

PART THREE

LIFE IN CHRIST

1691 “Christian, recognize your dignity and, now that you share in God’s own nature, do not return to your former base condition by sinning. Remember who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Never forget that you have been rescued 790 from the power of darkness and brought into the light of the Kingdom of God.”¹

1692 The Symbol of the faith confesses the greatness of God’s gifts to man in his work of creation, and even more in redemption and sanctification. What faith confesses, the sacraments communicate: by the sacraments of rebirth, Christians have become “children of God,”² “partakers of the divine nature.”³ Coming to see in the faith their new dignity, Christians are called to lead henceforth a life “worthy of the gospel of Christ.”⁴ They are made capable of doing so by the grace of Christ and the gifts of his Spirit, which they receive through the sacraments and through prayer.

1693 Christ Jesus always did what was pleasing to the *Father*,⁵ and always lived in perfect communion with him. Likewise Christ’s disciples are invited to live in the sight of the Father “who sees in secret,”⁶ in order to become “perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect.”⁷

1694 Incorporated into *Christ* by Baptism, Christians are “dead 1267 to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus” and so participate in the life of the Risen Lord.⁸ Following Christ and united with him,⁹ Chris-

1 St. Leo the Great, *Sermo 21 in nat. Dom.*, 3: PL 54, 192C.

2 *Jn* 1:12; 1 *Jn* 3:1.

3 2 *Pet* 1:4.

4 *Phil* 1:27.

5 Cf. *Jn* 8:29.

6 *Mt* 6:6.

7 *Mt* 5:48.

8 *Rom* 6:11 and cf. 6:5; cf. *Col* 2:12.

9 Cf. *Jn* 15:5.

tians can strive to be “imitators of God as beloved children, and walk in love”¹⁰ by conforming their thoughts, words and actions to the “mind . . . which is yours in Christ Jesus,”¹¹ and by following his example.¹²

1695 “Justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God,”¹³ “sanctified . . . [and] called to be saints,”¹⁴ Christians have become the temple of the *Holy Spirit*.¹⁵ This “Spirit of the Son” teaches them to pray to the Father¹⁶ and, having become their life, prompts them to act so as to bear “the fruit of the Spirit”¹⁷ by charity in action. Healing the wounds of sin, the Holy Spirit renews us interiorly through a spiritual transformation.¹⁸ He enlightens and strengthens us to live as “children of light” through “all that is good and right and true.”¹⁹

1696 The way of Christ “leads to life”; a contrary way “leads to destruction.”²⁰ The Gospel parable of the *two ways* remains ever
1970 present in the catechesis of the Church; it shows the importance of moral decisions for our salvation: “There are two ways, the one of life, the other of death; but between the two, there is a great difference.”²¹

1697 *Catechesis* has to reveal in all clarity the joy and the demands of the way of Christ.²² Catechesis for the “newness of life”²³ in him should be:

737 ff. — *a catechesis of the Holy Spirit*, the interior Master of life according to Christ, a gentle guest and friend who inspires, guides, corrects, and strengthens this life;

1988 ff. — *a catechesis of grace*, for it is by grace that we are saved and again it is by grace that our works can bear fruit for eternal life;

10 Eph 5:1–2.

11 Phil 2:5.

12 Cf. Jn 13:12–16.

13 1 Cor 6:11.

14 1 Cor 1:2.

15 Cf. 1 Cor 6:19.

16 Cf. Gal 4:6.

17 Gal 5:22, 25.

18 Cf. Eph 4:23.

19 Eph 5:8, 9.

20 Mt 7:13; cf. Deut 30:15–20.

21 Didache 1, 1: SCh 248, 140.

22 Cf. John Paul II, CT 29.

23 Rom 6:4.

— *a catechesis of the beatitudes*, for the way of Christ is summed up in the beatitudes, the only path that leads to the eternal beatitude for which the human heart longs; 1716 ff.

— *a catechesis of sin and forgiveness*, for unless man acknowledges that he is a sinner he cannot know the truth about himself, which is a condition for acting justly; and without the offer of forgiveness he would not be able to bear this truth; 1846 ff.

— *a catechesis of the human virtues* which causes one to grasp the beauty and attraction of right dispositions towards goodness; 1803 ff.

— *a catechesis of the Christian virtues* of faith, hope, and charity, generously inspired by the example of the saints; 1812 ff.

— *a catechesis of the twofold commandment of charity* set forth in the Decalogue; 2067 ff.

— *an ecclesial catechesis*, for it is through the manifold exchanges of “spiritual goods” in the “communion of saints” that Christian life can grow, develop, and be communicated. 946 ff.

1698 The first and last point of reference of this catechesis will always be Jesus Christ himself, who is “the way, and the truth, and the life.”²⁴ It is by looking to him in faith that Christ’s faithful can hope that he himself fulfills his promises in them, and that, by loving him with the same love with which he has loved them, they may perform works in keeping with their dignity: 426

I ask you to consider that our Lord Jesus Christ is your true head, and that you are one of his members. He belongs to you as the head belongs to its members; all that is his is yours: his spirit, his heart, his body and soul, and all his faculties. You must make use of all these as of your own, to serve, praise, love, and glorify God. You belong to him, as members belong to their head. And so he longs for you to use all that is in you, as if it were his own, for the service and glory of the Father.²⁵

For to me, to live is Christ.²⁶

²⁴ Jn 14:6.

²⁵ St. John Eudes, *Tract. de admirabili corde Jesu*, 1, 5.

²⁶ Phil 1:21.

SECTION ONE

MAN'S VOCATION

LIFE IN THE SPIRIT

1699 Life in the Holy Spirit fulfills the vocation of man (*chapter one*). This life is made up of divine charity and human solidarity (*chapter two*). It is graciously offered as salvation (*chapter three*).

CHAPTER ONE

THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

356 **1700** The dignity of the human person is rooted in his creation in the image and likeness of God (*article 1*); it is fulfilled in his vocation to divine beatitude (*article 2*). It is essential to a human being freely to direct himself to this fulfillment (*article 3*). By his deliberate actions (*article 4*), the human person does, or does not, conform to the good promised by God and attested by moral conscience (*article 5*). Human beings make their own contribution to their interior growth; they make their whole sentient and spiritual lives into means of this growth (*article 6*). With the help of grace they grow in virtue (*article 7*), avoid sin, and if they sin they entrust
1439 themselves as did the prodigal son¹ to the mercy of our Father in heaven (*article 8*). In this way they attain to the perfection of charity.

