

The Moral Life of Christians

Q. 269. If we want to answer God's love with our love, what must we do?

If we want to answer God's love with our love, we must believe all that He has revealed (faith), and observe and do everything that Jesus Christ has commanded (morals).

The Church continues to teach what Jesus revealed and studies the changing conditions of human life in the light of the Gospel in order to help people know how best to apply His unchangeable teaching on a daily basis.

The teaching of the Church instructs us on things which are to be done and to be avoided, so that we, as followers of Jesus, might live the Christian life according to His will. As Christians, we should respond to God's love by faith and action. If we truly love God, we shall seek to always do His holy will.

Christ directed His Apostles to teach us this when He said: "Go therefore and make disciples of all nations...teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you" (Matthew 28:19-20). He told His Apostles to go forth and preach the Gospel of the New Covenant to every nation, for He intended His Kingdom, the Church, to encompass all people. The Apostles gathered those who believed into communities, uniting them to Christ and to one another through God's holy Word and the Mass.

Not only individuals, but all human society must make judgments and base its conduct on Christ's teaching, at least implicitly. Only through the light of the Gospel will societies be able to recognize and respect the dignity of man and help man fulfill his destiny. Societies which reject the light of the Gospel easily become totalitarian. Their judgments and conduct reflect their own limited (and therefore, fallible) human vision of man and his destiny.

Sacred Scripture

"If you love me, you will keep my commandments... He who does not love me does not keep my words; and the word which you hear is not mine but the Father's who sent me."
John 14:15, 24

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1972 The New Law is called a *law of love* because it makes us act out of the love infused by the Holy Spirit, rather than from fear; a *law of grace*, because it confers the strength of grace to act, by means of faith and the sacraments; a *law of freedom*, because it sets us free from the ritual and juridical observances of the Old Law, inclines us to act spontaneously by the prompting of charity and, finally, lets us pass from the condition of a servant who "does not know what his master is doing" to that of a friend of Christ—"For all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you"—or even to the status of son and heir.¹

For commentaries on each question with Cardinal Arinze, Sr. John Vianney and Fr. Straub (in Spanish), see Appendix E.

Splendor of Truth

God alone is worthy of being loved “with all one’s heart, and with all one’s soul, and with all one’s mind” (Mt 22:37). He is the source of man’s happiness. Jesus brings the question about morally good action back to its religious foundations, to the acknowledgment of God, who alone is goodness, fullness of life, the final end of human activity, and perfect happiness. (section 9)



Vatican Council II

The highest norm of human life is the divine law itself—eternal, objective and universal, by which God orders, directs and governs the whole world and the ways of the human community according to a plan conceived in his wisdom and love. *Liberty*, 3

Summary Prayer

Life-giving Spirit, our Creator and Sanctifier, You have given us life and being and have led us into Your holy Catholic Church, which is the ordinary means of salvation. You have adorned our souls with sanctifying grace, made them Your temples, enriched them with heavenly virtues, and sanctified them through the holy sacraments. All of these benefits have come to us through Your holy Catholic Church. We thank You for having created it. Make us faithful children of our holy Mother Church, which is the pillar and foundation of truth. Help us to uphold her doctrines, to seek her interests, and to defend her rights. Help us to be ever obedient to the Holy See, Your infallible mouthpiece. All this we ask through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Q. 270. What does Catholic morality teach?

Catholic morality teaches us a way of life that is worthy of human beings who are adopted sons and daughters of God. We must grow in the new life which God gave us through Jesus Christ.

For commentaries on each question with Cardinal Arinze, Sr. John Vianney and Fr. Straub (in Spanish), see Appendix E.

The Catholic Church expresses the fullness of Christian moral teaching by stating moral precepts or commands, by making judgments about the morality of certain actions, and by making laws that concern the implementation of moral principles and precepts. The Church's teaching expresses the will of God that we become both sharers in Christ's risen life and children in His holy family. We are to live lives worthy of the members of a community of worshippers and believers who are destined for heaven.

