

LESSON TWENTY-NINTH: ON THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD

310. Q. is it enough to belong to God's Church in order to be saved?

A. It is not enough to belong to the Church in order to be saved, but we must also keep the Commandments of God and of the Church.

311. Q. Which are the Commandments that contain the whole law of God?

A. The Commandments which contain the whole law of God are these two:

1. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with thy whole heart, with thy whole soul, with thy whole strength, and with thy whole mind;
2. Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.

312. Q. Why do these two Commandments of the love of God and of our neighbor contain the whole law of God?

A. These two Commandments of the love of God and of our neighbor contain the whole law of God because all the other Commandments are given either to help us to keep these two, or to direct us how to shun what is opposed to them.

313. Q. Which are the Commandments of God?

A. The Commandments of God are these ten.

1. I am the Lord thy God, who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt not have strange gods before Me. Thou shalt not make to thyself a graven thing, nor the likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or in the earth beneath, nor of those things that are in the waters under the earth. Thou shalt not adore them, nor serve them.
2. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.
3. Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day.
4. Honor thy father and thy mother.
5. Thou shalt not kill.
6. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
7. Thou shalt not steal.
8. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
9. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife.
10. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's goods.

314. Q. Who gave the Ten Commandments?

A. God Himself gave the Ten Commandments to Moses on Mount Sinai. and Christ our Lord confirmed them.

LESSON THIRTIETH: ON THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

315. Q. What is the first Commandment?

A. The first Commandment is: I am the Lord thy God: thou shalt not have strange gods before Me.

316. Q. How does the first Commandment help us to keep the great Commandment of the love of God?

A. The first Commandment helps us to keep the great Commandment of the love of God because it commands us to adore God alone.

317. Q. How do we adore God?

A. We adore God by faith, hope, and charity, by prayer and sacrifice.

318. Q. How may the first Commandment be broken?

A. The first Commandment may be broken by giving to a creature the honor which belongs to God alone; by false worship; and by attributing to a creature a perfection which belongs to God alone. 66

319. Q. Do those who make use of spells and charms, or who believe in dreams, in mediums, spiritists, fortune-tellers, and the like, sin against the first Commandment?

A. Those who make use of spells and charms, or who believe in dreams, in mediums, spiritists, fortunetellers and the like, sin against the first Commandment, because they attribute to creatures perfections which belong to God alone.

320. Q. Are sins against faith, hope and charity also sins against the first Commandment?

A. Sins against faith, hope, and charity are also sins against the first Commandment.

321. Q. How does a person sin against faith?

A. A person sins against faith:

1. by not trying to know what God has taught;

2. by refusing to believe all that God has taught;

3. by neglecting to profess his belief in what God has taught.

322. Q. How do we fail to try to know what God has taught?

A. We fail to try to know what God has taught by neglecting to learn the Christian doctrine.

323. Q. Who are they who do not believe all that God has taught?

A. They who do not believe all that God has taught are the heretics and infidels.

324. Q. Who are they who neglect to profess their belief in what-God has taught?

A. They who neglect to profess their belief in what God has taught are all those who fail to acknowledge the true Church in which they really believe. 67

325. Q. Can they who fail to profess their faith in the true Church in which they believe expect to be saved while in that state?

A. They who fail to profess their faith in the true Church in which they believe cannot expect to be saved while in that state, for Christ has said: "Whoever shall deny Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven."

326. Q. Are we obliged to make open profession of our faith?

A. We are obliged to make open profession of our faith as often as God's honor, our neighbor's spiritual good, or our own requires it. "Whosoever," says Christ, "shall confess Me before men, I will also confess him before My Father who is in heaven."

327. Q. Which are the sins against hope?

A. The sins against hope are presumption and despair.

328. Q. What is presumption?

A. Presumption is a rash expectation of salvation without making proper use of the necessary means to obtain it.

329. Q. What is despair?

A. Despair is the loss of hope in God's mercy.

330. Q. How do we sin against the love of God?

A. We sin against the love of God by all sin, but particularly by mortal sin. 68

LESSON THIRTY-FIRST: THE FIRST COMMANDMENT--ON THE HONOR AND INVOCATION OF SAINTS

331. Q. Does the first Commandment forbid the honoring of the saints?

A. The first Commandment does not forbid the honoring of the saints, but rather approves of it; because by honoring the saints, who are the chosen friends of God, we honor God Himself.