ARTICLE 1

MAN: THE IMAGE OF GOD

359 **1701** "Christ, . . . in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love, makes man fully manifest to himself and brings to light his exalted vocation."² It is in Christ, "the image of the invisible God,"³ that man has been created "in the image and likeness" of the Creator. It is in Christ, Redeemer and Savior, that the divine image, disfigured in man by the first sin, has been restored to its original beauty and ennobled by the grace of God.⁴

1 Lk 15:11-32.

2 GS 22.

3 Col 1:15; cf. 2 Cor 4:4.

4 Cf. GS 22.

1702 The divine image is present in every man. It shines forth 1878
in the communion of persons, in the likeness of the unity of the
divine persons among themselves (cf. *chapter two*).

1703 Endowed with “a spiritual and immortal” soul,⁵ the hu- 363
man person is “the only creature on earth that God has willed for
its own sake.”⁶ From his conception, he is destined for eternal 2258
beatitude.

1704 The human person participates in the light and power of
the divine Spirit. By his reason, he is capable of understanding the
order of things established by the Creator. By free will, he is capable 339
of directing himself toward his true good. He finds his perfection
“in seeking and loving what is true and good.”⁷ 30

1705 By virtue of his soul and his spiritual powers of intellect
and will, man is endowed with freedom, an “outstanding manifes- 1730
tation of the divine image.”⁸

1706 By his reason, man recognizes the voice of God which
urges him “to do what is good and avoid what is evil.”⁹ Everyone
is obliged to follow this law, which makes itself heard in conscience
and is fulfilled in the love of God and of neighbor. Living a moral 1776
life bears witness to the dignity of the person.

1707 “Man, enticed by the Evil One, abused his freedom at the
very beginning of history.”¹⁰ He succumbed to temptation and did
what was evil. He still desires the good, but his nature bears the 397
wound of original sin. He is now inclined to evil and subject to
error:

Man is divided in himself. As a result, the whole life of men,
both individual and social, shows itself to be a struggle, and
a dramatic one, between good and evil, between light and
darkness.¹¹

1708 By his Passion, Christ delivered us from Satan and from 617
sin. He merited for us the new life in the Holy Spirit. His grace
restores what sin had damaged in us.

5 GS 14 § 2.

6 GS 24 § 3.

7 GS 15 § 2.

8 GS 17.

9 GS 16.

10 GS 13 § 1.

11 GS 13 § 2.

- 1265 **1709** He who believes in Christ becomes a son of God. This filial adoption transforms him by giving him the ability to follow the example of Christ. It makes him capable of acting rightly and doing good. In union with his Savior, the disciple attains the perfection of charity which is holiness. Having matured in grace, the moral
- 1050 life blossoms into eternal life in the glory of heaven.

IN BRIEF

- 1710** “Christ . . . makes man fully manifest to man himself and brings to light his exalted vocation” (GS 22 § 1).
- 1711** Endowed with a spiritual soul, with intellect and with free will, the human person is from his very conception ordered to God and destined for eternal beatitude. He pursues his perfection in “seeking and loving what is true and good” (GS 15 § 2).
- 1712** In man, true freedom is an “outstanding manifestation of the divine image” (GS 17).
- 1713** Man is obliged to follow the moral law, which urges him “to do what is good and avoid what is evil” (cf. GS 16). This law makes itself heard in his conscience.
- 1714** Man, having been wounded in his nature by original sin, is subject to error and inclined to evil in exercising his freedom.
- 1715** He who believes in Christ has new life in the Holy Spirit. The moral life, increased and brought to maturity in grace, is to reach its fulfillment in the glory of heaven.
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ARTICLE 2

OUR VOCATION TO BEATITUDE

I. THE BEATITUDES

1716 The Beatitudes are at the heart of Jesus’ preaching. They take up the promises made to the chosen people since Abraham. The Beatitudes fulfill the promises by ordering them no longer merely to the possession of a territory, but to the Kingdom of heaven:

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. 2546
 Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.
 Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.
 Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness,
 for they shall be satisfied.
 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.
 Blessed are you when men revile you and persecute you
 and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on my account.
 Rejoice and be glad,
 for your reward is great in heaven.¹²

1717 The Beatitudes depict the countenance of Jesus Christ and 459
 portray his charity. They express the vocation of the faithful asso-
 ciated with the glory of his Passion and Resurrection; they shed
 light on the actions and attitudes characteristic of the Christian life;
 they are the paradoxical promises that sustain hope in the midst of
 tribulations; they proclaim the blessings and rewards already se- 1820
 cured, however dimly, for Christ's disciples; they have begun in
 the lives of the Virgin Mary and all the saints.

II. THE DESIRE FOR HAPPINESS

1718 The Beatitudes respond to the natural desire for happiness.
 This desire is of divine origin: God has placed it in the human heart 27, 1024
 in order to draw man to the One who alone can fulfill it:

We all want to live happily; in the whole human race there
 is no one who does not assent to this proposition, even before
 it is fully articulated.¹³

How is it, then, that I seek you, Lord? Since in seeking you, 2541
 my God, I seek a happy life, let me seek you so that my soul
 may live, for my body draws life from my soul and my soul
 draws life from you.¹⁴

God alone satisfies.¹⁵

¹² Mt 5:3-12.

¹³ St. Augustine, *De moribus eccl.* 1, 3, 4: PL 32, 1312.

¹⁴ St. Augustine, *Conf.* 10, 20: PL 32, 791.

¹⁵ St. Thomas Aquinas, *Expos. in symb. apost.* I.

- 1950 **1719** The Beatitudes reveal the goal of human existence, the ultimate end of human acts: God calls us to his own beatitude. This vocation is addressed to each individual personally, but also to the Church as a whole, the new people made up of those who have accepted the promise and live from it in faith.

III. CHRISTIAN BEATITUDE

- 1027 **1720** The New Testament uses several expressions to characterize the beatitude to which God calls man:

- the coming of the Kingdom of God;¹⁶
- the vision of God: “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God”;¹⁷
- entering into the joy of the Lord;¹⁸
- entering into God’s rest:¹⁹

There we shall rest and see, we shall see and love, we shall love and praise. Behold what will be at the end without end. For what other end do we have, if not to reach the kingdom which has no end?²⁰

- 1721** God put us in the world to know, to love, and to serve him, and so to come to paradise. Beatitude makes us “partakers of the divine nature” and of eternal life.²¹ With beatitude, man enters into
260 the glory of Christ²² and into the joy of the Trinitarian life.

