT give an extensive picture of the need to keep the Sabbath. In speaking of the Sabbath, Scripture recalls creation: "For six days the Lord made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested on the seventh day; therefore the Lord blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy." (Ex. 20: 11) The Sabbath is holy and set apart for the praise of God, his work of creation, and his saving actions on behalf of his people.

God's action is the model for human action. If God rested and was refreshed on the seventh day, man too ought to rest. God clearly commands both rest and worship on the Sabbath.

The Gospel reports many incidents when Jesus was accused of violating the Sabbath law. But Jesus never fails to respect the holiness of this day. All four Gospels speak of Jesus entering the synagogue on the Sabbath. (Mt.12: 9, Mk. 1:21, Lk. 4:16 and Jn. 6: 59)

For Christians, the Sabbath holiness has been transferred to Sunday due to Jesus rising from the dead. The Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and his Eucharist is the heart of the Church's life. Sunday is the day on which the Pascal mystery is celebrated in light of apostolic tradition and is to be observed as the for most holy day of obligation in the universal Church. For Catholics, Sunday devotion centers on Holy Mass attendance. Holy Mass is important because only in Church can the person receive the Body and Blood of Christ. Jesus promised to raise up to eternal life those who feed on his flesh and drink his blood. (Jn 6: 54)

The Precept of the Church specifies the law of the Lord more precisely: "On Sundays and other Holy Days of obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass." The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. The letter to the Hebrews states: "We should not absent ourselves from the assembly, as some do, but encourage one another." (10: 25)

We are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason, for example, illness or the care of infants. This obligation can be fulfilled any time between four o' clock in the afternoon of the day before until midnight on the Sunday or Holy Day. It is important to attend the complete Mass in order to fulfill the obligation. Attending a non- Catholic service does not fulfill the obligation. Any Catholic over the age of reason who knows of this obligation and deliberately chooses not to attend Mass on a Sunday or Holy Day commits a grave sin.

Just as God rested on the seventh day from all his work, human life has a rhythm of work and rest. The Lord's Day helps everyone enjoy adequate rest and cultivate his or her familial, cultural, social and religious lives.

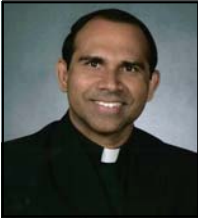
On Sundays and other Holy Days of obligation, we should refrain from all work that hinder the worship owed to God and the appropriate relaxation of body and mind. Sunday is traditionally dedicated by Christian piety to good works and humble service of the sick and the elderly. Christians will also sanctify Sunday by devoting time and care to their families and relatives. Traditional social necessities and public services require some people to work on Sundays. But every one should still take care to set aside sufficient time for rest and for observing the Lord's Day properly.



The participation in the Eucharist on Sundays and Holy days is not solely because of the obligation, but because of our love and gratitude for the ever-loving God who created, saved and protects us. No obligation is heavy or difficult when it is given in love and carried in love.

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Abraham George, CMI



“Honor Your Father and Mother” (Exodus 20:12)

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The fourth commandment opens the second table of the Decalogue. Having outlined the three basic responsibilities to God, the commandments now focus on human relationships. This fourth commandment highlights obligations within the family, extended family, and even toward other authorities. 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.

The fourth commandment is addressed expressly to children in their relationship to their father and mother, because this relationship is the most universal. The Bible also promises blessings for keeping this commandment: “He who honors his father is gladdened by children and when he prays he is heard.” (Sirach 3:51) “Observe, my son, your father’s bidding, and reject not your mother’s teaching.” (Proverbs 6:20)

