

Our Duties Toward Our Neighbor

Q. 284. What responsibilities do we have toward other people?

As Christians, we must show our love for all people. We do this when we: (1) are concerned about our neighbor's rights—his freedom, housing, food, health, and right to work, (2) show to others the justice and charity of Christ—that is, reaching out in the spirit of the Beatitudes to help others, to build up a better society in the local community, and to promote social justice and peace throughout the world, (3) speak and judge others by the standard of charity that is due all sons of God, (4) respect and obey all lawful authority—in the home, in civil society, and in the Church.

The second great commandment of God, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself” (cf. Luke 10:27), is like the first: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart” (Luke 10:27), because it springs from the same principle and motive—to love. The norm for the love of God is the totality of the very depths and powers of the soul: “with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind” (Luke 10:27).

The norm for the love of neighbor is the proper love of self—to love our neighbor as ourselves. But our Lord raised that norm to the sphere of the divine when He commanded us to love our neighbor as He loves us. The Redeemer's love for us is without limit.

The commandment to love our neighbor is founded in the Old Testament and carried over into the new dispensation, or the New Testament, where it is renewed. However, in the New Testament, it takes on a new, special relationship to Christ, the God-man, for He declared that this commandment of fraternal love is His favorite commandment. It is His own commandment: “A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you” (John 13:34). This love is the sign by which His disciples will be clearly recognized.

In our lives, we are challenged to bear witness to Christ by serving the needs of man. We can serve our fellow man by personally taking care of his spiritual, physical, and social needs, and by helping others personally through the ministries of medicine, nursing, teaching, and social work. We can also be of service to man and society in the fields of business, education, law, government, and public health. Since not every Christian can be a servant professionally, each should be a servant according to the gifts and talents he has received from God.

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

Sacred Scripture

Q. 284. Is 1:17; Mic 6:8; Jn 13:3-15.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Q. 284. Paragraphs 952, 954, 1789, 1807, 1822, 1844, 1889, 1931, 2052, 2196.

Sacred Scripture

Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one. To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. *1 Corinthians 12:4-7*

Let us not love in word or speech but in deed and in truth. *1 John 3:18*

#C37-8



Catechism of the Catholic Church

952 *“They had everything in common.”*¹ “Everything the true Christian has is to be regarded as a good possessed in common with everyone else. All Christians should be ready and eager to come to the help of the needy... and of their neighbors in want.”² A Christian is a steward of the Lord’s goods.³

1916 As with any ethical obligation, the participation of all in realizing the common good calls for a continually renewed conversion of the social partners. Fraud and other subterfuges, by which some people evade the constraints of the law and the prescriptions of societal obligation, must be firmly condemned because they are incompatible with the requirements of justice. Much care should be taken to promote institutions that improve the conditions of human life.¹

2420 The Church makes a moral judgment about economic and social matters, “when the fundamental rights of the person or the salvation of souls requires it.”¹ In the moral order she bears a mission distinct from that of political authorities: the Church is concerned with the temporal aspects of the common good because they are ordered to the sovereign Good, our ultimate end. She strives to inspire right attitudes with respect to earthly goods and in socio-economic relationships.

2426 The development of economic activity and growth in production are meant to provide for the needs of human beings. Economic life is not meant solely to multiply goods produced and increase profit or power; it is ordered first of all to the service of persons, of the whole man, and of the entire human community. Economic activity, conducted according to its own proper methods, is to be exercised within the limits of the moral order, in keeping with social justice so as to correspond to God’s plan for man.¹



Splendor of Truth

Jesus asks us to follow him and to imitate him along the path of love, a love which gives itself completely to the brethren out of love for God... The word “as” requires imitation of Jesus and of his love... Jesus’ way of acting and his words, his deeds and his precepts constitute the moral rule of Christian life. Indeed, his actions, and in particular his Passion and Death on the Cross, are the living revelation of his love for the Father and for others. This is exactly the love that Jesus wishes to be imitated by all who follow him. (*section 20*)

Vatican Council II

The faithful should learn to distinguish carefully between the rights and the duties which they have as belonging to the Church and those which fall to them as members of the the human society. They will strive to unite the two harmoniously, remembering that in every temporal affair they are to be guided by a Christian conscience, since not even in temporal business may any human activity be withdrawn from God’s dominion. *The Church, 36*

The greatest commandment of the law is to love God with one’s whole heart and one’s neighbor as oneself (cf. Mt. 22:37, 39). Christ has made this love of the neighbor his personal commandment and has enriched it with a new meaning when he willed himself, along with his brothers, to be the object of this charity saying: “When you showed it to one of the least of my brothers here, you showed it to me” (Mt. 25:40). *Lay People, 8*

The presence of Christians among these human groups should be one that is animated by that love with which we are loved by God, who desires that we should love each other with that self-same love (cf. 1 Jn 4:11). Christian charity is extended to all without distinction of race, social condition, or religion, and seeks neither gain nor gratitude. Just as God loves us with a gratuitous love, so too the faithful, in their charity, should be concerned for mankind, loving it with that same love with which God sought man. As Christ went about all the towns and villages healing every sickness and infirmity, as a sign that the Kingdom of God had come (cf. Mt. 9:35 ff.; Acts 10:38), so the Church, through its children, joins itself with men of every condition, but especially with the poor and afflicted, and willingly spends herself for them (cf. 2 Cor. 12:15). It shares their joys and sorrows, it is familiar with the hopes and problems of life, it suffers with them in the anguish of death. It wishes to enter into fraternal dialogue with those who are working for peace, and to bring them the peace and light of the Gospel. *Missionary Activity, 12*

Catechism by Diagram

#W2-12



Love of Neighbor. One can tell the true Christian by the love he shows for his fellow man (man offering a cup of water). We love our fellow men because they, too, belong to God. The presence in us of the Holy Spirit through sanctifying grace means we are able to love with the love of God. With the help of God's grace, we can even love our enemies if we really want to do so. Grace operates through faith (cross), hope (anchor) and love (flame) in our soul (heart), which helps us to be kind in our thoughts, words (arrow from mouth), and deeds. Jesus said, "And whoever gives to one of these little ones even a cup of cold water because he is a disciple, truly, I say to you, he shall not lose his reward" (Matthew 10:42) (angels carrying cup to heaven).

Summary Prayer

Lord Jesus, how highly You value charity towards our neighbor! You are the infinitely great God; man is unspeakably small, and yet You declare that no one truly loves You who withholds his love from his fellow man. You teach us the law of charity which demands that we love our neighbors, because they carry in their souls the image of God, reflect His perfections, and are created for eternal union with God.

Jesus, You have given us the parable of the Good Samaritan to teach us who our neighbor is. If we want to possess eternal life, we must imitate the Samaritan in his exercise of the law of charity, because he is an image of You. When we see our fellow men in pain or sorrow, let us do as the Samaritan did. Regardless of a man's creed, country, or social standing, we believe that the image of God is engraved upon his soul. Your Blood was shed for his salvation; he is intended for eternal glory. A child of God and Your brother, he is also our brother.

We often meet bruised hearts. Sometimes through carelessness, malice, or accident, these hearts have been wounded. Perhaps failure, ingratitude, poverty, sickness, ignorance, or sin is the cause of the suffering. Help us to be Good Samaritans and try to bind up the heart-wounds of those we meet. Let us pour in the oil of sympathy and the strengthening wine of cheerful words or deeds to give those in sorrow a spiritual uplift.

Give us the grace, through frequent Holy Communion and prayer; to overcome our selfishness; to resist our sinful temptations and reactions, such as hatred and bitterness; to develop kindness, sympathy, forbearance, and forgiveness; to think kindly of everyone; and to find happiness in making others happy. Help us to have compassion upon our neighbor and to do whatever we can to lighten the burden of his misery. Make us generous enough to consider our enemies among our neighbors. May we thus unite ourselves by love to You and to the members of Your Mystical Body, the Church, now and forever. Amen.