- 1722** Such beatitude surpasses the understanding and powers of man. It comes from an entirely free gift of God: whence it is called
1028 supernatural, as is the grace that disposes man to enter into the divine joy.

- “Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.” It is true, because of the greatness and inexpressible glory of God, that “man shall not see me and live,” for the Father cannot be grasped. But because of God’s love and goodness toward us, and because he can do all things, he goes so far as to grant those who love him the privilege of seeing him. . . . For “what is impossible for men is possible for God.”²³
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¹⁶ Cf. *Mt* 4:17.

¹⁷ *Mt* 5:8; cf. *1 Jn* 2; *1 Cor* 13:12.

¹⁸ *Mt* 25:21-23.

¹⁹ Cf. *Heb* 4:7-11.

²⁰ St. Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 22, 30, 5: PL 41, 804.

²¹ *2 Pet* 1:4; cf. *Jn* 17:3.

²² Cf. *Rom* 8:18.

²³ St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 4, 20, 5: PG 7/1, 1034-1035.

1723 The beatitude we are promised confronts us with decisive moral choices. It invites us to purify our hearts of bad instincts and to seek the love of God above all else. It teaches us that true happiness is not found in riches or well-being, in human fame or power, or in any human achievement—however beneficial it may be—such as science, technology, and art, or indeed in any creature, but in God alone, the source of every good and of all love: 2519 227

All bow down before wealth. Wealth is that to which the multitude of men pay an instinctive homage. They measure happiness by wealth; and by wealth they measure respectability. . . . It is a homage resulting from a profound faith . . . that with wealth he may do all things. Wealth is one idol of the day and notoriety is a second. . . . Notoriety, or the making of a noise in the world—it may be called “newspaper fame”—has come to be considered a great good in itself, and a ground of veneration.²⁴

1724 The Decalogue, the Sermon on the Mount, and the apostolic catechesis describe for us the paths that lead to the Kingdom of heaven. Sustained by the grace of the Holy Spirit, we tread them, step by step, by everyday acts. By the working of the Word of Christ, we slowly bear fruit in the Church to the glory of God.²⁵

IN BRIEF

- 1725** The Beatitudes take up and fulfill God’s promises from Abraham by ordering them to the Kingdom of heaven. They respond to the desire for happiness that God has placed in the human heart.
- 1726** The Beatitudes teach us the final end to which God calls us: the Kingdom, the vision of God, participation in the divine nature, eternal life, filiation, rest in God.
- 1727** The beatitude of eternal life is a gratuitous gift of God. It is supernatural, as is the grace that leads us there.
- 1728** The Beatitudes confront us with decisive choices concerning earthly goods; they purify our hearts in order to teach us to love God above all things.

24 John Henry Cardinal Newman, “Saintliness the Standard of Christian Principle,” in *Discourses to Mixed Congregations* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1906) V, 89-90.

25 Cf. the parable of the sower: *Mt* 13:3-23.

- 1729 The beatitude of heaven sets the standards for discernment in the use of earthly goods in keeping with the law of God.

ARTICLE 3

MAN'S FREEDOM

- 1730 God created man a rational being, conferring on him the dignity of a person who can initiate and control his own actions. "God willed that man should be 'left in the hand of his own counsel,' so that he might of his own accord seek his Creator and
30 freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him."²⁶

Man is rational and therefore like God; he is created with free will and is master over his acts.²⁷

I. FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

- 1731 Freedom is the power, rooted in reason and will, to act or not to act, to do this or that, and so to perform deliberate actions on one's own responsibility. By free will one shapes one's own life. Human freedom is a force for growth and maturity in truth and
1721 goodness; it attains its perfection when directed toward God, our beatitude.

- 1732 As long as freedom has not bound itself definitively to its
396 ultimate good which is God, there is the possibility of *choosing*
1849 *between good and evil*, and thus of growing in perfection or of failing and sinning. This freedom characterizes properly human acts. It is
2006 the basis of praise or blame, merit or reproach.

- 1803 1733 The more one does what is good, the freer one becomes. There is no true freedom except in the service of what is good and just. The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of freedom and leads to "the slavery of sin."²⁸

- 1036 1734 Freedom makes man *responsible* for his acts to the extent
1804 that they are voluntary. Progress in virtue, knowledge of the good, and ascesis enhance the mastery of the will over its acts.

26 GS 17; *Sir* 15:14.

27 St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 4, 4, 3: PG 7/1, 983.

28 Cf. *Rom* 6:17.

1735 *Imputability* and responsibility for an action can be diminished or even nullified by ignorance, inadvertence, duress, fear, habit, inordinate attachments, and other psychological or social factors. 597

1736 Every act directly willed is imputable to its author: 2568

Thus the Lord asked Eve after the sin in the garden: "What is this that you have done?"²⁹ He asked Cain the same question.³⁰ The prophet Nathan questioned David in the same way after he committed adultery with the wife of Uriah and had him murdered.³¹

An action can be indirectly voluntary when it results from negligence regarding something one should have known or done: for example, an accident arising from ignorance of traffic laws.

1737 An effect can be tolerated without being willed by its agent; for instance, a mother's exhaustion from tending her sick child. A bad effect is not imputable if it was not willed either as an end or as a means of an action, e.g., a death a person incurs in aiding someone in danger. For a bad effect to be imputable it must be foreseeable and the agent must have the possibility of avoiding it, as in the case of manslaughter caused by a drunken driver. 2263

1738 Freedom is exercised in relationships between human beings. Every human person, created in the image of God, has the natural right to be recognized as a free and responsible being. All owe to each other this duty of respect. The *right to the exercise of freedom*, especially in moral and religious matters, is an inalienable requirement of the dignity of the human person. This right must be recognized and protected by civil authority within the limits of the common good and public order.³² 2106 2109

II. HUMAN FREEDOM IN THE ECONOMY OF SALVATION

1739 *Freedom and sin.* Man's freedom is limited and fallible. In fact, man failed. He freely sinned. By refusing God's plan of love, he deceived himself and became a slave to sin. This first alienation engendered a multitude of others. From its outset, human history attests the wretchedness and oppression born of the human heart in consequence of the abuse of freedom. 387 401

29 Gen 3:13.

30 Cf. Gen 4:10.

31 Cf. 2 Sam 12:7-15.

32 Cf. DH 2 § 7.

2108 **1740** *Threats to freedom.* The exercise of freedom does not imply a right to say or do everything. It is false to maintain that man, "the subject of this freedom," is "an individual who is fully self-sufficient and whose finality is the satisfaction of his own interests in the enjoyment of earthly goods."³³ Moreover, the economic, social, political, and cultural conditions that are needed for a just exercise of freedom are too often disregarded or violated. Such situations
1887 of blindness and injustice injure the moral life and involve the strong as well as the weak in the temptation to sin against charity. By deviating from the moral law man violates his own freedom, becomes imprisoned within himself, disrupts neighborly fellowship, and rebels against divine truth.