Jesus’ obedience to his parents is clearly recorded. “He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and was obedient to them.” (Luke 2:51) Children must obey their parents in all things, except sin. They are obligated to help their parents in their old age, or when they are sick and helpless, and to pray for them. Some other texts are more picturesque: “My son, take care of your father when he is old. Grieve him not as long as he lives.” (Sirach 3:12) “With your whole heart, honor your father, and your mother’s birth pangs forget not.” (Sirach 7:27) St. Mark records an important occasion when Jesus is extremely upset because this commandment is set aside. “If a person says to his father or mother, ‘Any support you might have had from me is ‘Korban’ (that is dedicated to God), you allow him to do nothing more for his father or mother. That is the way you nullify God’s word.” (Mark 7:11-13)

When God commands respect for parents, he also demands *obedience to those who stand in the place of parents*. These people would include *grandparents, other relatives, teachers, etc.* Grandparents’ relationships with the extended family must be fostered. In our day, it is extremely important that grandparents remain close to the family. They offer security for broken marriages and reinforcement of Christian values for intact marriages. “Grandchildren are the crown of old men, and the glory of children is their parentage.” (Proverbs 17:6) St. Timothy benefited from the faith of his grandmother. St. Paul wrote, “I find myself thinking of your sincere faith that first belonged to your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice.” (2 Timothy 1:5)

This commandment also requires *parents to care for the spiritual and temporal welfare of their children*. Parents are to make sure that their children receive the education they need to lead morally upright lives. Normally, this means that the parents choose the schools the children will attend. More importantly, parents are to teach their children the Gospel and the Christian virtues by word and examples. In today’s world, parents need to be particularly vigilant about the TV shows, movies, Internet, and videos their children watch.

The deeply religious father, Tobit, is solicitous to train his son Tobiah by many wise teachings. Tobit’s instructions to his son (Tobit 4:5-19) should be given by every father to his children. This commandment also obliges *parents to correct their children wisely*. Proverbs 13:1 says, “A wise son loves correction.”

Scripture gives examples of two famous fathers who failed to correct their sons: **1.** The priest Eli, was himself a good man but he failed to discipline his two sons. God, therefore, raised up Samuel as a prophet because Eli “knew his sons were blaspheming God” and he did not reprove them.” (1 Samuel 3:13) **2.** King David had no control over his son, “Adonijah, who began to display his ambition to be king and acquired chariots, drivers and fifty henchmen. Yet his father never rebuked him or asked why he was doing this.” (1 King 1:6). The result was disastrous. A split took place between the followers of Adonijah and Solomon, the two sons of David. Later, Solomon gains David’s blessing to succeed him as king and then kills Adonijah. (1 King 2:25).

This commandment *obliges parents to respect the vocations* which God has given their children. The parents should encourage each of their children to discern if God has given them a vocation to the religious life or priestly ministry.

Finally, this commandment demands to *obey and respect public authorities*. And public authorities are obliged to respect human persons and their rights. This commandment obliges all citizens to contribute to the good of society. However, when civil commands violate God’s law and the moral order, they need not be obeyed. “We must obey God rather than men.” (Acts 5:29)

Observing the fourth commandment brings its reward: “Honor your father and mother, that you may have long life in the land which the Lord your God gives you.” (Exodus 20:12) This is the only commandment with a promise attached. Respecting this commandment provides, along with spiritual fruits, temporal fruits of peace and prosperity. Conversely, failure to observe it brings “great harm to communities and to individuals.” (CCC 2200)

Yours In Christ,
Fr. Abraham George, CMI
Associate Pastor



“You Shall Not Kill” (Exodus 20:13)

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

The fifth commandment commands us to respect each and every human person as an image of God. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning to its end: No one can, under any circumstance, claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being. This commandment prohibits all kinds of **violence towards others**: In the sermon on the Mount, the Lord recalls the commandment, “You shall not kill.” and adds it to the proscription of anger, hatred, and vengeance.

Homicide: It is a direct and intentional killing. It is gravely sinful. This includes those who voluntarily cooperate. Legitimate defense can be not only a right but a grave duty for one who is responsible for the lives of others.