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

1. "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you" (John 13:34). What are the four main areas in which love for our fellow man should be shown?
2. In what concrete ways does your family take care of the physical, spiritual, and social needs of other people, especially those in your parish? List the gifts and talents that each of your family members possess and think how you can serve each other and your parish community with those talents.
3. Prayerfully reflect on 1 John 4:11, "Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another." Pray for a person who seems difficult to love. Thank God for His love for you and ask Him to help you love that person with a grateful and willing heart.



Q. 285. How can we show the justice and charity of Christ to others?

We show to others the justice and charity of Christ by reaching out in the spirit of the Beatitudes to help others, to build up a better society in the local community, and to promote social justice and peace throughout the world.

We show the justice and charity of Christ to others by letting our Catholic faith, with its beautiful truths and attainable ideals, fill our lives with the spirit of the Gospel. If we really believe in Jesus Christ, we know that we must reshape our lives so that they are living examples of the Gospel in the spirit of the Beatitudes. This is the Christian life.

Christ said: “Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness’ sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven” (Matthew 5:7-10).

The Church urges us to serve God by serving our fellow man, after the example of our Lord. After He had washed the feet of His disciples, Jesus said to them: “Do you know what I have done to you? You call me Teacher and Lord; and you are right, for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also ought to wash one another’s feet. For I have given you an example, that you also should do as I have done to you.” (John 13:12-15).

The Church calls upon Christians to live for others as Jesus lived and died for all. Such a life calls for sacrifice and fortitude, and it will help to make our Christian faith alive and real. The Church wishes us to make room in our hearts for all people, so that we might labor with all men to build up our society.

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

Society, in turn, is obligated to promote and safeguard social justice. To do so, society must provide the conditions and climate necessary for justice. Both individuals and groups of people should have access to the ways and means they need to obtain what is rightfully due them.

By friendship with all men, the People of God can become a sign and instrument of union with God and of the unity of all mankind. A life of service to others is the best way of showing God's presence in the world and of letting people know that He loves all of them.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

1807 *Justice* is the moral virtue that consists in the constant and firm will to give their due to God and neighbor. Justice toward God is called the “virtue of religion.” Justice toward men disposes one to respect the rights of each and to establish in human relationships the harmony that promotes equity with regard to persons and to the common good. The just man, often mentioned in the Sacred Scriptures, is distinguished by habitual right thinking and the uprightness of his conduct toward his neighbor. “You shall not be partial to the poor or defer to the great, but in righteousness shall you judge your neighbor.”⁷¹ “Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.”⁷²

1927 It is the role of the state to defend and promote the common good of civil society. The common good of the whole human family calls for an organization of society on the international level.

Vatican Council II

In assuming human nature he has united to himself all humanity in a supernatural solidarity which makes of it one single family. He has made charity the distinguishing mark of his disciples, in the words: “By this will all men know you for my disciples, by the love you bear one another” (Jn. 13:35). *Lay People, 8*

Charitable action today can and should reach all men and all needs. *Lay People, 8*

Summary Prayer

Jesus, You are the Good Samaritan Who, journeying along the road of life, stops by the wayside to care for and assist fallen humanity who lies flat on the ground through sin and who has been stripped of its garments of grace by Satan. At the cost of Your own life, You exercise Your mission of mercy and love toward Your wounded neighbor; You restore him to divine favor and spiritual health, and so enable him to continue along the road to heaven.

How often have our souls been beaten and robbed by the powers of evil! Our hearts overflow with love and gratitude to You, Good Samaritan, to Whom we are indebted for our rescue. You poured into our open wounds the strengthening wine of Your sacred doctrines; You dropped into them the holy oil of the graces Your sacraments impart. As the Good Shepherd, how often have You carried us straying sheep upon Your shoulder to the inn of peace and friendship of God. Help us to imitate Your love and compassion in our dealings with our neighbor.

Jesus, before the Last Supper, You gave us an example of Your deep humility and charity and Your purity of heart. Though You are Master and Lord,

You performed the lowest task, the one which was usually done by slaves: You washed the feet of Your Apostles. If we do not accept the lesson, whether in regards to purity of heart (which the washing signifies) or to love or humility, we will have no part with You—no part in Your Spirit, Your character, or Your life. We want to imitate Your loving humility and tender love in serving our neighbor, for it is the union of these two virtues which is the real spirit of the Church and of Christianity.

Jesus, teach us to be ready to do all things for our fellow man and to consider no act of assistance beneath our dignity. Help us to make use of every opportunity which presents itself to us to perform acts of love toward our neighbor, in remembrance of the great example You have given us. May You be praised forever. Amen.

#E5-33



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

1. Describe some of the ways in which we can show the justice and charity of Christ to others.
2. In your neighborhood, parish community, school and workplace, how do you and your family reach out to others in the spirit of the Beatitudes?
3. Memorize the Beatitudes. At the end of each day, recall how you have practiced them in your dealings with others. Thank God for the grace He has given you to practice the Beatitudes in your daily life.

Q. 286. How should our judgments of others and our speech be ruled?

Our judgments of others and our speech should follow the standard of Christ’s charity—which is due to all those created in the image and likeness of God. God commands us to think kindly of others.

Jesus said: “Judge not, that you be not judged. For with the judgement you pronounce you will be judged, and the measure you give will be the measure you get. Why do you see the speck that is in your brother’s eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, ‘Let me take the speck out of your eye,’ when there is the log in your own eye?” (Matthew 7:1-4).

Kindness, a fruit of the Holy Spirit, is an essential virtue for our Christian lives. Its essence is the strength of our self-control and the conquest of our egoism, especially within our family. Its object is the giving of ourselves to others. This interior disposition inclines us to think kindly of others, to wish them well, and to do good.

The basis of love is kind thinking. Kindness excludes any malicious and suspicious thoughts—thoughts which ascribe evil intentions and vicious purposes to others, or thoughts which interpret unjustly as evil the gestures, actions, words and even silence of others.

Truthfulness is also an important virtue in which one is true in deeds, truthful in speech, and guards against insincerity (hypocrisy), pretense, and deliberate deceptiveness. When we speak of our neighbors, what we say must be ruled by charity and prudence. The sin of uncharitable speech is a vicious destroyer of internal unity within any family. It violates truth, justice, and love. Our Lord’s new law of love demands that we avoid not only bodily injury to our neighbor, but also angry, uncharitable words and feelings against him.



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

Sacred Scripture

Q. 286. Jn 7:24; Rom 2:1-8; 1 Cor 13:1-7; Jas 3:8-10; 1 Pet 3:10-12.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Q. 286. Paragraphs 2464-2492.

Sacred Scripture

Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, with all malice, and be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you. *Ephesians 4:31-32*

Do not speak evil against one another, brethren. He that speaks evil against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. There is one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you that you judge your neighbor? *James 4:11-12*

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2477 *Respect for the reputation* of persons forbids every attitude and word likely to cause them unjust injury.¹ He becomes guilty:

– of *rash judgment* who, even tacitly, assumes as true, without sufficient foundation, the moral fault of a neighbor;

– of *detraction* who, without objectively valid reason, discloses another's faults and failings to persons who did not know them;

– of *calumny* who, by remarks contrary to the truth, harms the reputation of others and gives occasion for false judgments concerning them.