1741 *Liberation and salvation.* By his glorious Cross Christ has won salvation for all men. He redeemed them from the sin that held them in bondage. "For freedom Christ has set us free."³⁴ In him we
782 have communion with the "truth that makes us free."³⁵ The Holy Spirit has been given to us and, as the Apostle teaches, "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom."³⁶ Already we glory in the "liberty of the children of God."³⁷

1742 *Freedom and grace.* The grace of Christ is not in the slightest way a rival of our freedom when this freedom accords with the
2002 sense of the true and the good that God has put in the human heart. On the contrary, as Christian experience attests especially in prayer, the more docile we are to the promptings of grace, the more we grow in inner freedom and confidence during trials, such as
1784 those we face in the pressures and constraints of the outer world. By the working of grace the Holy Spirit educates us in spiritual freedom in order to make us free collaborators in his work in the Church and in the world:

Almighty and merciful God,
graciously keep from us all adversity,
so that, unhindered in mind and body alike,
we may pursue in freedom of heart
the things that are yours.³⁸

33 CDF, instruction, *Libertatis conscientia* 13.

34 *Gal* 5:1.

35 Cf. *Jn* 8:32.

36 *2 Cor* 17.

37 *Rom* 8:21.

38 *Roman Missal*, 32nd Sunday, Collect: *Omnipotens et misericors Deus, universa nobis adversantia propitiatus exclude, ut, mente et corpore pariter expediti, quæ tua sunt liberis mentibus exsequamur.*

IN BRIEF

- 1743 “God willed that man should be left in the hand of his own counsel (cf. *Sir* 15:14), so that he might of his own accord seek his creator and freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him” (GS 17 § 1).
- 1744 Freedom is the power to act or not to act, and so to perform deliberate acts of one’s own. Freedom attains perfection in its acts when directed toward God, the sovereign Good.
- 1745 Freedom characterizes properly human acts. It makes the human being responsible for acts of which he is the voluntary agent. His deliberate acts properly belong to him.
- 1746 The imputability or responsibility for an action can be diminished or nullified by ignorance, duress, fear, and other psychological or social factors.
- 1747 The right to the exercise of freedom, especially in religious and moral matters, is an inalienable requirement of the dignity of man. But the exercise of freedom does not entail the putative right to say or do anything.
- 1748 “For freedom Christ has set us free” (*Gal* 5:1).
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ARTICLE 4

THE MORALITY OF HUMAN ACTS

1749 Freedom makes man a moral subject. When he acts deliberately, man is, so to speak, the *father of his acts*. Human acts, that is, acts that are freely chosen in consequence of a judgment of conscience, can be morally evaluated. They are either good or evil. 1732

I. THE SOURCES OF MORALITY

1750 The morality of human acts depends on:

- the object chosen;
- the end in view or the intention;
- the circumstances of the action.

The object, the intention, and the circumstances make up the “sources,” or constitutive elements, of the morality of human acts.

1751 The *object* chosen is a good toward which the will deliberately directs itself. It is the matter of a human act. The object chosen morally specifies the act of the will, insofar as reason recognizes and judges it to be or not to be in conformity with the true good. Objective norms of morality express the rational order of good and evil, attested to by conscience.

1752 In contrast to the object, the *intention* resides in the acting subject. Because it lies at the voluntary source of an action and determines it by its end, intention is an element essential to the moral evaluation of an action. The end is the first goal of the intention and indicates the purpose pursued in the action. The intention is a movement of the will toward the end: it is concerned with the goal of the activity. It aims at the good anticipated from the action undertaken. Intention is not limited to directing individual actions, but can guide several actions toward one and the same purpose; it can orient one’s whole life toward its ultimate end. For example, a service done with the end of helping one’s neighbor can at the same time be inspired by the love of God as the ultimate end of all our actions. One and the same action can also be inspired by several intentions, such as performing a service in order to obtain a favor or to boast about it.

1753 A good intention (for example, that of helping one’s neighbor) does not make behavior that is intrinsically disordered, such as lying and calumny, good or just. The end does not justify the means. Thus the condemnation of an innocent person cannot be justified as a legitimate means of saving the nation. On the other hand, an added bad intention (such as vainglory) makes an act evil that, in and of itself, can be good (such as almsgiving).³⁹

1754 The *circumstances*, including the consequences, are secondary elements of a moral act. They contribute to increasing or diminishing the moral goodness or evil of human acts (for example, the amount of a theft). They can also diminish or increase the agent’s responsibility (such as acting out of a fear of death). Circumstances of themselves cannot change the moral quality of acts themselves; they can make neither good nor right an action that is in itself evil.

39 Cf. Mt 6:2-4.

II. GOOD ACTS AND EVIL ACTS

1755 A *morally good* act requires the goodness of the object, of the end, and of the circumstances together. An evil end corrupts the action, even if the object is good in itself (such as praying and fasting “in order to be seen by men”).

The *object of the choice* can by itself vitiate an act in its entirety. There are some concrete acts—such as fornication—that it is always wrong to choose, because choosing them entails a disorder of the will, that is, a moral evil.

1756 It is therefore an error to judge the morality of human acts by considering only the intention that inspires them or the circumstances (environment, social pressure, duress or emergency, etc.) which supply their context. There are acts which, in and of themselves, independently of circumstances and intentions, are always gravely illicit by reason of their object; such as blasphemy and perjury, murder and adultery. One may not do evil so that good may result from it. 1789

IN BRIEF

- 1757** The object, the intention, and the circumstances make up the three “sources” of the morality of human acts.
 - 1758** The object chosen morally specifies the act of willing accordingly as reason recognizes and judges it good or evil.
 - 1759** “An evil action cannot be justified by reference to a good intention” (cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Dec. praec.* 6). The end does not justify the means.
 - 1760** A morally good act requires the goodness of its object, of its end, and of its circumstances together.
 - 1761** There are concrete acts that it is always wrong to choose, because their choice entails a disorder of the will, i.e., a moral evil. One may not do evil so that good may result from it.
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ARTICLE 5

THE MORALITY OF THE PASSIONS

762 The human person is ordered to beatitude by his deliberate acts: the passions or feelings he experiences can dispose him to it and contribute to it.