The moral laws which govern human conduct come from an unchanging God and apply to an unchanging human nature. Whatever might be said in favor of the theory of human evolution, once rational man, i.e., homo sapiens, appeared on the earth, his nature has not changed one iota. The first rational human beings were essentially the same as those who live today. Therefore, the natural laws that must govern man's moral conduct remain the same. Thus, it will always be sinful to lie, to cheat, to gossip, to commit adultery, to contracept, to abuse others, to torture, etc.



Sacred Scripture

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us. *Ephesians 5:1-2*

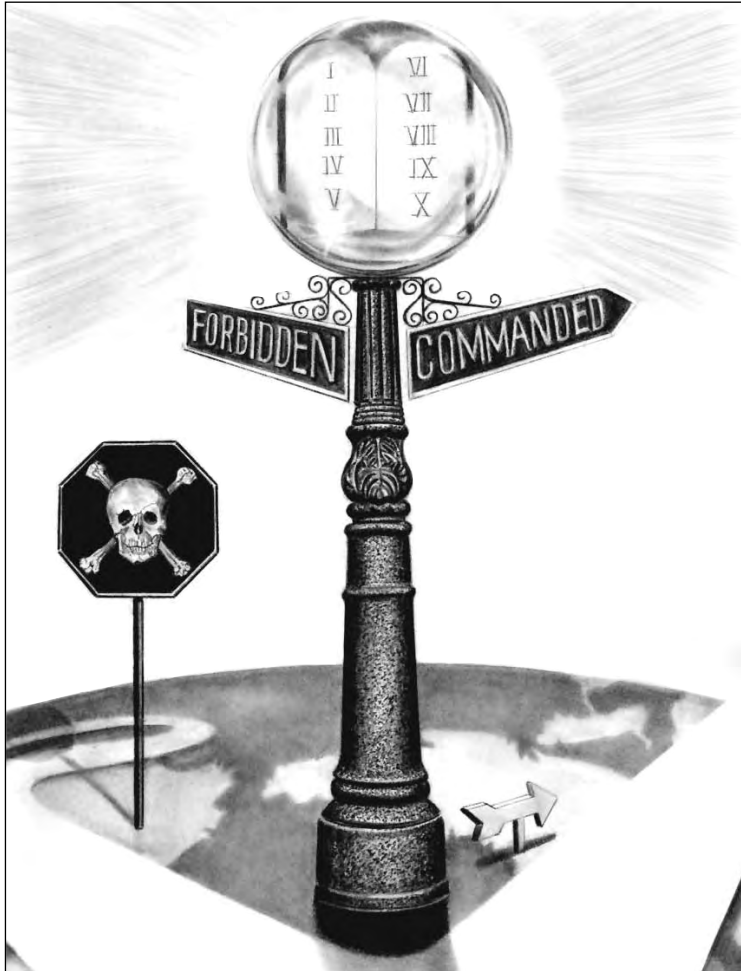
For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from immorality; that each one of you know how to control his own body in holiness and honor... For God has not called us for uncleanness, but in holiness. *1 Thessalonians 4:3-4, 7*

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2037 The law of God entrusted to the Church is taught to the faithful as the way of life and truth. The faithful therefore have the *right* to be instructed in the divine saving precepts that purify judgment and, with grace, heal wounded human reason.¹ They have the *duty* of observing the constitutions and decrees conveyed by the legitimate authority of the Church. Even if they concern disciplinary matters, these determinations call for docility in charity.

Catechism by Diagram

#C16-12



God's Laws Are the Signpost Pointing to God. The Ten Commandments are like a bright light showing us a sign pointing to God's Kingdom. In the Commandments, we know what is commanded (arrow and open highway to God) and what is forbidden (the highway marked with a skull—a sign of death). The Commandments are a means which God gave us to reach holiness (rays of light).