Abortion: It is the willful taking of the life of a child in the womb. “Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person—among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life.” (The Gift of Life #1:1) “Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you.” (Jeremiah 1:5). The church in its first catechism, written about 90 A.D., said clearly that abortion and infanticide were wrong. “You shall not kill the embryo by abortion and shall not cause the newborn to perish.” (Didache 2:2)

Euthanasia: Killing sick or dying persons often to end their suffering.

Amputation: It is the intentional and willful act of amputating a part of the body from a living human person without a medical reason.

Sterilization and Artificial Contraception: It is the intentional and willful act of making the sexual powers of the body infertile. This includes vasectomy and tubal ligation. Artificial contraception is the temporary alteration of the sexual powers of the body so that they would be infertile.

Scandal: It is an attitude or behavior which leads another to do evil. The person who gives scandal damages virtue and integrity, he may even draw his brother into spiritual death.

War: This commandment forbids the intentional destruction of human life. All citizens and all governments are obliged to work for the avoidance of war. (CCC-2307, 2308). Acts of war directed indiscriminately against whole cities or vast areas are crimes and cannot be permitted. War is to be avoided if at all possible, but defensive wars are sometimes necessary. The Church’s “just war” theory has four criteria that should be used in deciding if a war is just: a) The damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community must be lasting, grave and certain. b) All other means, besides war, have been used and are impractical or ineffective. c) There must be serious prospects of success. d) The use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated.

Sinful structures resulting in physical harm: Today millions are starving. Many die of famine when the world is truly able to feed everyone. Some parts of the world receive excellent health care, while many do not even have basic health care. These inequalities are due to sinful social structures and selfish political arrangements. All human persons have the right to the necessities of life. This commandment encourages governments and everyone to do all that is possible to provide everyone with their fundamental needs: food, clothing, adequate housing, health care, basic education and employment.

Respect for the dead: This commandment calls us to respect the human body, even in death. “The bodies of the dead must be treated with respect and charity, in faith and hope of the Resurrection.” (CCC-2300) “The Church permits cremation, provided that it does not demonstrate a denial of faith in the resurrection of the body.” (CIC, Can. 1176; 3)

Self inflicted violence: Besides demanding that we do no harm to others, this commandment requires respect also for ourselves and our bodies. The following are sins of self-inflicted violence:

Suicide: God alone holds power over us, deciding the time when our lives should end. “Everyone is responsible for his life before God who has given it to him. It is God who remains the sovereign master of life. We are obliged to accept life gratefully and preserve it for his honor and the salvation of our souls. We are stewards, not owners, of the life God has entrusted to us. It is not ours to dispose of.” (CCC-2280)

Alcohol Abuse and Drug Abuse: By alcohol abuse, the person does serious harm to the body and entire life. Drug abuse is a more serious form of self destruction than alcoholism.

Tattoos and Body Piercing: We have become a tattooed people, following the examples established by sports and entertainment figures. A tattoo proclaims dominion over our bodies that belongs to God alone. A tattoo violates the dignity of the person’s body, which God never intended to be a human billboard. “Do not tattoo yourselves. I am the Lord.” (Leviticus 19:28) Society now approves and promotes a multiple piercing of the body, which is really beneath human dignity. “In God’s hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind.” (Job 12:10)

Yours In Christ,
Fr. Abraham George, CMI



“You Shall Not Commit Adultery” (Exodus 20:14)

Dear Brothers & Sisters,

The sixth commandment commands us to respect the sexual powers God gave us in creation. We should accept our sexual identity as male or female. “God created man in his image...male and female. He blessed them, saying, “Be fruitful and multiply.” (Genesis 1:27-28). Our sexual powers should be placed at the service of life-giving love. In other words, we all need to practice the virtue of chastity.