Vatican Council II

If this exercise of charity is to be above all criticism, and seen to be so, one should see in one's neighbor the image of God to which he has been created, and Christ the Lord to whom is really offered all that is given to the needy. The liberty and dignity of the person helped must be respected with the greatest sensitivity. Purity of intention should not be stained by any self-seeking or desire to dominate. The demands of justice must first of all be satisfied; that which is already due in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity. The cause of evils, and not merely their effects, ought to disappear. The aid contributed should be organized in such a way that beneficiaries are gradually freed from their dependence on others and become self-supporting." *Lay People*, 8

Summary Prayer

Jesus, You forbid hasty judging, to which we may be led by a lack of charity or pride. Help us to be kind in our thoughts about our neighbors, that on the day of judgment we may also receive kindness and mercy. We wish to step out of the narrow circle of selfishness. Help us to try to find some excuse for what others do, not forcing ourselves to view things in the wrong light but keeping our eyes open to the whole truth, lest hasty judgments and prejudices close them to a part of the truth. Give us kind eyes that we may see beyond other peoples' weaknesses and failings, like a mother who looks on her child more kindly, but also more correctly, than a stranger.

No one ever saw human frailties more clearly than You saw them in Your Apostles: their dullness, their worldliness, and their faults. Yet You remained patient and untiring towards them because Your kindness was without limit. You looked on them with a kind eye and led them with a kind hand. Help us to imitate Your kindness.

Jesus, help us to be kind in speech. You never met a sad person without offering him a word of comfort, a fearful one without giving him a word of encouragement, a persecuted one without defending him, or a needy one without granting his request. Your words of comfort, recognition, and

blessing were always perfectly simple and natural because they were prompted by a sincere love for people.

Help us to realize that kind words make both us and other people happy. When a kind word proceeds from our lips, it blesses us first. Nearly always, the reward of a kind word is the experience of feeling God's presence. Let us always talk in such a way as to promote the other person's interests. Let us always try to bring happiness to others by our kind words. Each kind word costs us only a moment in this world, but will have an important bearing on the kind of eternity we spend, for You said, "For by your words you will be justified, and by your words you will be condemned" (Matthew 12:37). Lord, may Your will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Amen.

#C37-7



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

1. Our thoughts and speech must be ruled by charity. What does this mean?
2. In your daily life, how can you form the habit of thinking and speaking kindly of others?
3. Pray and reflect on the Summary Prayer after question 286. Recall instances in the past when you have failed to practice kindness toward others in thought or in words. Be sorry for these sins and resolve to overcome the temptation to be unkind in thought, in speech, and in judgments.

Q. 287. In obedience to lawful authority, how do we show our love for our neighbor?

We show our love for our neighbor when we obey all lawful authority, whether it be in the home, in civil society, or in the Church.

With respect to lawful authority in the home, the Fourth Commandment of God says: “Honor your father and your mother” (Deuteronomy 5:16; Exodus 20:12).

St. Paul wrote: “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ‘Honor your father and mother’ (this is the first commandment with a promise), ‘that it may be well with you and that you may live long on the earth’” (Ephesians 6:1-3).

Even the authority of the civil government comes from God. St. Paul wrote: “Let every person be subject to the governing authorities. For there is no authority except from God, and those that exist have been instituted by God. Therefore he who resists the authorities resists what God has appointed, and those who resist will incur judgement” (Romans 13:1-2).

God establishes authority on earth to ensure the well-being and common good of those who are subject to that authority, not for the honor or gain of those who exercise the right and duty of governing.

To achieve the common good of the people they govern, those in authority must use morally acceptable means. They may never “do evil for a good cause,” e.g., promote or even support abortion and contraception as a means for population control. Rather, for this purpose, they should encourage chastity, sexual abstinence, and natural family planning.

Those in authority, especially, have the responsibility of loving their neighbor in the persons whom they govern and defend. Out of a pure unselfish love of God and their fellow citizens, leaders must respect their people’s fundamental human rights and freedoms and the conditions necessary for the exercise of these freedoms. Such love, respect, and mercy will move them to seek always what is best for their people. It will guarantee them, in their turn, a merciful judgment at the end of their lives when they are called by God to give an account of their stewardship.

Christians who possess authority should consider themselves as servants of those they govern. Jesus said: “You know that the rulers of the Gentiles lord it over them, and their great men exercise authority over them. It shall not be so among you; but whoever would be great among you must be your servant, and whoever would be first among you must be your slave” (Matthew 20:25-27).

Although He was God, Jesus was obedient to Mary and Joseph. He also respected the civil and temple authorities. He did not consider Himself immune to the duty of paying taxes. He obeyed the regulations which had been established for the

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

Sacred Scripture

Q. 287. Mk 12:13-17; Lk 2:31; Rom 13:3-7; Tit 3:1-2.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Q. 287. Paragraphs 1897-1927, 2234-2243.

good of the society in which He lived. In doing so, Christ was really showing respect for His Father in heaven, for all authority stems from Him.

We who are members of the Mystical Body of Christ are to imitate the reverence which He showed to those in authority. We are commanded to show our parents consideration and affection. As children, we owe them obedience, respect, gratitude, and our assistance. When we respect our parents, we promote unity in the family and in society.



Like Jesus, we must also obey legitimate civil authorities. All just laws, whether they please us or not, are to be accepted as expressions of God's will. In a special way, the laws of the Catholic Church reveal to us God's will. Our risen Lord speaks to us through the Church. Therefore, we should look upon Church laws as commands from God Himself.

Christ exercised His authority over others with charity. The manner in which He gave orders to His Apostles and sent them forth was always respectful and kind. He knew that the Father had entrusted to Him the responsibility of leading the Apostles safely back to the Father. We, whom the Father has called to share the life of Jesus Christ, must use our authority over others in a responsible, kind way as our Lord Himself did. Parents should understand that their children have been entrusted to them by our Father in heaven. It is their duty to instruct their children about Christ and His Church, and to teach them to love their neighbors.

Parents who fail to exercise proper authority over their children, children who fail to honor and obey their parents, and citizens who offend the common good by violating laws are all, in some way, offending God.

Sacred Scripture

Hear, my son, your father's instruction, and reject not your mother's teaching. *Proverbs 1:8*

Be subject for the Lord's sake to every human institution... Live as free men, yet without using your freedom as a pretext for evil; but live as servants of God. *1 Peter 2:13, 16*



Catechism of the Catholic Church

2242 The citizen is obliged in conscience not to follow the directives of civil authorities when they are contrary to the demands of the moral order, to the fundamental rights of persons or the teachings of the Gospel. *Refusing obedience* to civil authorities, when their demands are contrary to those of an upright conscience, finds its justification in the distinction between serving God and serving the political community. “Render therefore to Caesar the things that are Caesar’s, and to God the things that are God’s.”¹ “We must obey God rather than men.”² “When citizens are under the oppression of a public authority which oversteps its competence, they should still not refuse to give or to do what is objectively demanded of them by the common good; but it is legitimate for them to defend their own rights and those of their fellow citizens against the abuse of this authority within the limits of the natural law and the Law of the Gospel.”³

Vatican Council II

Because of the closer bonds of human interdependence and their spread over the whole world, we are today witnessing a widening of the role of the common good, which is the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily. The whole human race is consequently involved with regard to the rights and obligations which result. Every group must take into account the needs and legitimate aspirations of every other group, and still more of the human family as a whole. *Modern World, 26*

Children as living members of the family contribute in their own way to the sanctification of their parents. With sentiments of gratitude, affection and trust, they will repay their parents for the benefits given to them and will come to their assistance as devoted children in times of hardship and in the loneliness of old age. *Modern World, 48*

It follows that political authority, either within the political community as such or through organizations representing the state, must be exercised within the limits of the moral order and directed toward the common good (understood in the dynamic sense of the term) according to the juridical order legitimately established or due to be established. Citizens, then, are bound in conscience to obey. Accordingly, the responsibility, the dignity, and the importance of state rulers is clear.

When citizens are under the oppression of a public authority which oversteps its competence, they should still not refuse to give or to do whatever is objectively demanded of them by the common good; but it is legitimate for them to defend their own rights and those of their fellow citizens against abuses of this authority within the limits of the natural law and the law of the Gospel. *Modern World, 74*

Summary Prayer

Lord, we pray for those who serve us in public office. Guide their minds and hearts, so that all men may live in true peace and freedom. You know the longings of men's hearts, and you protect their rights. In your goodness, watch over those in authority so that people every where may enjoy religious freedom, security, and peace.