Splendor of Truth

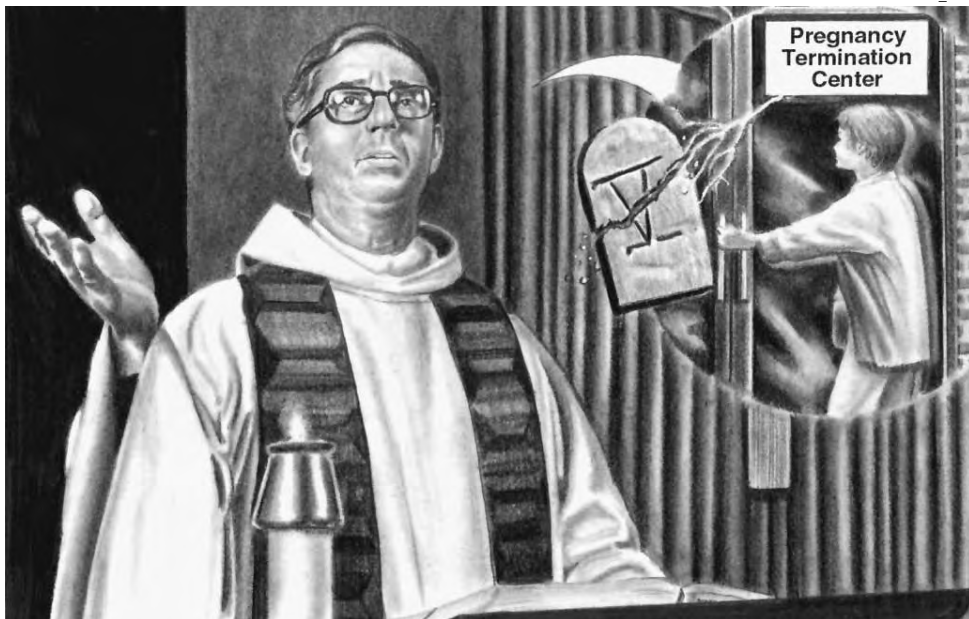
The Christian, thanks to God's Revelation and to faith, is aware of the "newness" which characterizes the morality of his actions: these actions are called to show either consistency or inconsistency with that dignity and vocation which have been bestowed on him by grace. In Jesus Christ and in his Spirit, the Christian is a "new creation," a child of God; by his actions he shows his likeness or unlikeness to the image of the Son who is the first-born among many brethren (cf. Rom 8:29), he lives out his fidelity or infidelity to the gift of the Spirit, and he opens or closes himself to eternal life, to the communion of vision, love and happiness with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. (*section 73*)

Vatican Council II

"The good news of Christ continually renews the life and culture of fallen man; it combats and removes the error and evil which flow from the ever-present attraction of sin. It never ceases to purify and elevate the morality of peoples." *Modern World, 58*

“The Council proclaims that all must accept the absolute primacy of the objective moral order. It alone is superior to and is capable of harmonizing all forms of human activity, not excepting art, no matter how noble in themselves. Only the moral order touches man in the totality of his being as God’s rational creature, called to a supernatural destiny. If the moral order is fully and faithfully observed, it leads man to full perfection and happiness.” *Social Communication*, 6

#M1_2-1



Q. 271. How is Catholic morality supported and guided?

Catholic morality is supported and guided, first of all, by natural law, which remains unchangeable throughout history. Man’s reflection on his own nature and experience, aided by God’s guidance, has shown that the principles and rules of natural law are valid for all times, people, and places. As such, natural law is the foundation for the establishment of all moral rules and civil law.

Catholic morality builds upon this foundation. The structure of Catholic morality is supported and guided by the grace and gifts of the Holy Spirit, especially by the liturgy of the Church and the celebration of the sacraments. Catholic moral life is essentially a spiritual worship, therefore, it must be nourished continually by these supernatural means.

The graces and gifts of the Holy Spirit help us to hold each other in high esteem. The Holy Spirit unites us to one another in Christ, through His life of grace, so that we become a community of love.

Moreover, through His actual graces, the Holy Spirit causes us to have the desire and the power to do things which are pleasing to our heavenly Father. The Spirit makes clear what Jesus taught us in the Gospel, and He gives us the help we need to fight Satan and to remain true to Jesus and the Catholic Church no mat-

For commentaries on each question with Cardinal Arinze, Sr. John Vianney and Fr. Straub (in Spanish), see Appendix E.

ter what the situation. Without these actual graces, it would be impossible to do anything which might win our own salvation or the salvation of others.