Chastity means the successful integration of sexuality within the person and thus the inner unity of man or woman in his or her bodily and spiritual being. Christ is the model of chastity. All the baptized are called to lead a chaste life in keeping with their particular states of life. “There are three forms of the virtue of chastity: the first is that of spouses, the second that of widows, and the third that of virgins. Some profess virginity or consecrated celibacy which enables them to give themselves to God alone with an undivided heart in a remarkable manner. Others live in the prescribed for all by the moral law, whether they are married or single. Married people are called to live conjugal chastity; others practice chastity in continence.” (Self refraining from sexual activities). (CCC 2349)

For those called to the vocation of married love, the sexual powers are the means of expressing a profound, abiding, permanent, faithful and fruitful love. Married partners help each other in this life and help each other come to the glory of heaven. As God’s love is fruitful, so human married love is naturally ordered to procreation. Children are a wondrous gift of God to a married couple, the supreme gift of marriage. Sins against the sixth commandment are the sins against sexuality, chastity and dignity of marriage.

Lust: Sexual pleasure is morally disordered when sought for itself, isolated from its procreative and unitive purposes. (CCC 2351) Jesus came to restore creation to the purity of its origin. In the Sermon on the Mount, he interprets God’s plan strictly: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery. But I say to you, everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart.” (Matthew 5:27-28).

Masturbation: Both the magisterium of the Church and the moral sense of the faith have been in no doubt and have firmly maintained that masturbation is an intrinsically and gravely disordered action. (CCC 2352).

Fornication: is carnal union between an unmarried man and an unmarried woman. It is contrary to the dignity of persons and of human sexuality which is naturally ordered to the good of spouses and the generation and education of children. (CCC 2353)

Pornography: is the display of intimate sexual acts to third parties. “It offends against chastity because it prevents the conjugal act, the intimate giving of spouses to each other. It does grave injury to the dignity of the participants since each one becomes an object of base pleasure and illicit profit for others.” (CCC 2354)

Prostitution: does injury to the dignity of the person. It reduces the person to an instrument of sexual pleasure and defiles ‘human body, the temple of the Holy Spirit’. (1 Corinthians 5:19)

Rape: “It does injury to justice and charity. It deeply wounds the respect, freedom, and physical and moral integrity to which every person has a right. It causes grave damage that can mark the victim for life.” (CCC 2356)

Homosexuality: Basing itself on sacred scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity. (Genesis 19:1-29, Romans 1:24-27, 1 Corinthians 6:10, 1 Timothy 1:10) They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved.

“You Shall Not Commit Adultery” (Exodus 20:14)

All unjust discrimination against homosexuals should be avoided. They are called to chastity. They must use prayer and the Sacraments to achieve inner freedom. (CCC 2357-2359)

Incest: designates intimate relations between relatives or in-laws within a degree that prohibits marriage between them. Incest corrupts family relationships.

Adultery: When two partners, of whom at least one is married to another party, have sexual relations, they commit adultery. Adultery refers to marital infidelity. It shakes the foundations of every marriage.

Divorce: The union of a man and a woman in the indissoluble bond of marriage is a holy vocation for each of them and mirrors the love of God. Jesus contrasts Moses' action with God's original plan. "From the beginning the creator made them male and female; for this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife and the two shall become one. So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined together, no human being must separate." (Matthew 19:4-6) 'Divorce is a grave offense against the natural law. It claims to break the contract, to which the spouses freely consented, to live with each other till death. Divorce is immoral also because it introduces disorder into the family and into society. This disorder brings grave harm to the deserted spouse, to children traumatized by the separation of their parents and often torn between them. It badly affects psychological, moral and spiritual developments of the children. The absence of parental model leads the children to immoral life. Over 50% of American marriages end in divorce, a result of many aspects of modern culture. To survive in marriage, couples must choose a "counter-cultural" lifestyle. This approach requires that they worship together both in church and at home. Married life includes pain. No love is meaningful, until it is sacrificial. Closeness often results in hurts and disappointments. Family prayer allows God to enter in. It results in forgiveness, or at least a willingness to forgive, that regularly washes away the daily hurts. Otherwise, all the pain just builds up and breaks the marriage bond. "The separation of spouses while maintaining the marriage bond can be legitimate in certain cases provided by canon law." (CCC 2383) (CIC, Can 1151-1155)