I. PASSIONS

1763 The term “passions” belongs to the Christian patrimony. Feelings or passions are emotions or movements of the sensitive appetite that incline us to act or not to act in regard to something felt or imagined to be good or evil.

1764 The passions are natural components of the human psyche; they form the passageway and ensure the connection between the life of the senses and the life of the mind. Our Lord called man’s
368 heart the source from which the passions spring.⁴⁰

1765 There are many passions. The most fundamental passion is love, aroused by the attraction of the good. Love causes a desire for the absent good and the hope of obtaining it; this movement finds completion in the pleasure and joy of the good possessed. The apprehension of evil causes hatred, aversion, and fear of the impending evil; this movement ends in sadness at some present evil, or in the anger that resists it.

1766 “To love is to will the good of another.”⁴¹ All other affections have their source in this first movement of the human heart
1704 toward the good. Only the good can be loved.⁴² Passions “are evil if love is evil and good if it is good.”⁴³

II. PASSIONS AND MORAL LIFE

1767 In themselves passions are neither good nor evil. They are morally qualified only to the extent that they effectively engage
1860 reason and will. Passions are said to be voluntary, “either because they are commanded by the will or because the will does not place

40 Cf. *Mk* 7:21.

41 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I-II, 26, 4, *corp. art.*

42 Cf. St. Augustine, *De Trin.*, 8, 3, 4: PL 42, 949-950.

43 St. Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 14, 7, 2: PL 41, 410.

obstacles in their way."⁴⁴ It belongs to the perfection of the moral or human good that the passions be governed by reason.⁴⁵

1768 Strong feelings are not decisive for the morality or the holiness of persons; they are simply the inexhaustible reservoir of images and affections in which the moral life is expressed. Passions are morally good when they contribute to a good action, evil in the opposite case. The upright will orders the movements of the senses it appropriates to the good and to beatitude; an evil will succumbs to disordered passions and exacerbates them. Emotions and feelings can be taken up into the *virtues* or perverted by the *vices*. 1803, 1865

1769 In the Christian life, the Holy Spirit himself accomplishes his work by mobilizing the whole being, with all its sorrows, fears and sadness, as is visible in the Lord's agony and passion. In Christ human feelings are able to reach their consummation in charity and divine beatitude.

1770 Moral perfection consists in man's being moved to the good not by his will alone, but also by his sensitive appetite, as in the words of the psalm: "My heart and flesh sing for joy to the living God."⁴⁶ 30

IN BRIEF

- 1771** The term "passions" refers to the affections or the feelings. By his emotions man intuitively feels the good and suspects evil.
- 1772** The principal passions are love and hatred, desire and fear, joy, sadness, and anger.
- 1773** In the passions, as movements of the sensitive appetite, there is neither moral good nor evil. But insofar as they engage reason and will, there is moral good or evil in them.
- 1774** Emotions and feelings can be taken up in the virtues or perverted by the vices.
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44 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I-II, 24, 1 *corp. art.*

45 Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I-II, 24, 3.

46 *Ps* 84:2.

1775 The perfection of the moral good consists in man's being moved to the good not only by his will but also by his "heart."

ARTICLE 6

MORAL CONSCIENCE

1776 "Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, 1954 ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in his heart at the right moment. . . . For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God. . . . His conscience is man's most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths."⁴⁷

I. THE JUDGMENT OF CONSCIENCE

1777 Moral conscience,⁴⁸ present at the heart of the person, enjoins him at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil. It also judges particular choices, approving those that are good and denouncing those that are evil.⁴⁹ It bears witness to the authority of truth in reference to the supreme Good to which the human 1766 person is drawn, and it welcomes the commandments. When he 2071 listens to his conscience, the prudent man can hear God speaking.

1778 Conscience is a judgment of reason whereby the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act that he is 1749 going to perform, is in the process of performing, or has already completed. In all he says and does, man is obliged to follow faithfully what he knows to be just and right. It is by the judgment of his conscience that man perceives and recognizes the prescriptions of the divine law:

Conscience is a law of the mind; yet [Christians] would not grant that it is nothing more; I mean that it was not a dictate, nor conveyed the notion of responsibility, of duty, of a threat and a promise. . . . [Conscience] is a messenger of him, who, both in nature and in grace, speaks to us behind a veil, and

47 GS 16.

48 Cf. *Rom* 2:14-16.

49 Cf. *Rom* 1:32.

teaches and rules us by his representatives. Conscience is the aboriginal Vicar of Christ.⁵⁰

1779 It is important for every person to be sufficiently present to himself in order to hear and follow the voice of his conscience. This requirement of *interiority* is all the more necessary as life often 1886 distracts us from any reflection, self-examination or introspection:

Return to your conscience, question it. . . . Turn inward, brethren, and in everything you do, see God as your witness.⁵¹

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. 1806

1781 Conscience enables one to assume *responsibility* for the acts 1731 performed. If man commits evil, the just judgment of conscience can remain within him as the witness to the universal truth of the good, at the same time as the evil of his particular choice. The verdict of the judgment of conscience remains a pledge of hope and mercy. In attesting to the fault committed, it calls to mind the forgiveness that must be asked, the good that must still be practiced, and the virtue that must be constantly cultivated with the grace of God:

We shall . . . reassure our hearts before him whenever our hearts condemn us; for God is greater than our hearts, and he knows everything.⁵²

1782 Man has the right to act in conscience and in freedom so as personally to make moral decisions. "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."⁵³ 2106

50 John Henry Cardinal Newman, "Letter to the Duke of Norfolk," V, in *Certain Difficulties felt by Anglicans in Catholic Teaching* II (London: Longmans Green, 1885), 248.

51 St. Augustine, *In ep Jo.* 8, 9: PL 35, 2041.

52 1 Jn 3:19-20.

53 DH 3 § 2.

II. THE FORMATION OF CONSCIENCE

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.