Sacred Scripture

Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is from God, that we might understand the gifts bestowed on us by God. And we impart this in words not taught by human wisdom but taught by the Spirit, interpreting spiritual truths to those who possess the Spirit. *1 Corinthians 2:12-13*

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1983 The New Law is the grace of the Holy Spirit received by faith in Christ, operating through charity. It finds expression above all in the Lord's Sermon on the Mount and uses the sacraments to communicate grace to us.

Splendor of Truth

To imitate and live out the love of Christ is not possible for man by his own strength alone. He becomes capable of this love only by virtue of a gift received. As the Lord Jesus receives the love of his Father, so he in turn freely communicates that love to his disciples: "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love" (Jn 15:9). Christ's gift is his Spirit, whose first "fruit" (cf. Gal 5:22) is charity: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us" (Rom 5:5). (*section 22*)

Vatican Council II

The gifts of the Spirit are manifold: some men are called to testify openly to mankind's yearning for its heavenly home and keep the awareness of it vividly before men's minds; others are called to dedicate themselves to the earthly service of men and in this way to prepare the way for the kingdom of heaven. But of all the Spirit makes free men, who are ready to put aside love of self and integrate earthly resources into human life, in order to reach out to that future day when mankind itself will become an offering accepted by God. *Modern World, 38*

Summary Prayer

Merciful Comforter, to Your mercy we entrust the entire Catholic Church, all its undertakings, and the souls entrusted to her care. We pray for the Pope, the bishops, priests, religious, and consecrated singles. By Your supernatural power, confirm in them the desire to spend their lives in Your holy service for the salvation of souls. Divine Fire, enkindle in all those who share in Your apostolate the flames which transformed the disciples in the Upper Room on the first Christian Pentecost (cf. Acts 2). They will no longer be ordinary men, but men who live in order to transfuse the divine life to the souls of their fellow men. Enkindle in their wills an ardent desire for the inner life, for their apostolate will be successful only in the measure in which they themselves live that supernatural life, of which You are the sovereign Principle, and Jesus Christ, the Source.

Be merciful also to all the children of Your holy Catholic Church, that they may be faithful to her teaching and so save their souls. Finally, be merciful to unrepentant sinners and non-believers. Grant them the grace they need to recognize You, with the Father and the Son, as the only source of true happiness, and to love You with their whole heart. Look graciously upon the Holy Souls in Purgatory; comfort and refresh them with the graces which flow from Your merciful love. To You, the Father, and the Son, be all honor and glory now and forever. Amen.

Doctrine • Moral • Worship Exercise (see Appendix B for answer key)

1. “If you love me, you will keep my commandments.” “He who does not love me does not keep my words.” (John 14:15, 24) According to these Scripture passages, what does God expect us to do if we want to answer His love with our love?
2. Think of instances in your daily life in which you have shown your love for our Lord by obeying His commandments. In what other ways can you give Christian example to others and encourage them to honor God’s laws?
3. Pray to the Holy Spirit, Who gives us a common bond of friendship, so that we may become a community of love united in Christ. Pray especially for our Church and civil leaders, that they may uphold the moral laws that ought to govern all human conduct.

**Q. 272. What is conscience?**

Conscience is a personal, reasoned, practical judgment that something is right or wrong; that is, whether something is in accordance with the will and law of God, which is written within one’s soul.

Conscience makes us aware of what God wants us to do at a given time. Furthermore, it helps us to know when we have sinned. Conscience tells us whether an action is right or wrong and whether it is a mortal or a venial sin. Our conscience is our mind’s ability to judge moral matters. It is important to note, however, that for most people, reason alone is not a sufficient guide in moral matters. The conscience must be instructed and formed. We must learn from Christ as He speaks to us in the hidden recesses of our souls, and as He teaches us through His Catholic Church.

For commentaries on each question with Cardinal Arinze, Sr. John Vianney and Fr. Straub (in Spanish), see Appendix E.