Give those in authority a true concern for the brothers and sisters who have been entrusted to their care and inspire the people to support their leaders according to their conscience.

Almighty and everlasting God, in the secret counsels of Your loving providence, You have called us into life by means of our parents, who thereby share in Your divine power and authority. Mercifully hear the prayer of childlike love which we offer to You for those who, in Your fatherly kindness, You have called to parenthood. Fill all parents with Your choicest blessings and enrich their souls with Your holy grace.

Grant that they may guard their holy union faithfully and constantly, since it is a sign of Your divine Son's spiritual union with the Church. Fill them with holy fear, which is the beginning of wisdom, and let them impart it to their children. Thus may they ever walk in the way of Your commandments; may their children be their joy during their earthly exile and their crown of glory in their heavenly home.

God, our Father, You gave us our fathers and mothers and made them an image of Your authority, love, and tender watchfulness. You command us to love, honor, and obey them. Give children the grace they need to love their parents sincerely, to honor them, to yield a ready obedience to their commands, to comply with their wishes, to accept their corrections with humility, and to bear their shortcomings with patience. Let them seek their parents' happiness in everything. Thus, make them worthy of the reward You promised to those who honor their father and their mother according to Your Fourth Commandment—that it will be well with them in this life and in the next.

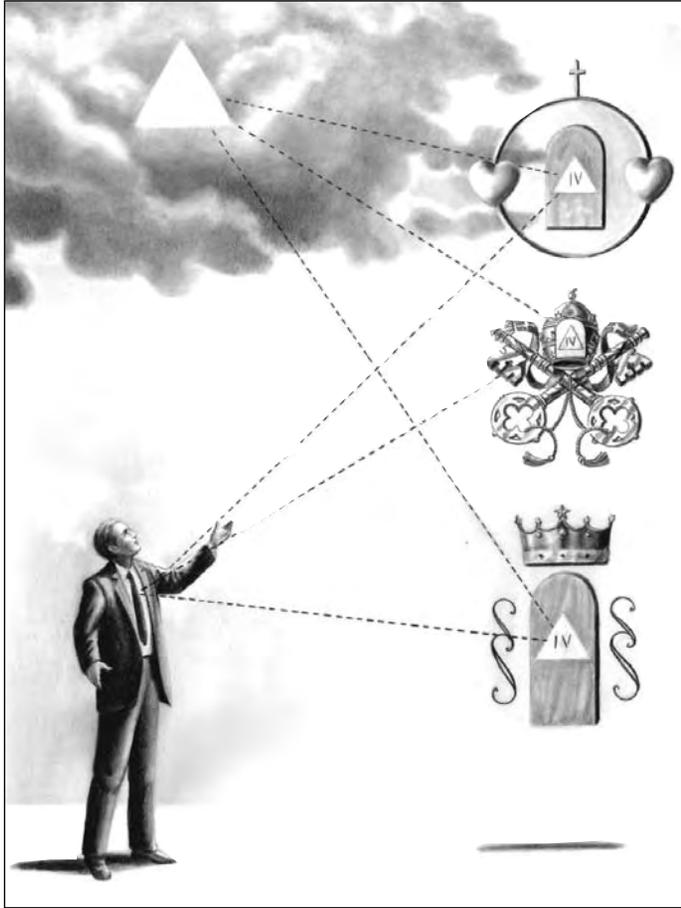
Give Your grace to children, that they may grow in Your favor, and to young people, that they may reach their full stature by loving You and by keeping Your commandments. All this we ask through our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.

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

1. How should we treat lawful authority in the home and in civil society according to God's commandment?
2. As parents or elders, how do you exercise authority over your children or younger brothers or sisters? As children, how do you show respect and obedience towards your parents? As an individual and as a family, how do you express your obedience to legitimate authority?
3. Pray for your parents and for all Church and civil leaders, especially those in your country and local community, that they may be guided by the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of Love and Truth.

Catechism by Diagram

#09-1



All Authority Comes from God. The obligations of parents and children alike stem from the fact that all rightful authority (tablet showing the Fourth Commandment) comes from God (lines from triangle), whether it be a parent (two hearts), the Church (Pope's tiara), or civil law (symbol of law, crown). A good Christian serves his family and his community with Christian charity, which he receives from God.

Q. 288. In what ways do we sin against our neighbor?

We sin against our neighbor in four general areas, namely: (1) justice, (2) God's gift of life, (3) speech, and (4) sexuality.

1. Sins against our neighbor in the area of justice.

The Seventh Commandment of God is, "You shall not steal", and the Tenth Commandment is, "You shall not covet anything that belongs to your neighbor" (cf. Exodus 20:15, 17; cf. Deuteronomy 5:19, 21).

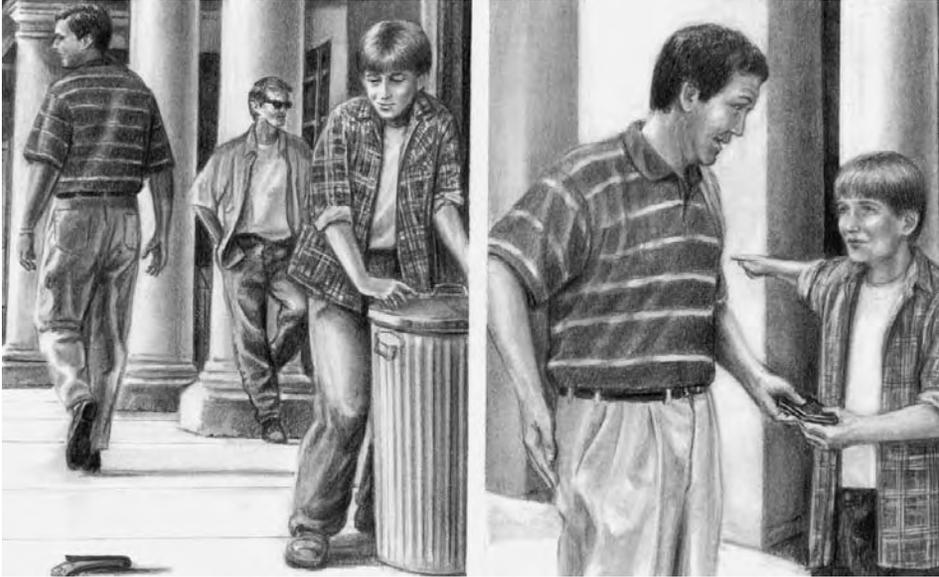
For commentaries on each question with Cardinal Arinze, Sr. John Vianney and Fr. Straub (in Spanish), see Appendix E.

Sacred Scripture

Q. 288. Prov 6:32; Sir 4:1-4, 26:15; Mt 18:6; Mk 7:21-23; Lk 16:19-25; 1 Cor 6:9-10; 2 Tim 2:20-22; Tit 2:4-6.

Catechism of the Catholic Church

Q. 288. Paragraphs 1467, 2196, 2258, 2351-2359, **2380-2391**, 2401, 2464, **2475-2492**, 2515-2516, **2534-2540**.



In the seventh and tenth commandments, God forbids taking or using something that belongs to another against his reasonable wish. Injustices that violate these two commandments are: stealing; borrowing without permission; depriving another of his money or property by deceiving him (fraud); deliberately damaging another person's good name or property; not paying just debts; not making a reasonable effort to find the owner of an article that we found; depriving a worker of a just wage; wasting an employer's time, money, or property; cheating; showing unjust or unreasonable anger, hatred, racial prejudice, or unjust discrimination; and depriving one's family of needed money by gambling, drinking, or foolish spending. If the damage to our neighbor is not serious, the sin is venial.

