

DIPPING INTO THE CATECHISM

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From the Compendium to the Catechism paragraphs: 429 – 436

THE CHURCH MOTHER AND TEACHER



How does the Church nourish the moral life of a Christian?

The Church is the community in which the Christian receives the Word of God, the teachings of the “Law of Christ” (Galatians 6:2), and the grace of the Sacraments. Christians are united to the Eucharistic

sacrifice of Christ in such a way that their moral life is an act of spiritual worship; and they learn the example of holiness from the Virgin Mary and the lives of the Saints.

Why does the Magisterium of the Church act in the field of morality?

It is the duty of the Magisterium of the Church (the teaching aspect) to preach the faith that is to be believed and put into practice in life. This duty extends even to the specific precepts of the natural law because their observance is necessary for salvation.

What purpose do the precepts of the Church have?

The five precepts of the Church are meant to guarantee for the faithful the indispensable minimum in the spirit of prayer, the sacramental life, moral commitment and growth in love of God and neighbour.

What are the precepts of the Church?

They are:

- 1) To attend Mass on Sundays and other holy days of obligation and to refrain from work and activities which could impede the sanctification of those days;
- 2) To confess one’s sins, receiving the sacrament of Reconciliation at *least* once each year*
- 3) To receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season*
- 4) To abstain from eating meat and to observe the days of fasting established by the Church;
- 5) To help to provide for the material needs of the Church, each according to his or her ability.

*the Church recommends frequent reception of these Sacraments.

Why is the Christian moral life indispensable for the proclamation of the Gospel?

Because their lives are conformed to the Lord Jesus, Christians draw others to the faith in the true God, build up the Church, inform the world with the spirit of the Gospel, and hasten the coming of the Kingdom of God. Not living an upright moral life creates impediments to oneself and others in all these things.

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

“Teacher, what good must I do to have eternal life?” (Matthew 19:16).

To the young man who asked this question, Jesus answered, “If you would enter into life, keep the commandments”, and then he added, “Come, follow Me” (Matthew 19:16-21). To follow Jesus involves keeping the commandments. The law has not been abolished but man is invited to rediscover it in the Person of the divine Master who realised it perfectly in Himself, revealed its full meaning and attested to its permanent validity.

How did Jesus interpret the Law?

Jesus interpreted the Law in the light of the twofold yet single commandment of love, the fullness of the Law: “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the greatest and first commandment. And the second is like it: you shall love your neighbour as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 22:37-40).

What does “Decalogue” mean?

Decalogue means “ten words” (Exodus 34:28). These words sum up the Law given by God to the people of Israel in the context of the Covenant mediated by Moses. This Decalogue, in presenting the commandments of the love of God (the first three) and of one’s neighbour (the other seven), traces for the chosen people and for every person in particular the path to a life freed from the slavery of sin.



It is essential that every Catholic has access to good Catechesis to be able to deepen their faith. The Diocese of Plymouth recommends the many Catechetical Workshops from 'Franciscan at Home,' for more information on access to these and online or real group sessions contact deborah.vankroonenburg@prcdtr.org.uk