Sacred Scripture

He set his eye upon their hearts to show them the majesty of his works...He bestowed knowledge upon them, and allotted to them the law of life. *Sirach 17:8, 11*

When Gentiles who have not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law to themselves, even though they do not have the law. They show that what the law requires is written on their hearts. *Romans 2:14-15*



#S13-34

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1780 The dignity of the human person implies and requires *uprightness of moral conscience*. Conscience includes the perception of the principles of morality (synderesis); their application in the given circumstances by practical discernment of reasons and goods; and finally judgment about concrete acts yet to be performed or already performed. The truth about the moral good, stated in the law of reason, is recognized practically and concretely by the *prudent judgment* of conscience. We call that man prudent who chooses in conformity with this judgment.

Splendor of Truth

Conscience in a certain sense confronts man with the law, and thus becomes a “witness” for man: a witness of his own faithfulness or unfaithfulness with regard to the law, of his essential moral rectitude or iniquity. Conscience is the only witness, since what takes place in the heart of the person is hidden from the eyes of everyone outside. Conscience makes its witness known only to the person himself. And, in turn, only the person himself knows what his own response is to the voice of conscience. (*section 57*)

Conscience is the witness of God himself, whose voice and judgment penetrate the depths of man’s soul. (*section 58*)

Vatican Council II

Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, tells him inwardly at the right moment: do this, shun that. For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God. His dignity lies in observing this law, and by it he will be judged. (cf. Rom. 2:15-16) His conscience is man’s most secret core, and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths. By conscience, in a wonderful way, that law is made known which is fulfilled in the love of God and of one’s neighbor (cf. Mt. 22:37-40; Gal. 5:14). *Modern World, 16*

Q. 273. Should each person have a right conscience?

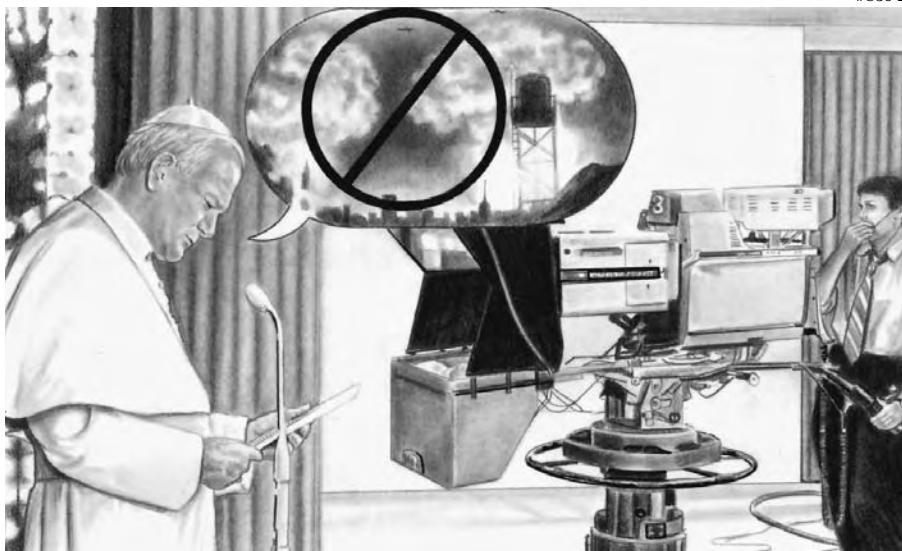
Each person should have a right conscience and follow it. A Catholic should form a right conscience by learning and obeying the teaching authority, or Magisterium, of the Catholic Church.

Moreover, the moral life of Christians is guided by the grace and gifts of the Holy Spirit. We do not always know with certainty whether our consciences are right, but we can train them over a period of time to be evermore aware of the Truth, by listening to the Word of God in Scripture and in the Church's teaching, and by being attentive to the inspiration of the Holy Spirit within us.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1783 Conscience must be informed and moral judgment enlightened. A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful. It formulates its judgments according to reason, in conformity with the true good willed by the wisdom of the Creator. The education of conscience is indispensable for human beings who are subjected to negative influences and tempted by sin to prefer their own judgment and to reject authoritative teachings.