Justice imposes on us the obligation to make reparation for our sins. For example, we must restore or replace goods which we have stolen. If we cannot find the owner of the stolen item, we are not free to keep and enjoy it. Instead, we must give it, or something of an equivalent value, to the poor, to the Church, or to a good cause.

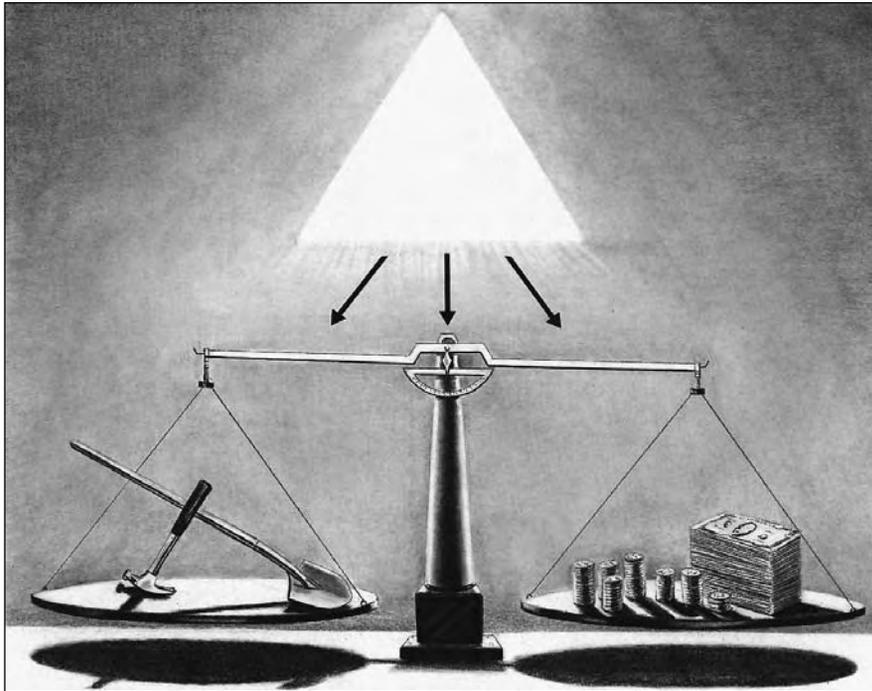
On a broader plain, all the resources of creation, whether of the mineral, vegetable, or animal worlds, are by their "nature destined for the common good of past, present, and future humanity" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2415). Man must not use these resources in a way that ignores his other obligations. For instance, it is sinful to be selfishly concerned only about ourselves and apathetic toward others who need our help. All of the goods of this world come from God. He has given more than enough of them for our use. The material goods that God gives us are not only for ourselves, but also for the benefit of our families and for helping others in need. True happiness comes from doing God's will. But His will, in most instances, cannot be done without adequate material goods, such as food, clothing, and shelter.

The dominion God gave man over these resources is not absolute. Man is obligated to conserve and preserve them. He must not waste or exhaust them. On the contrary, man must provide for their renewal and replacement.

Anytime that our wrong words or actions encourage another to sin, we become guilty of the sin of scandal, the sin of bad example. The sin is serious if the possible harm we do is serious. It may cause the death of another person's soul if we lead him to mortal sin.

Catechism by Diagram

#J3-15



Fair Day's Work. The Seventh Commandment demands (arrows from triangle—God) that we practice the virtue of justice (scale) by giving a living wage (money) to employees (hammer, shovel) and also by giving a fair day's work. We sin when we waste an employer's time or materials or money. The Christian is to show all the justice and charity of Christ—to reach out in the spirit of the Beatitudes to help others.

Sacred Scripture

And he said to his disciples, "Temptations to sin are sure to come; but woe to him by whom they come! It would be better for him if a millstone were hung round his neck and he were cast into the sea, than that he should cause one of these little ones to sin. *Luke 17:1-2*

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2414 The seventh commandment forbids acts or enterprises that for any reason—selfish or ideological, commercial, or totalitarian—lead to the *enslavement of human beings*, to their being bought, sold and exchanged like merchandise, in disregard for their personal dignity. It is a sin against the dignity of persons and their fundamental rights to reduce them by violence to their productive value or to a source of profit. St. Paul directed a Christian master to treat

his Christian slave “no longer as a slave but more than a slave, as a beloved brother, . . . both in the flesh and in the Lord.”²¹

2536 The tenth commandment forbids greed and the desire to amass earthly goods without limit. It forbids avarice arising from a passion for riches and their attendant power. It also forbids the desire to commit injustice by harming our neighbor in his temporal goods:

When the Law says, “You shall not covet,” these words mean that we should banish our desires for whatever does not belong to us. Our thirst for another’s goods is immense, infinite, never quenched. Thus it is written: “He who loves money never has money enough.”²¹

Splendor of Truth

The Supreme Good and the moral good meet in truth: the truth of God, the Creator and Redeemer, and the truth of man, created and redeemed by him. Only upon this truth is it possible to construct a renewed society and to solve the complex and weighty problems affecting it, above all the problem of overcoming the various forms of totalitarianism, so as to make way for the authentic freedom of the person. (*section 99*)

Catechism by Diagram

#S13-47



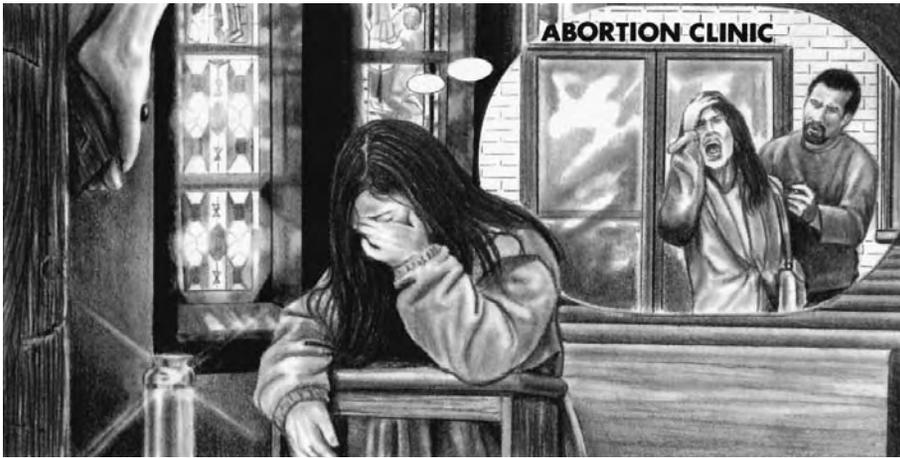
The Road to Worldly Riches. The Tenth Commandment forbids us to do in our thoughts what it would be sinful to do in our actions. It is a sin to wish that we might get and keep for ourselves something that belongs to another. To attain worldly riches (castle), we sometimes destroy (car crashing through the signs) charity and justice by sinning against these two virtues.

Vatican Council II

Every man has the right to possess a sufficient amount of the earth's goods for himself and his family. This has been the opinion of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, who taught that men are bound to come to the aid of the poor and to do so not merely out of their superfluous goods. When a person is in extreme necessity he has the right to supply himself with what he needs out of the riches of others. *Modern World*, 69

2. Sins against our neighbor in the area of God's gift of life.

From the moment of conception until natural death every human being is sacred. With the cooperation of one's human parents, each person is created by God Himself, in God's own image and likeness. From the moment of conception, God infuses a spiritual human soul in each person.



Accordingly, the Fifth Commandment of God is: “You shall not kill” (Deuteronomy 5:17, Exodus 20:13). This commandment directs us to respect and care for our bodies and souls and those of our neighbors. God has given us our lives and our bodies as the means to serve Him, to serve ourselves, and to serve our neighbors. In response to His gift, we should take care of our bodies and our health. We should practice moderation and Christian self-discipline in the use of food, alcohol, and tobacco.