1784 The education of the conscience is a lifelong task. From the earliest years, it awakens the child to the knowledge and practice of the interior law recognized by conscience. Prudent education teaches virtue; it prevents or cures fear, selfishness and pride, resentment arising from guilt, and feelings of complacency, born of human weakness and faults. The education of the conscience guarantees freedom and engenders peace of heart.

1785 In the formation of conscience the Word of God is the light for our path;⁵⁴ we must assimilate it in faith and prayer and put it into practice. We must also examine our conscience before the Lord's Cross. We are assisted by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, aided by the witness or advice of others and guided by the authoritative teaching of the Church.⁵⁵

III. TO CHOOSE IN ACCORD WITH CONSCIENCE

1786 Faced with a moral choice, conscience can make either a right judgment in accordance with reason and the divine law or, on the contrary, an erroneous judgment that departs from them.

1787 Man is sometimes confronted by situations that make moral judgments less assured and decision difficult. But he must always seriously seek what is right and good and discern the will of God expressed in divine law.

1788 To this purpose, man strives to interpret the data of experience and the signs of the times assisted by the virtue of prudence, by the advice of competent people, and by the help of the Holy Spirit and his gifts.

⁵⁴ Cf. *Ps* 119:105.

⁵⁵ Cf. *DH* 14.

1789 Some rules apply in every case:

— One may never do evil so that good may result from it; 1756

— the Golden Rule: “Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them.”⁵⁶ 1970

— charity always proceeds by way of respect for one’s neighbor and his conscience: “Thus sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience . . . you sin against Christ.”⁵⁷ Therefore “it is right not to . . . do anything that makes your brother stumble.”⁵⁸ 1827 1971

IV. ERRONEOUS JUDGMENT

1790 A human being must always obey the certain judgment of his conscience. If he were deliberately to act against it, he would condemn himself. Yet it can happen that moral conscience remains in ignorance and makes erroneous judgments about acts to be performed or already committed.

1791 This ignorance can often be imputed to personal responsibility. This is the case when a man “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.”⁵⁹ In such cases, the person is culpable for the evil he commits. 1704

1792 Ignorance of Christ and his Gospel, bad example given by others, enslavement to one’s passions, assertion of a mistaken notion of autonomy of conscience, rejection of the Church’s authority and her teaching, lack of conversion and of charity: these can be at the source of errors of judgment in moral conduct. 133

1793 If—on the contrary—the ignorance is invincible, or the moral subject is not responsible for his erroneous judgment, the evil committed by the person cannot be imputed to him. It remains no less an evil, a privation, a disorder. One must therefore work to correct the errors of moral conscience. 1860

1794 A good and pure conscience is enlightened by true faith, for charity proceeds at the same time “from a pure heart and a good conscience and sincere faith.”⁶⁰

56 Mt 7:12; cf. Lk 6:31; Tob 4:15.

57 1 Cor 8:12.

58 Rom 14:21.

59 GS 16.

60 1 Tim 5; cf. 3:9; 2 Tim 3; 1 Pet 3:21; Acts 24:16.

- 1751 The more a correct conscience prevails, the more do persons and groups turn aside from blind choice and try to be guided by objective standards of moral conduct.⁶¹

IN BRIEF

- 1795 "Conscience is man's most secret core, and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths" (GS 16).
- 1796 Conscience is a judgment of reason by which the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act.
- 1797 For the man who has committed evil, the verdict of his conscience remains a pledge of conversion and of hope.
- 1798 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. Everyone must avail himself of the means to form his conscience.
- 1799 Faced with a moral choice, conscience can make either a right judgment in accordance with reason and the divine law or, on the contrary, an erroneous judgment that departs from them.
- 1800 A human being must always obey the certain judgment of his conscience.
- 1801 Conscience can remain in ignorance or make erroneous judgments. Such ignorance and errors are not always free of guilt.
- 1802 The Word of God is a light for our path. We must assimilate it in faith and prayer and put it into practice. This is how moral conscience is formed.
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61 GS 16.

ARTICLE 7

THE VIRTUES

1803 “Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.”⁶²

A virtue is an habitual and firm disposition to do the good. 1733
It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and 1768
chooses it in concrete actions.

The goal of a virtuous life is to become like God.⁶³

I. THE HUMAN VIRTUES

1804 *Human virtues* are firm attitudes, stable dispositions, habitual perfections of intellect and will that govern our actions, order our passions, and guide our conduct according to reason and faith. They make possible ease, self-mastery, and joy in leading a morally 2500
good life. The virtuous man is he who freely practices the good.

The moral virtues are acquired by human effort. They are the fruit and seed of morally good acts; they dispose all the powers 1827
of the human being for communion with divine love.

The cardinal virtues

1805 Four virtues play a pivotal role and accordingly are called “cardinal”; all the others are grouped around them. They are: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. “If anyone loves righteousness, [Wisdom’s] labors are virtues; for she teaches temperance and prudence, justice, and courage.”⁶⁴ These virtues are praised under other names in many passages of Scripture.

⁶² Phil 4:8.

⁶³ St. Gregory of Nyssa, *De beatitudinibus*, 1: PG 44, 1200D.

⁶⁴ Wis 8:7.

1806 *Prudence* is the virtue that disposes practical reason to discern our true good in every circumstance and to choose the right means of achieving it; “the prudent man looks where he is going.”⁶⁵ “Keep sane and sober for your prayers.”⁶⁶ Prudence is
 1788 “right reason in action,” writes St. Thomas Aquinas, following Aristotle.⁶⁷ It is not to be confused with timidity or fear, nor with duplicity or dissimulation. It is called *auriga virtutum* (the charioteer of the virtues); it guides the other virtues by setting rule and measure. It is prudence that immediately guides the judgment of
 1780 conscience. The prudent man determines and directs his conduct in accordance with this judgment. With the help of this virtue we apply moral principles to particular cases without error and overcome doubts about the good to achieve and the evil to avoid.

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
 2095 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
 2401 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.”⁶⁸ “Masters, treat your slaves justly and fairly, knowing that you also have a Master in heaven.”⁶⁹

1808 *Fortitude* is the moral virtue that ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good. It strengthens the resolve to resist temptations and to overcome obstacles in the moral life. The virtue of fortitude enables one to conquer fear, even
 2848 fear of death, and to face trials and persecutions. It disposes one
 2473 even to renounce and sacrifice his life in defense of a just cause. “The Lord is my strength and my song.”⁷⁰ “In the world you have tribulation; but be of good cheer, I have overcome the world.”⁷¹

65 *Prov* 14:15.