#C36-2

***Splendor of Truth***

Although each individual has a right to be respected in his own journey in search of the truth, there exists a prior moral obligation, and a grave one at that, to seek the truth and to adhere to it once it is known. (*section 34*)

According to some, it appears that one no longer need acknowledge the enduring absoluteness of any moral value. All around us we encounter contempt for human life after conception and before birth; the ongoing violation of basic rights of the person; the unjust destruction of goods minimally necessary for a human life. Indeed, something more serious has happened: man is no longer convinced that only in the truth can he find salvation. The saving power of the truth is contested, and freedom alone, uprooted from any objectivity, is left to decide by itself what is good and what is evil. This relativism becomes, in the field of theology, a lack of trust in the wisdom of God, who guides man with the moral law. (*section 84*)

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Vatican Council II

It is through his conscience that man sees and recognizes the demands of the divine law. He is bound to follow this conscience faithfully in all his activity so that he may come to God, who is his last end. Therefore he must not be forced to act contrary to his conscience. Nor must he be prevented from acting according to his conscience, especially in religious matters. *Liberty*, 3

Through loyalty to conscience Christians are joined to other men in the search for truth and for the right solution to so many moral problems which arise both in the life of individuals and from social relationships. Hence, the more a correct conscience prevails, the more do persons and groups turn aside from blind choice and try to be guided by the objective standards of moral conduct. Yet it often happens that conscience goes astray through ignorance which it is unable to avoid, without thereby losing its dignity. This cannot be said of the man who takes little trouble to find out what is true and good, or when conscience is by degrees almost blinded through the habit of committing sin. *Modern World*, 16

#H5-34

**Summary Prayer**

Father, let Your Spirit come upon us with power and fill us with His gifts. May He make our hearts pleasing to You and ready to do Your will. Let our spiritual sacrifice at Mass, in union with Christ's sacrifice, make us an everlasting gift to You. Renew us by the mysteries we share in Holy Communion. Help us to know You and Your will, and prepare us for the gifts of the Spirit, that we may live truly Christian lives that are pleasing to You through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Catechism by Diagram

#C16-10



Symbols of the Ten Commandments. Left: (1) God (triangle). (2) God's name (IHS—*Jesus Hominum Salvator* [Jesus Savior of Mankind]). (3) Worship (church). Right: (4) Honor and love mother and father (two hearts, ring—symbol of marriage) who were given authority by God (scepter—symbol of ruling), and thereby share His power of ruling (crown). (5) Killing is forbidden (gun). (6) Sins of the flesh (swine). (7) Stealing (hand, money). (8) Speaking falsely (heart saying “yes”, arrow pointing out—lack of sincerity). (9) Chaste thoughts (lily in heart). (10) Desiring money and property (heart, bag of money).

Q. 274. How should a Catholic form a right conscience?

A Catholic should form a right conscience by studying and obeying the teaching authority of the Catholic Church.

It is the duty of the teaching authority of the Catholic Church, the Magisterium, to guide the faithful in applying the norms and values of Christian morality to specific situations of everyday life.

Christian freedom needs to be directed by the specific circumstances of human life. Accordingly, the consciences of the faithful, even when informed by the virtue

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of prudence, must be subject to the teaching authority of the Church. It is the Church's duty to explain the whole moral law authoritatively, in order that it may rightly and correctly make known the objective moral order.

The conscience of the Catholic must pay respectful and obedient attention to the teaching authority of the Catholic Church.