Living Together and Pre-marital Sex: The availability and moral acceptance of contraceptives and abortion have removed the walls places by nature to curb pre-marital activity. They give the wrong message—"Have sex but make it safe sex." Living together before marriage has become more the norm than the exception. "Some today claim a '*right to a trial marriage*' where there is an intention of getting married later. Carnal union is morally legitimate only when a definitive communitive of life between a man and a woman has been established. Human love does not tolerate 'trial marriages'." (CCC 2391) Statistics now show that living together is a very poor way to prepare for a life long commitment. Avoiding pre-marital sex is important, because selecting the right person to marry is a difficult task which becomes complicated by sexual acts. Sexual activity does not prepare the person to be a good spouse, where as, purity is excellent training for a good sexual relationship in marriage.

Other sins against the sixth Commandment include contraception, artificial insemination and polygamy.

The tradition of the Church has understood the sixth Commandment as encompassing the whole of human sexuality. This Commandment requires purity, both within and outside of marriage. It presents tremendous challenges to a Christian life.

Yours In Christ,
Fr. Abraham George, CMI
Associate Pastor



“You Shall Not Steal” (Exodus 20:15)

Dear Sisters & Brothers,

The seventh Commandment forbids taking what someone else owns against their will. It commands us to practice justice and charity in the administration of earthly goods and the fruits of human labor. This Commandment requires restitution, a restoring of what has been stolen.

In the creation of man, God entrusted all the goods of creation to all people in common. The right to private property does not abolish what God gave to all people. The right to hold private property must yield to justice when the holding of some goods violates justice or inflicts serious harm on other people. For example, when people are starving, it is unreasonable and unjust for a landowner who has a barn full of grain not to make it available to those who are hungry.

Every believer must realize that, although they earned their riches and rightly consider these goods private property, these goods belong basically to the whole human race. Giving away surplus money isn't charity, but justice. Therefore, private ownership is secondary to the primary ordering of the earth for all people's benefit. “The universal destination of goods remains primordial.” (CCC 2403).

This Commandment includes the principle that the human person is the author, center, and goal of all economies and social life (CCC 2459). Everyone has a right to work. “A just wage is the legitimate fruit of work.” (CCC 2434). Profit cannot be the exclusive norm of a business activity.

“The Church's love for the poor is a part of her constant tradition. This love is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and of his concern for the poor.” (CCC 2444) “On the international level, inequality of resources creates a real gap between nations.” (CCC 2437). “Rich nations have a grave moral responsibility to help the poorer countries.” (CCC2439).

Sins against the seventh Commandment:

- Theft, burglary or fraud
- Deliberately damaging another's property.
- Failure to pay a just debt or obligation.
- Failure to fulfill a promise or a contract.
- Failure to return what has been found or borrowed.
- Failure to pay employees a just wage.
- The wasting of time, money, or property of an employee.
- Reducing people to slaves or mere things for profit.
- Neglecting to help the poor or those in need.
- Gambling which deprives a person or those dependant on that person of what is needed. “The passion for gambling risks becoming an enslavement.” (CCC 2413). Christian justice and charity requires excess money be given to the poor, and not be wasted in gambling.

“An increased sense of God and self awareness are fundamental to any full development of human society. This development multiplies material goods and puts them at the service of the person and his freedom. It reduces dire poverty and economic exploitation. It makes for growth in respect for cultural identities and openness to the transcendent.” (CCC2441).

Yours In Christ,

Fr. Abraham George, CMI
Associate Pastor



"You Shall Not Bear False Witness Against Your Neighbor." (Exodus 20:16)

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

By this commandment we are commanded to speak the truth. Man's good conscious recognizes the truth. He is obliged to honor and bear witness to it. The eighth commandment forbids misrepresenting the truth in our relations with others.