66 *1 Pet* 4:7.

67 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* II-II, 47, 2.

68 *Lev* 19:15.

69 *Col* 4:1.

70 *Pss* 118:14.

71 *Jn* 16:33.

1809 *Temperance* is the moral virtue that moderates the attraction of pleasures and provides balance in the use of created goods. It ensures the will's mastery over instincts and keeps desires within the limits of what is honorable. The temperate person directs the sensitive appetites toward what is good and maintains a healthy discretion: "Do not follow your inclination and strength, walking according to the desires of your heart."⁷² Temperance is often praised in the Old Testament: "Do not follow your base desires, but restrain your appetites."⁷³ In the New Testament it is called "moderation" or "sobriety." We ought "to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world."⁷⁴

To live well is nothing other than to love God with all one's heart, with all one's soul and with all one's efforts; from this it comes about that love is kept whole and uncorrupted (through temperance). No misfortune can disturb it (and this is fortitude). It obeys only [God] (and this is justice), and is careful in discerning things, so as not to be surprised by deceit or trickery (and this is prudence).⁷⁵

The virtues and grace

1810 Human virtues acquired by education, by deliberate acts and by a perseverance ever-renewed in repeated efforts are purified and elevated by divine grace. With God's help, they forge character and give facility in the practice of the good. The virtuous man is happy to practice them.

1811 It is not easy for man, wounded by sin, to maintain moral balance. Christ's gift of salvation offers us the grace necessary to persevere in the pursuit of the virtues. Everyone should always ask for this grace of light and strength, frequent the sacraments, cooperate with the Holy Spirit, and follow his calls to love what is good and shun evil.

⁷² *Sir* 5:2; cf. 37:27-31.

⁷³ *Sir* 18:30.

⁷⁴ *Titus* 2:12.

⁷⁵ St. Augustine, *De moribus eccl.* 1, 25, 46: PL 32, 1330-1331.

2086-2094 **II. THE THEOLOGICAL VIRTUES**
 2656-2658

1812 The human virtues are rooted in the theological virtues, which adapt man's faculties for participation in the divine nature;⁷⁶ for the theological virtues relate directly to God. They dispose Christians to live in a relationship with the Holy Trinity.
 1266 They have the One and Triune God for their origin, motive, and object.

1813 The theological virtues are the foundation of Christian moral activity; they animate it and give it its special character. They inform and give life to all the moral virtues. They are infused by God into the souls of the faithful to make them capable of acting as his children and of meriting eternal life. They are the pledge of the presence and action of the Holy Spirit in the faculties of the human being.
 2008 There are three theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity.⁷⁷

142-175 **Faith**

1814 Faith is the theological virtue by which we believe in God and believe all that he has said and revealed to us, and that Holy
 506 Church proposes for our belief, because he is truth itself. By faith "man freely commits his entire self to God."⁷⁸ For this reason the believer seeks to know and do God's will. "The righteous shall live by faith." Living faith "work[s] through charity."⁷⁹

1815 The gift of faith remains in one who has not sinned against it.⁸⁰ But "faith apart from works is dead":⁸¹ when it is deprived of hope and love, faith does not fully unite the believer to Christ and does not make him a living member of his Body.

2471 **1816** The disciple of Christ must not only keep the faith and live on it, but also profess it, confidently bear witness to it, and spread it: "All however must be prepared to confess Christ before men and to follow him along the way of the Cross, amidst the persecutions which the Church never lacks."⁸² Service of and witness to the faith

76 Cf. 2 *Pet* 1:4.

77 Cf. 1 *Cor* 13:13.

78 *DV* 5.

79 *Rom* 1:17; *Gal* 5:6.

80 Cf. Council of Trent (1547): DS 1545.

81 *Jas* 2:26.

82 *LG* 42; cf. *DH* 14.

are necessary for salvation: "So every one who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven."⁸³

Hope

1817 Hope is the theological virtue by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit. "Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for he who promised is faithful."⁸⁴ "The Holy Spirit . . . he poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that we might be justified by his grace and become heirs in hope of eternal life."⁸⁵ 1024

1818 The virtue of hope responds to the aspiration to happiness which God has placed in the heart of every man; it takes up the hopes that inspire men's activities and purifies them so as to order them to the Kingdom of heaven; it keeps man from discouragement; it sustains him during times of abandonment; it opens up his heart in expectation of eternal beatitude. Buoyed up by hope, he is preserved from selfishness and led to the happiness that flows from charity. 27

1819 Christian hope takes up and fulfills the hope of the chosen people which has its origin and model in the *hope of Abraham*, who was blessed abundantly by the promises of God fulfilled in Isaac, and who was purified by the test of the sacrifice.⁸⁶ "Hoping against hope, he believed, and thus became the father of many nations."⁸⁷ 146

83 Mt 10:32-33.

84 Heb 10:23.

85 Titus 3:6-7.

86 Cf. Gen 17:4-8; 22:1-18.

87 Rom 4:18.

1820 Christian hope unfolds from the beginning of Jesus' preach-
 1716 ing in the proclamation of the beatitudes. The *beatitudes* raise our
 hope toward heaven as the new Promised Land; they trace the path
 that leads through the trials that await the disciples of Jesus. But
 through the merits of Jesus Christ and of his Passion, God keeps us
 in the "hope that does not disappoint."⁸⁸ Hope is the "sure and
 steadfast anchor of the soul . . . that enters . . . where Jesus has gone
 as a forerunner on our behalf."⁸⁹ Hope is also a weapon that
 protects us in the struggle of salvation: "Let us . . . put on the
 breastplate of faith and charity, and for a helmet the hope of
 salvation."⁹⁰ It affords us joy even under trial: "Rejoice in your
 hope, be patient in tribulation."⁹¹ Hope is expressed and nourished
 2772 in prayer, especially in the Our Father, the summary of everything
 that hope leads us to desire.