#E5-32



Catechism of the Catholic Church

2032 The Church, the “pillar and bulwark of the truth,” “has received this solemn command of Christ from the apostles to announce the saving truth.”⁷¹ “To the Church belongs the right always and everywhere to announce moral principles, including those pertaining to the social order, and to make judgments on any human affairs to the extent that they are required by the fundamental rights of the human person or the salvation of souls.”⁷²

Splendor of Truth

The Church seeks, with great love, to help all the faithful to form a moral conscience which will make judgments and lead to decisions in accordance with the truth... This effort by the Church finds its support—the “secret” of its educative power—not so much in doctrinal statements and pastoral appeals to vigilance, as in constantly looking to the Lord Jesus. Each day the Church looks to Christ with unfailing love, fully aware that the true and final answer to the problem of morality lies in him alone. (*section 85*)

Vatican Council II

Although the bishops, taken individually, do not enjoy the privilege of infallibility, they do, however, proclaim infallibly the doctrine of Christ on the following conditions: namely, when, even though dispersed throughout the world but preserving for all that amongst themselves and with Peter's successor the bond of communion, in their authoritative teaching concerning matters of faith and morals, they are in agreement that a particular teaching is to be held definitively and absolutely. This is still more clearly the case when, assembled in an ecumenical council, they are, for the universal Church, teachers of and judges in matters of faith and morals, whose decisions must be adhered to with the loyal and obedient assent of faith. *The Church, 25*

Bishops who teach in communion with the Roman Pontiff are to be revered by all as witnesses of divine and Catholic truth; the faithful, for their part, are obliged to submit to their bishops' decision, made in the name of Christ, in matters of faith and morals, and to adhere to it with a ready and respectful allegiance of mind. This loyal submission of the will and intellect must

be given, in a special way, to the authentic teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff, even when he does not speak *ex cathedra* in such wise, indeed, that his supreme teaching authority be acknowledged with respect, and that one sincerely adhere to decisions made by him, conformably with his manifest mind and intention, which is made known principally either by the character of the documents in question, or by the frequency with which a certain doctrine is proposed, or by the manner in which the doctrine is formulated. *The Church*, 25

In availing of any freedom men must respect the moral principle of personal and social responsibility: in exercising their rights individual men and social groups are bound by the moral law to have regard for the rights of others, their own duties to others and the common good of all. All men must be treated with justice and humanity. *Liberty*, 7

For the Catholic Church is by the will of Christ the teacher of truth. It is her duty to proclaim and teach with authority the truth which is Christ and, at the same time, to declare and confirm by her authority the principles of the moral order which spring from human nature itself. *Liberty*, 14



#T3-34

Q. 275. What does obedience to the Holy Spirit entail?

Obedience to the Holy Spirit entails a faithful observance of the commandments of God, the laws and precepts of the Church, and just civil laws.

Without the help of the Holy Spirit, we can do nothing to obtain our salvation. He gives us the power to make a lasting commitment to Christ and the strength needed to keep that commitment.

We should allow the Holy Spirit to guide our lives. He will bend our wills and touch our hearts if we let Him. We should pray each day for the strength to say yes to whatever the Holy Spirit wants to accomplish in us.

Our Christian witness is especially powerful when we defend the values of God rather than those of the world. Our Lord called us “the salt of the earth,” and “the light of the world” (cf. Mt 5:13-14). Therefore, we should take an interest in and participate in civic affairs, so that we can carry the principles of Christ into the world.

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Sacred Scripture

Q. 275. 1 Cor 2:12-13; Eph 5:8-10.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Q. 275. Paragraphs 1952, 2042-2043, 2052-2055, 2235, 2242.

Sacred Scripture

For he who sows to his own flesh will from the flesh reap corruption; but he who sows to the Spirit will from the Spirit reap eternal life. *Galatians 6:8*

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2825 “Although he was a Son, [Jesus] learned obedience through what he suffered.”¹ How much more reason have we sinful creatures to learn obedience — we who in him have become children of adoption. We ask our Father to unite our will to his Son’s, in order to fulfill his will, his plan of salvation for the life of the world. We are radically incapable of this, but united with Jesus and with the power of his Holy Spirit, we can surrender our will to him and decide to choose what his Son has always chosen: to do what is pleasing to the Father.²

In committing ourselves to [Christ], we can become one spirit with him, and thereby accomplish his will, in such wise that it will be perfect on earth as it is in heaven.³