The Old Testament pictures God as true: "You, our God, are good and true." (Wisdom 15: 1) "You are God and your words are truth." (2 Samuel 7: 28) "The statutes of the Lord are true." (Psalm 19: 10)

Gospel focuses on Jesus as the truth. Jesus describes himself as "the way, the truth and the life" (John 14: 6) "I came into the world, is to testify the truth." (John 18: 37) "Whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness." (John 12: 46). The disciple of Jesus continues in his word so as to know "the truth and the truth will set you free" (John 8: 32)

Sins against this commandment:

Lie: Lying is the most direct offense against the truth. To lie is to speak or act against the truth in order to lead someone into error. The gravity of a lie is measured against the nature of the truth it deforms, the circumstances, the intentions of the one who lies, and the harm suffered by its victims. (CCC-2482)

False witness and perjury: When it is made publicly, a statement contrary to the truth takes on a particular gravity. In court it becomes false witness. When it is under oath, it is perjury. Acts such as these contribute to condemnation of the innocent, exoneration of the guilty, or the increased punishment of the accused (CCC-2476).

Rash judgment: Judging someone without sufficient evidence.

Detraction: Revealing another's faults and failings without objectively valid reason.

Calumny: Harming the reputation of others by telling remarks contrary to the truth.

Gossiping about another.

Flattery or adulation: Encouraging and confirming malicious acts and perverse conduct of another.

Boasting or bragging: Exalting ourselves to the point of lying.

If we have committed any of these sins against justice and truth, we must make reparation, that is we must tell the truth. When it is impossible publicly to make reparation for a wrong, it must be made secretly.

This commandment binds us to keep secrets we have promised to keep.

- a) **The seal of confession:** A priest-confessor may absolutely never reveal the sins told to him by a penitent. The secret of the sacrament of reconciliation is sacred, and cannot be violated under any pretext.
- b) **Professional secrets:** Those of political office holders, soldiers, physicians, and lawyers—or confidential information given under the seal of secrecy must be kept. Everyone should observe an appropriate reserve concerning persons' private lives.

This commandment imposes serious responsibilities on the Communication Media.

Within modern society the communications media play a major role in information, cultural promotion, and formation. The information provided by the media is at the service of the common good. Society has a right to information based on truth, freedom, justice, and solidarity.

This commandment also requires the expression of *truth and beauty in art above all in Sacred Art*. Created "in the image of God," man also expresses the truth of his relationship with God the Creator by the beauty of his artistic works.

"You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor" (Exodus 20:16). Christ's disciples have "put on the new man, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness" (Ephesians 4:24).

Yours in Christ,

Fr. Abraham George, CMI
Associate Pastor



“You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.” (Exodus 20:17)

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

In Catholic teaching, the Ninth Commandment focuses on internal acts of purity and the Sixth Commandment on external sins.

The sexual adjustment and identity is a process which begins at birth and is deeply influenced by early childhood experiences. Many children enter puberty poorly prepared by their early years. With the sexual maturing at puberty, a young person experiences physical, emotional and mental changes and crisis. Home is the most important and safe place, where the young person can experience the mature love of parents and needed guidance. Unfortunately, this important parental help has, in many cases, been destroyed by a divorce or a breakdown of any true loving relationship.

The Ninth Commandment obliges us to be *pure of heart*, both within and outside of marriage. We are to avoid willful consent to impure thought or desires. The heart is the seat of moral personality: “Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, unchastity. . .”(Matthew 15:19)

The Sixth Beatitude proclaims, “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” (Matthew 5:8) “Pure in heart” refers to those who have attuned their intellects and wills to the demands of God's holiness, chiefly in three areas: charity; chastity or sexual rectitude; love of truth and orthodoxy of faith. There is a connection between purity of heart, of body, and of faith. (CCC 2518)

Purity of heart will enable us to see God; it lets us perceive the human body, ours and others, as a temple of the Holy Spirit. Purification of the heart demands prayer, the practice of chastity, purity of intention and of vision.