Our Lord came to give life, not to take it away. As His followers, we must oppose whatever tends to destroy or abuse human life: murder, suicide, abortion, contraception, euthanasia, drug abuse, drunkenness, fighting, and unjust or unreasonable anger. All of these are contrary to justice, hope, and charity.

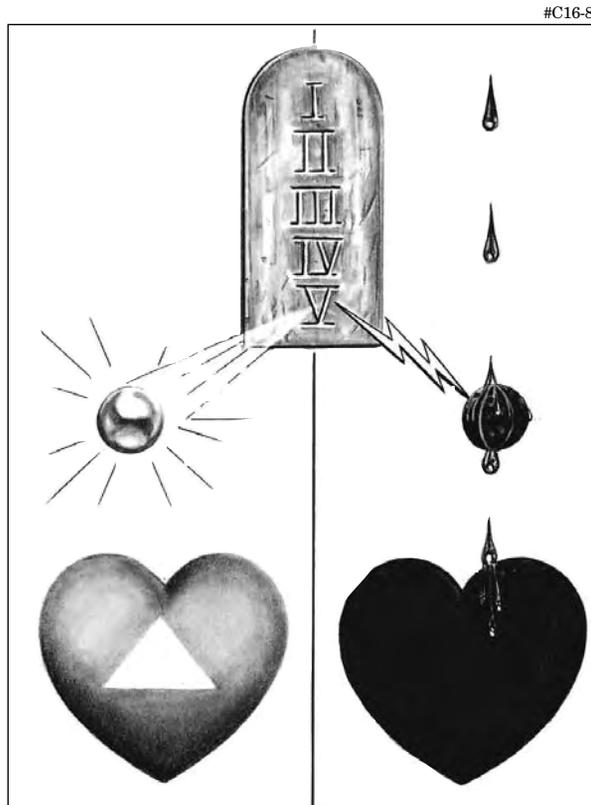
Even one's embryo must be defended in its wholeness. It must be respected, loved and cared for. To the extent of man's capability, it must be healed when ill or injured. Every human embryo is no less human, no less a person, no less a precious image and likeness of God, no less endowed with every right to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness than any other human being.

Similarly, the life and being of every severely injured or diseased, elderly, handicapped or chronically ill person is sacred. Every life must be protected.

Intentional euthanasia, in any form and for any motive, no matter how good it seems, is murder. It violates the dignity of the human person and the rights of God, who alone, as the giver of human life, has the right to take a human life.

Christians must do all they can to prevent war and promote the peaceful resolution of international conflicts and aggression. All wars inevitably bring a myriad of evils and injustices, and, except for the right to defend one's own nation or to help another nation unjustly attacked, they must be avoided whenever possible. We have the duty to defend ourselves and those for whom we are responsible against any unjust aggressor.

Catechism by Diagram



Spiritual Harm. Sins against the Fifth Commandment not only harm our physical life, but also bring damage to our spiritual life and good name. The soul in grace (heart, triangle) is like a precious pearl. It can tarnish (tarnished pearl) and even destroy (lightning) the life of the soul (black heart). Any time that our wrong words or actions encourage sin in another, we become guilty of the sin of scandal, the sin of bad example. This sin is serious if the possible harm we do is serious. It may cause the death of the soul by leading it to mortal sin.

Sacred Scripture

You have heard that it was said to the men of old, “You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.” But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment; whoever insults his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says, “You fool!” shall be liable to the hell of fire. *Matthew 5:21-22*

Any one who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life abiding in him. *1 John 3:15*

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2270 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.¹

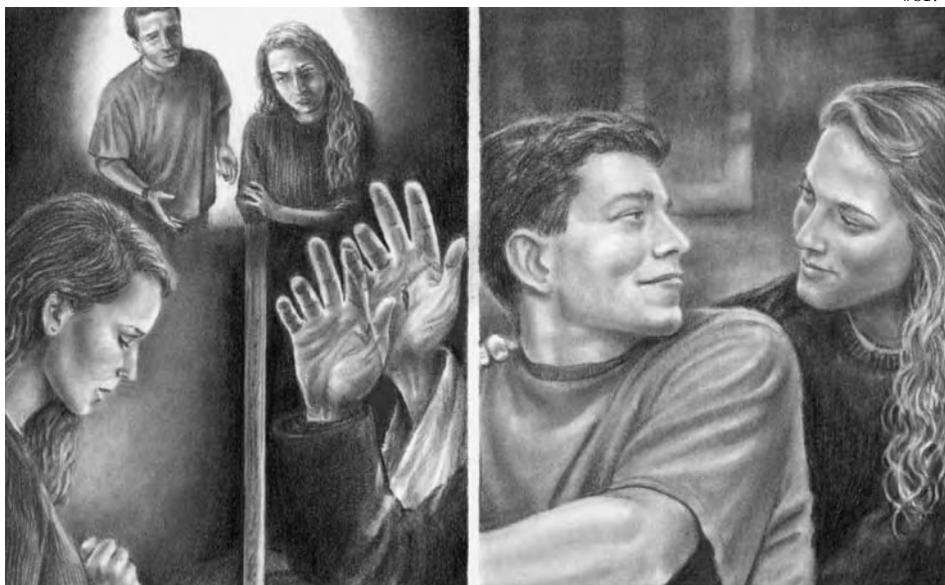
2272 Formal cooperation in an abortion constitutes a grave offense. The Church attaches the canonical penalty of excommunication to this crime against human life. “A person who procures a completed abortion incurs excommunication *latae sententiae*,”² “by the very commission of the offense,”³ and subject to the conditions provided by Canon Law.³ The Church does not thereby intend to restrict the scope of mercy. Rather, she makes clear the gravity of the crime committed, the irreparable harm done to the innocent who is put to death, as well as to the parents and the whole of society.

2307 The fifth commandment forbids the intentional destruction of human life. Because of the evils and injustices that accompany all war, the Church insistently urges everyone to prayer and to action so that the divine Goodness may free us from the ancient bondage of war.¹

Splendor of Truth

The origin and foundation of the duty of absolute respect for human life are to be found in the dignity proper to the person and not simply in the natural inclination to preserve one’s own physical life. Human life, even though it is a fundamental good of man, thus acquires a moral significance in reference to the good of the person, who must always be affirmed for his own sake. While it is always morally illicit to kill an innocent human being, it can be licit, praiseworthy or even imperative to give up one’s own life (cf. Jn 15:13) out of love of neighbor or as a witness to the truth. (*section 50*)

#C17-4



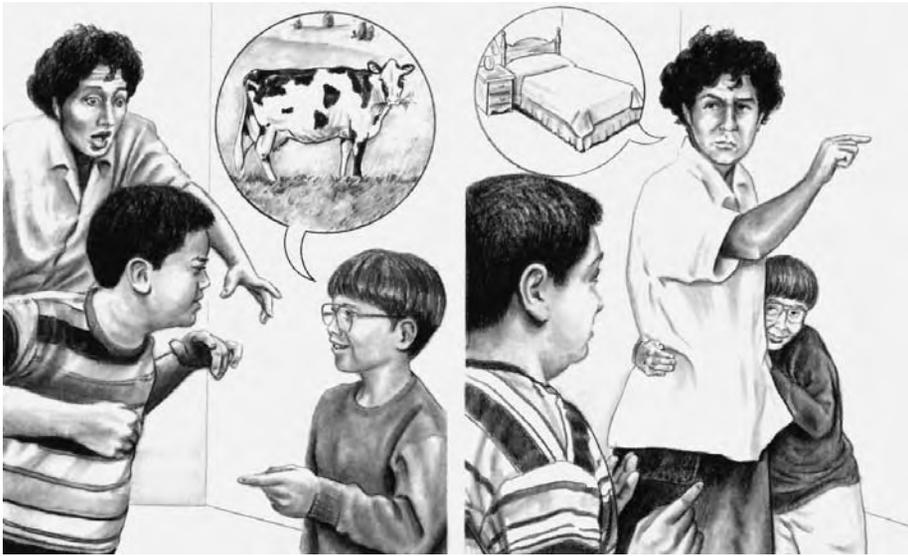
Vatican Council II

The teaching of Christ even demands that we forgive injury, and the precept of love, which is the commandment of the New Law, includes all our enemies: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall love your neighbor and hate your enemy.’ But I say to you, love your enemies, do good to them that hate you” (Mt. 5:43-44). *Modern World, 28*

Whatever one may think of this form of deterrent, people are convinced that the arms race, which quite a few countries have entered, is no infallible way of maintaining real peace and that the resulting so-called balance of power is no sure and genuine path to achieving it. Rather than eliminate the causes of war, the arms race serves only to aggravate the position...