Consider how [Jesus Christ] teaches us to be humble, by making us see that our virtue does not depend on our work alone but on grace from on high. He commands each of the faithful who prays to do so universally, for the whole world. For he did not say “thy will be done in me or in us,” but “on earth,” the whole earth, so that error may be banished from it, truth take root in it, all vice be destroyed on it, virtue flourish on it, and earth no longer differ from heaven.⁴

Vatican Council II

Since this mission continues and, in the course of history, unfolds the mission of Christ, who was sent to evangelize the poor, then the Church, urged on by the Spirit of Christ, must walk the road Christ himself walked, a way of poverty and obedience, of service and self-sacrifice even to death, a death from which he emerged victorious by his resurrection. *Missionary Activity*, 5

Doctrine • Moral • Worship Exercise (see Appendix B for answer key)

1. What does our conscience enable us to do? Why is it necessary to continually form a right conscience?
2. List at least three specific things that you and your family can do to form a right conscience.
3. Set aside at least five minutes each day for an examination of conscience. Make a “key card” on which you write down a virtue to practice that is the opposite of your primary fault. Also include a Scripture verse to memorize that summarizes that virtue. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you to live the “key” virtue and to guide you in all of your decisions.

Chapter Summary Prayer

God our Father, You gave Your Holy Spirit to Your Church on Pentecost. Let the Spirit You sent to Your Church to begin the teaching of the Gospel continue to work in the world through the hearts of all those who believe.

Father of Light, from Whom every good gift comes, send Your Spirit into our lives with the power of a mighty wind, and by the flame of Your wisdom, open the horizons of our minds. By the power of the Holy Spirit, loosen our tongues so that we may praise You properly. For without Your

Spirit, man could never raise his voice in words of peace or announce the truth that Jesus is Lord.

On Pentecost, You enlightened the minds of the disciples by sending the Holy Spirit. May He bless us and give us His gifts. May that fire which hovered over the disciples as tongues of flame burn all evil from our hearts and make them glow with Your light. You enabled the Apostles to speak in different tongues so that they could proclaim the one Faith. May the Holy Spirit strengthen our faith and sustain our hope that we may someday see Him face to face.

By glorifying Christ and sending us Your Spirit, You open the way to eternal life. May our sharing in this gift of the most holy Godhead increase our love and make our faith grow stronger. Unite Your Church in the Holy Spirit so that we may serve You with our whole heart and work together with unselfish love. Send Your Spirit to help the Church You love so that it may show Your salvation to all the world. This we ask in Jesus' name. Amen.

Family Wisdom Library: Chapter 76

See Appendix A for more references.

Q. 270. What does Catholic morality teach?

Dei Verbum (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation), Vatican II, sect. 7; Gospel of Life, John Paul II, sect. 75, 98; The Relationship Between Faith and Reason, John Paul II, sect. 25, 68.

Q. 271. How is Catholic morality supported and guided?

Dei Verbum (Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation), Vatican II, sect. 7; Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People, John Paul II, sect. 21; The Relationship Between Faith and Reason, John Paul II, sect. 25, 68; The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World, John Paul II, sect. 34.

Q. 272. What is conscience?

The Relationship Between Faith and Reason, John Paul II, sect. 25, 36, 68.

Q. 273. Must each person have a right conscience?

The Relationship Between Faith and Reason, John Paul II, sect. 25, 36, 68.

Q. 274. How should a Catholic form a right conscience?

On the Holy Spirit in the Life of the Church and the World, John Paul II, sect. 42-45; The Relationship Between Faith and Reason, John Paul II, sect. 25, 36, 68.



Thought Provokers

Please see Appendix C for the answers.

- Q. 269: In order to do God's will, what basically must we, as baptized Christians, do?
- Q. 270: Can Christian moral principles or laws change?
- Q. 271: Can we do God's will completely by simply making up our minds to do so?
- Q. 272: A. Should we always obey our conscience?
B. Can our consciences ever be in error?
- Q. 273: Do theologians form part of the Church's magisterium or teaching authority?
- Q. 274: Where is the conscience to be found?
- Q. 275: Can agnostics and atheists know what is morally right and what is wrong according to the will of God?