Purity requires *modesty*. Modesty protects the intimate center of the person. It means refusing to unveil what should remain hidden. It is ordered to chastity to whose sensitivity it bears witness. It guides how one looks at others and behaves toward them in conformity with the dignity of persons.

Modesty protects the mystery of persons as an image of God. It encourages patience and moderation in loving relationships; it requires that the conditions for the definitive giving and commitment of man and woman to one another, be fulfilled.

Modesty is decency. It inspires one's choice of clothing. It keeps silence or reserve where there is evident risk of unhealthy curiosity. We should not foolishly enter into temptation or be a sexual temptation to others in the way they dress, speak or act. The sum total of these efforts is called modesty. Modesty inspires a way of life which makes it possible to resist the allurements of fashion and the pressures of prevailing ideologies.

Practicing modesty is absolutely necessary in becoming a selfless adult. If no effort is made to be modest, then the sexual cravings will take control leading to sexual sins and sexual addictions. Parents and those in charge of education can reasonably be expected to give young people instruction and example in keeping the purity of the heart, and the moral and spiritual dignity of a person. Teaching modesty to children and adolescents means awakening in them respect for the human person.

The Blessed Virgin Mary is the model of purity. It is good to pray to her for help in keeping the sixth and the ninth Commandments and in developing purity of heart.

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Abraham George, CMI
Associate Pastor

“You shall not covet your neighbor’s goods.” (Exodus 20:17)

Dear Sisters and Brothers,

The Catholic Church links the Seventh and the Tenth Commandments, teaching clearly that the inner coveting and craving for what is not ours (Tenth Commandment) leads to stealing and dishonest practices (Seventh Commandment).

The **sins** against the Tenth Commandment are: **greed, envy, and the sadness** that overpowers those who seek what is not theirs. If envy includes a wish to inflict harm on one’s neighbor, it is a grave sin. This commandment forbids **greed** and the desire to amass earthly goods without limit. It also forbids the desire to commit injustice by harming our neighbor in his temporal goods. This commandment requires that **envy** be banished from the human heart. Envy represents a form of sadness and therefore a refusal of charity. We are called to rejoice in our neighbor’s progress and will give glory to God.

The Old Testament records two specific murders which flowed from envy and greed: “Cain greatly resented this (God’s blessing of Abel) and was crestfallen....Cain killed his brother.” (Genesis 4:5-8) Although Ahab, the King of Samaria, seemingly has everything, he envies the vineyard of Naboth. It leads to the murder of Naboth. (1 Kings 21: 1-16) The Biblical teaching is clear that coveting a neighbor’s goods leads to dark inner feelings, which causes major problems.

Jesus speaks against greed and envy. He says, “Avoid greed in all its forms, because possessions don’t guarantee eternal life.” (Luke 12:15) He praises poverty of spirit: “Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.” (Matthew 5:3) The Beatitudes reveal an order of happiness and peace.

Jesus warns us: “Where your treasure is, there also will your heart be.” (Matthew 6:21). The Lord grieves over the rich, because they find their consolation in the abundance of goods. “Life must be based on a trust in the heavenly Father.” (Matthew 6: 26-29)

Jesus enjoins his disciples to prefer him to everything and everyone, and bids them "renounce all that [they have]" for his sake and that of the Gospel. Shortly before his passion he gave them the example of the poor widow of Jerusalem who, out of her poverty, gave all that she had to live on. The precept of detachment from riches is obligatory for entrance into the Kingdom of heaven. (CCC. 2544) Desire for true happiness frees man from his immoderate attachment to the goods of this world so that he can find his fulfillment in the vision and beatitude of God. (CCC.2548)

Yours in Christ,
Fr. Abraham George, CMI
Associate Pastor.