Therefore, we declare once again: the arms race is one of the greatest curses on the human race and the harm it inflicts on the poor is more than can be endured. And there is every reason to fear that if it continues it will bring forth those lethal disasters which are already in preparation. Warned by the possibility of the catastrophes that man has created, let us profit by the respite we now enjoy, thanks to the divine favor, to take stock of our responsibilities and find ways of resolving controversies in a manner worthy of human beings. Providence urgently demands of us that we free ourselves from the age-old slavery of war. If we refuse to make this effort, there is no knowing where we will be led on the fatal path we have taken. *Modern World*, 81

#F1-90



3. Sins against our neighbor in the area of speech.

Sins in this area include lying, detraction, and calumny.

The Eighth Commandment of God is: “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (Exodus 20:16; cf. Deuteronomy 5:20). A good name consists in the esteem which people have for a person and the mutual confidence resulting from it. Mutual confidence, based on mutual respect, is the foundation of all family and community life. Without this respect, doubt, mistrust, and suspicion disrupt the family, community, and society.

Every unjustified violation of a person’s good name is a sin. This occurs either when the uncharitable talk is based on truth, which is detraction, or when it is based on a lie, which is calumny. Calumny is the greater sin, because it violates not only justice and love, but also truth.

Revealing the hidden faults of another, gossiping about a person’s known faults, exaggerating his faults, and telling stories about him are ways of damaging a person’s reputation. We are never permitted to tell a lie, because every lie is an abuse

of the sacred power which God has given to us. Lies and gossip can start quarrels and discord and may even separate friends and destroy community life.

Priests in particular are bound to strict silence about sins they have heard in the sacrament of Penance. This is called the sacramental seal of confession. This seal binds the priest under pain of very serious sin and very severe ecclesiastical penalties. It is absolutely sacred and indissoluble. The priest may never, even if threatened with torture and death, reveal or talk about any sin heard in confession without the penitent's permission, nor may the priest act on his knowledge of such sins or of those who have committed them.

Professional secrets—those learned by doctors, counselors, researchers, employees with respect to their employers, etc.—must also be kept faithfully, although not with as strict an obligation as the sacramental seal of confession.

Confidences one has been entrusted with must not be revealed unless another's greater rights are at stake, e.g., those who have a right to this knowledge in virtue of their office and responsibilities, such as parents in regard to the well-being of their children or religious superiors with reference to their community members.

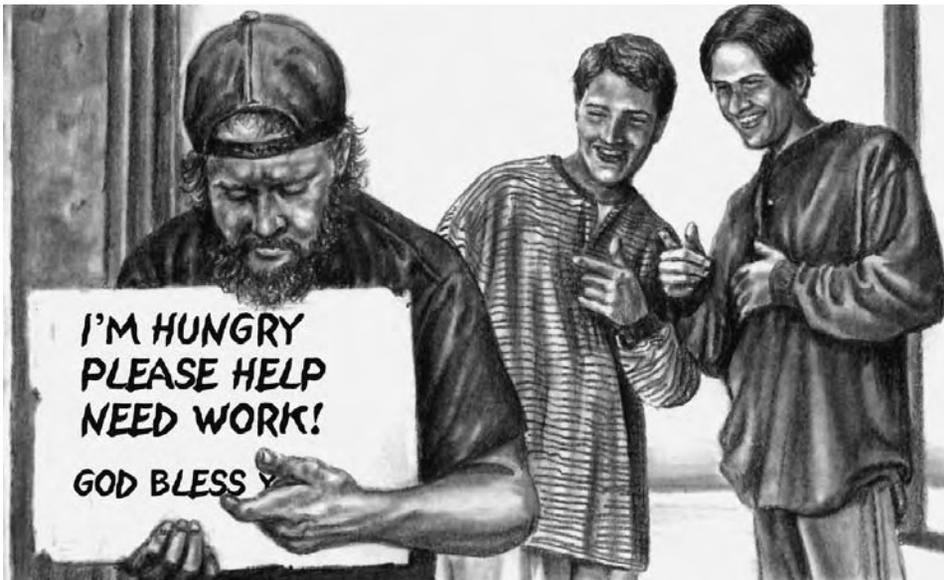
Sacred Scripture

And for one who hates gossip evil is lessened. Never repeat a conversation, and you will lose nothing at all. With friend or foe do not report it, and unless it would be a sin for you, do not disclose it; for some one has heard you and watched you, and when the time comes he will hate you. Have you heard a word? Let it die with you. Be brave! It will not make you burst! *Sirach 19:6-10*

Curse the whisperer and deceiver, for he has destroyed many who were at peace. *Sirach 28:13*

Remind them to be submissive to rulers and authorities, to be obedient, to be ready for any honest work, to speak evil of no one, to avoid quarreling, to be gentle, and to show perfect courtesy toward all men. *Titus 3:1-2*

#S13-24



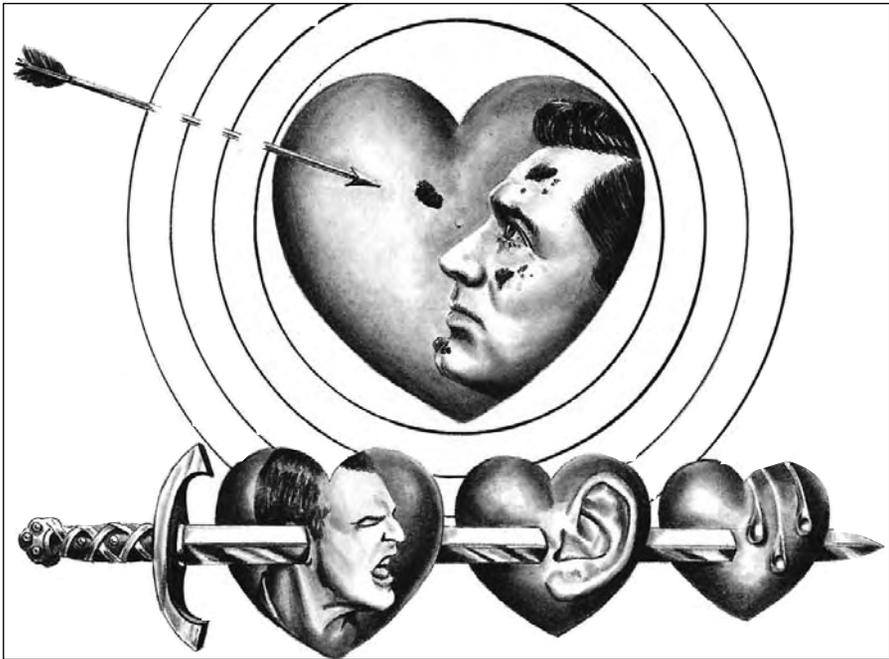
Catechism of the Catholic Church

2468 Truth as uprightness in human action and speech is called *truthfulness*, sincerity, or candor. Truth or truthfulness is the virtue which consists in showing oneself true in deeds and truthful in words, and in guarding against duplicity, dissimulation, and hypocrisy.