332. Q. Does the first Commandment forbid us to pray to the saints?

A. The first Commandment does not forbid us to pray to the saints.

333. Q. What do we mean by praying to the saints?

A. By praying to the saints we mean the asking of their help and prayers.

334. Q. How do we know that the saints hear us?

A. We know that the saints hear us, because they are with God, who makes our prayers known to them.

335. Q. Why do we believe that the saints will help us?

A. We believe that the saints will help us because both they and we are members of the same Church. and they love us as their brethren.

336. Q. How are the saints and we members of the same Church?

A. The saints and we are members of the same Church, because the Church in heaven and the Church on earth are one and the same Church, and all its members are in communion with one another. 69

337. Q. What is the communion of the members of the Church called?

A. The communion of the members of the Church is called the communion of saints.

338. Q. What does the communion of saints mean?

A. The communion of saints means the union which exists between the members of the Church on earth with one another, and with the blessed in heaven and with the suffering souls in purgatory.

339. Q. What benefits are derived from the communion of saints?

A. The following benefits are derived from the communion of saints:--the faithful on earth assist one another by their prayers and good works, and they are aided by the intercession of the saints in heaven, while both the saints in heaven and the faithful on earth help the souls in purgatory.

340. Q. Does the first Commandment forbid us. to honor relics?

A. The first Commandment does not forbid us to honor relics, because relics are the bodies of the saints, or objects directly connected with them or with our Lord.

341. Q. Does the first Commandment forbid the making of images?

A. The first Commandment does forbid the making of images if they are made to be adored as gods, but it does not forbid the making of them to put us in mind of Jesus Christ, His Blessed Mother, and the saints.

342. Q. Is it right to show respect to the pictures and images of Christ and His saints?

A. It is right to show respect to the pictures and images of Christ and His saints, because they are the representations and memorials of them.

343. Q. Is it allowed to pray to the crucifix or to the images and relics of the saints?

A. It is not allowed to pray to the crucifix or images and relics of the saints, for they have no life, nor power to help us, nor sense to hear us. 70

344. Q. Why do we pray before the crucifix and the images and relics of the saints?

A. We pray before the crucifix and images and relics of the saints because they enliven our devotion by exciting pious affections and desires, and by reminding us of Christ and of the saints, that we may imitate their virtues.

LESSON THIRTY-SECOND: FROM THE SECOND TO THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

345. Q. What is the second Commandment?

A. The second Commandment is: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

346. Q. What are we commanded by the second Commandment?

A. We are commanded by the second Commandment to speak with reverence of God and of the saints, and of all holy things, and to keep our lawful oaths and vows.

347. Q. What is an oath?

A. An oath is the calling upon God to witness the truth of what we say.

348. Q. When may we take an oath?

A. We may take an oath when it is ordered by lawful authority or required for God's honor or for our own or our neighbor's good.

349. Q. What is necessary to make an oath lawful?

A. To make an oath lawful it is necessary that what we swear to, be true, and that there be a sufficient cause for taking an oath. 71

350. Q. What is a vow?

A. A vow is a deliberate promise made to God to do something that is pleasing to Him.

351. Q. Is it a sin not to fulfill our vows?

A. Not to fulfill our vows is a sin, mortal or venial, according to the nature of the vow and the intention we had in making it.

352. Q. What is forbidden by the second Commandment?

A. The second Commandment forbids all false, rash, unjust, and unnecessary oaths, blasphemy, cursing, and profane words.

353. Q. What is the third Commandment?

A. The third Commandment is: Remember thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

354. Q. What are we commanded by the third Commandment?

A. By the third Commandment we are commanded to keep holy the Lord's day and the holydays of obligation, on which we are to give our time to the service and worship of God.

355. Q. How are we to worship God on Sundays and holydays of obligation?

A. We are to worship God on Sundays and holydays of obligation by hearing Mass, by prayer, and by other good works.

356. Q. Are the Sabbath day and the Sunday the same?

A. The Sabbath day and the Sunday are not the same. The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, and is the day which was kept holy in the Old Law; the Sunday is the first day of the week, and is the day which is kept holy in the New Law. 72

357. Q. Why does the Church command us to keep the Sunday holy instead of the Sabbath?

A. The Church commands us to keep the Sunday holy instead of the Sabbath because on Sunday Christ rose from the dead, and on Sunday He sent the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles.

358. Q. What is forbidden by the third Commandment?

A. The third Commandment forbids all unnecessary servile work and whatever else may hinder the due observance of the Lord's day.

359. Q. What are servile works?

A. Servile works are those which require labor rather of body than of mind.

360. Q. Are servile works on Sunday ever lawful?

A. Servile works are lawful on Sunday when the honor of God, the good of our neighbor, or necessity requires them.