2487 Every offense committed against justice and truth entails the *duty of reparation*, even if its author has been forgiven. When it is impossible publicly to make reparation for a wrong, it must be made secretly. If someone who has suffered harm cannot be directly compensated, he must be given moral satisfaction in the name of charity. This duty of reparation also concerns offenses against another's reputation. This reparation, moral and sometimes material, must be evaluated in terms of the extent of the damage inflicted. It obliges in conscience.

Catechism by Diagram

#S13-46



Slander and Detraction. The Christian's judgment and speech concerning others are to be ruled by the charity due to all sons of God. The Eighth Commandment forbids the sin of lying, slander and detraction. *Slander* is the damaging (arrow) of our neighbor's reputation by lying (mud) about him. It combines a sin against truth with sins against justice and charity, and damages another's good name. *Detraction* consists of hurting our neighbor by unnecessarily telling something harmful about him which is true, but which is not commonly known. Our tongue is like a sword which is capable of hurting the soul in three ways: sins against justice and charity in word (man talking), in hearing (ear), and in hurting the good name or reputation of another (tears).

4. Sins against our neighbor in the area of sexuality.

The Sixth Commandment of God is: "You shall not commit adultery." The Ninth Commandment is: "You shall not covet your neighbor's wife" (Exodus 20:14, 17; cf. Deuteronomy 5:18, 21).

The use of the sexual faculty is a right and privilege of those who are validly married. Therefore, adultery, polygamy, fornication, masturbation, pornography,

premarital sex, homosexual practices, indecent entertainment of every description, other acts of impurity, and the fully deliberate lustful desire to commit these acts are all gravely contrary to chastity and are seriously wrong. Though it is impossible to keep all evil thoughts and desires from our minds, we can at least refuse to welcome them. Unwelcome desires, no matter how wrong they seem, cannot defile our hearts as long as we do not consent to them.

All Christians have the responsibility to practice the virtue of chastity according to their state in life, looking to Jesus as their model. The virtue of chastity helps a Christian to regulate the use of his sexual powers according to God's law. In Baptism, a Christian consecrates his soul and body to Jesus Christ. The procreative faculty, given to us by God as a sacred power, is something holy. It is something good in itself and is important in God's plan of creation and providence. The misuse of this faculty is evil.

To help foster the virtue of chastity and to overcome the tendency toward lust, we should practice temperance, seek to purify our hearts, behave and dress modestly, and protect others from ideas, actions, and images which are opposed to the Church's teaching on sexuality.

#T16-2



Sacred Scripture

You have heard that it was said, “You shall not commit adultery.” But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart. *Matthew 5:27-28*

Now the works of the flesh are plain: immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God. *Galatians 5:19-21*

Catechism of the Catholic Church

2522 Modesty protects the mystery of persons and their love. 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. It is discreet.

Vatican Council II

It is imperative to give suitable and timely instruction to young people, above all in the heart of their own families, about the dignity of married love, its role and its exercise; in this way they will be able to engage in honorable courtship and enter upon marriage of their own. *Modern World, 49*

Parents on their part should remember that it is their duty to see that entertainments and publications which might endanger faith and morals do not enter their houses and that their children are not exposed to them elsewhere. *Social Communications, 10*

Catechism by Diagram

#E4-53



Holy Purity. The Sixth Commandment urges us to be holy in body, because Jesus loves the pure of heart (monogram of Christ among the lilies). We must have the highest respect for ourselves and the person of our neighbor, whose soul is God's masterpiece, like a ciborium in which Christ resides with His Presence through grace (hosts). Through Holy Communion (man with host in his heart), we receive the grace we need to live a pure, sinless life. The follower of Christ must be pure in words and actions. The lily is also a symbol of simplicity of heart which makes us seek God instead of worldly pleasures. The Ninth Commandment demands that the Christian remain chaste in repelling lustful thoughts, desires, and temptations from his soul.

Summary Prayer

Lord God, King of Heaven and earth, direct and sanctify our hearts, bodies, thoughts, words, and deeds, so that we may follow Your law and keep Your commandments. If we are faithful to you everyday, we will be kept safe and free.

Lord, we are citizens of this earth. We ask to be made citizens of heaven by Your free gift. Help us to run in the way of Your commandments and to set our hearts on You alone. Send the fire of Your Holy Spirit deep within us, so that we can serve You with chaste bodies and please You with pure minds. We ask this through Christ our Savior and God. Amen.

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

1. One of our duties toward our neighbor is stated in the Fifth Commandment. What does this commandment positively ask us to do regarding human life?
2. In your family and parish community, how can you, as an individual and as a family, protect human life and respect the dignity of the human person?
3. Pray for an end to all attacks on human life and on the family. Offer reparation and sacrifices for the sins of abortion, contraception, and immodesty, which are destroying family life throughout the world.

Chapter Summary Prayer

May our words in praise of Your commandments find favor with You, Lord. May our faith prove we are not slaves, but sons. We are not as much subjected to Your law as we are sharers in Your power.

All powerful Father, refuge and strength of Your people, You protect in adversity and defend in prosperity those who put their trust in You. May we persevere in seeking Your will and find our way to You through obedience to Your commandments.

Strengthen our faith, hope, and love. May we do with loving hearts what You ask of us and so come to share in the life You promise.

Praise be to You, God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. There is no power for good which does not come from Your covenant and no promise which Your love has not offered. Strengthen our faith, that we may accept Your covenant; give us the love we need to carry out Your commandments, through Christ our Lord. Amen.

Family Wisdom Library: Chapter 79

See Appendix A for more references.

Q. 284. What responsibilities do we have toward other people?

Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People, John Paul II, sect. 41-42;
On the Dignity and Vocation of Women, John Paul II, sect. 7, 29;
On Evangelization in the Modern World, Paul VI, sect. 30;
On Human Work, John Paul II, sect. 18;
On the Hundredth Anniversary of Rerum Novarum, John Paul II, sect. 6-9, 22, 58;
On Social Concern, John Paul II, sect. 17, 30, 33;
Redeemer of Man, John Paul II, sect. 12, 16-17;
The Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World, John Paul II, sect. 42-44, 47.

Q. 285. How can we show the justice and charity of Christ to others?

Catechesis in Our Time, John Paul II, sect. 18;
Lay Members of Christ's Faithful People, John Paul II, sect. 33, 41-42;
On the Dignity and Vocation of Women, John Paul II, sect. 7, 29;
On Evangelization in the Modern World, Paul VI, sect. 51-53, 57;
On the Hundredth Anniversary of Rerum Novarum, John Paul II, sect. 25;
On Reconciliation and Penance, John Paul II, sect. 9;
On Social Concern, John Paul II, sect. 47.

Q. 287. In obedience to lawful authority, how do we show our love for our neighbor?

On Social Concern, John Paul II, sect. 29-30.

Q. 288. In what ways do we sin against our neighbor?

Gospel of Life, John Paul II, sect. 57-58, 64, 91;
On Human Work, John Paul II, sect. 2;
On Reconciliation and Penance, John Paul II, sect. 15;
On the Dignity and Vocation of Women, John Paul II, sect. 10, 14;
On the Hundredth Anniversary of Rerum Novarum, John Paul II, sect. 39, 47;
Redeemer of Man, John Paul II, sect. 16-17.



Thought Provokers

Please see Appendix C for the answers.

- Q. 284: Jesus taught that we must love all others as he loved us (cf. John 13:34). What basically does this mean?
- Q. 285: What does the practice of the justice of Christ mean in terms of our relationship with others?
- Q. 286: In our relationship with others, how does charity differ from justice?
- Q. 287: Is it ever proper to disobey or oppose lawful authority?
- Q. 288: Are we bound to like our neighbor? That is, does God expect us to like everybody?