1821 We can therefore hope in the glory of heaven promised by
 God to those who love him and do his will.⁹² In every circumstance,
 each one of us should hope, with the grace of God, to persevere "to
 2016 the end"⁹³ and to obtain the joy of heaven, as God's eternal reward
 1037 for the good works accomplished with the grace of Christ. In hope,
 the Church prays for "all men to be saved."⁹⁴ She longs to be united
 with Christ, her Bridegroom, in the glory of heaven:

Hope, O my soul, hope. You know neither the day nor the
 hour. Watch carefully, for everything passes quickly, even
 though your impatience makes doubtful what is certain, and
 turns a very short time into a long one. Dream that the more
 you struggle, the more you prove the love that you bear your
 God, and the more you will rejoice one day with your Be-
 loved, in a happiness and rapture that can never end.⁹⁵

Charity

1723 1822 Charity is the theological virtue by which we love God
 above all things for his own sake, and our neighbor as ourselves
 for the love of God.

88 Rom 5:5.

89 Heb 6:19-20.

90 1 Thess 5:8.

91 Rom 12:12.

92 Cf. Rom 8:28-30; Mt 7:21.

93 Mt 10:22; cf. Council of Trent: DS 1541.

94 1 Tim 2:4.

95 St. Teresa of Avila, *Excl.* 15:3.

1823 Jesus makes charity the *new commandment*.⁹⁶ By loving his own “to the end,”⁹⁷ he makes manifest the Father’s love which he receives. By loving one another, the disciples imitate the love of Jesus which they themselves receive. Whence Jesus says: “As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you; abide in my love.” And again: “This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you.”⁹⁸ 1970

1824 Fruit of the Spirit and fullness of the Law, charity keeps the *commandments* of God and his Christ: “Abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love.”⁹⁹ 735

1825 Christ died out of love for us, while we were still “enemies.”¹⁰⁰ The Lord asks us to love as he does, even our *enemies*, to make ourselves the neighbor of those farthest away, and to love children and the poor as Christ himself.¹⁰¹ 604

The Apostle Paul has given an incomparable depiction of charity: “charity is patient and kind, charity is not jealous or boastful; it is not arrogant or rude. Charity does not insist on its own way; it is not irritable or resentful; it does not rejoice at wrong, but rejoices in the right. Charity bears all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things.”¹⁰²

1826 “If I . . . have not charity,” says the Apostle, “I am nothing.” Whatever my privilege, service, or even virtue, “if I . . . have not charity, I gain nothing.”¹⁰³ Charity is superior to all the virtues. It is the first of the theological virtues: “So faith, hope, charity abide, these three. But *the greatest of these is charity*.”¹⁰⁴

1827 The practice of all the virtues is animated and inspired by charity, which “binds everything together in perfect harmony”;¹⁰⁵ it is the *form of the virtues*; it articulates and orders them among themselves; it is the source and the goal of their Christian practice. Charity upholds and purifies our human ability to love, and raises it to the supernatural perfection of divine love. 815 826

96 Cf. *Jn* 13:34.

97 *Jn* 13:1.

98 *Jn* 15:9, 12.

99 *Jn* 15:9-10; cf. *Mt* 22:40; *Rom* 13:8-10.

100 *Rom* 5:10.

101 Cf. *Mt* 5:44; *Lk* 10:27-37; *Mk* 9:37; *Mt* 25:40, 45.

102 *1 Cor* 13:4-7.

103 *1 Cor* 13:1-4.

104 *1 Cor* 13:13.

105 *Col* 3:14.

1828 The practice of the moral life animated by charity gives to the Christian the spiritual freedom of the children of God. He no longer stands before God as a slave, in servile fear, or as a mercenary looking for wages, but as a son responding to the love of him who "first loved us".¹⁰⁶

If we turn away from evil out of fear of punishment, we are in the position of slaves. If we pursue the enticement of wages, . . . we resemble mercenaries. Finally if we obey for the sake of the good itself and out of love for him who commands . . . we are in the position of children.¹⁰⁷

1829 The *fruits* of charity are joy, peace, and mercy; charity demands beneficence and fraternal correction; it is benevolence; it fosters reciprocity and remains disinterested and generous; it is friendship and communion:

Love is itself the fulfillment of all our works. There is the goal; that is why we run: we run toward it, and once we reach it, in it we shall find rest.¹⁰⁸

III. THE GIFTS AND FRUITS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

1830 The moral life of Christians is sustained by the gifts of the Holy Spirit. These are permanent dispositions which make man docile in following the promptings of the Holy Spirit.

1831 The seven *gifts* of the Holy Spirit are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord. They belong in their fullness to Christ, Son of David.¹⁰⁹ They complete and perfect the virtues of those who receive them. They make the faithful docile in readily obeying divine inspirations.

Let your good spirit lead me on a level path.¹¹⁰

For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God . . . If children, then heirs, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ.¹¹¹

106 Cf. 1 Jn 4:19.

107 St. Basil, *Reg. fus. tract., prol.* 3: PG 31, 896 B.

108 St. Augustine, *In ep. Jo.* 10, 4: PL 35, 2057.

109 Cf. *Isa* 11:1-2.

110 *Psa* 143:10.

111 *Rom* 8:14, 17.

1832 The *fruits* of the Spirit are perfections that the Holy Spirit 736 forms in us as the first fruits of eternal glory. The tradition of the Church lists twelve of them: “charity, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, generosity, gentleness, faithfulness, modesty, self-control, chastity.”¹¹²

IN BRIEF

- 1833** Virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do good.
- 1834** The human virtues are stable dispositions of the intellect and the will that govern our acts, order our passions, and guide our conduct in accordance with reason and faith. They can be grouped around the four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance.
- 1835** Prudence disposes the practical reason to discern, in every circumstance, our true good and to choose the right means for achieving it.
- 1836** Justice consists in the firm and constant will to give God and neighbor their due.
- 1837** Fortitude ensures firmness in difficulties and constancy in the pursuit of the good.
- 1838** Temperance moderates the attraction of the pleasures of the senses and provides balance in the use of created goods.
- 1839** The moral virtues grow through education, deliberate acts, and perseverance in struggle. Divine grace purifies and elevates them.
- 1840** The theological virtues dispose Christians to live in a relationship with the Holy Trinity. They have God for their origin, their motive, and their object—God known by faith, God hoped in and loved for his own sake.
- 1841** There are three theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity. They inform all the moral virtues and give life to them.

112 Gal 5:22-23 (Vulg.).

- 1842 By faith, we believe in God and believe all that he has revealed to us and that Holy Church proposes for our belief.
- 1843 By hope we desire, and with steadfast trust await from God, eternal life and the graces to merit it.
- 1844 By charity, we love God above all things and our neighbor as ourselves for love of God. Charity, the form of all the virtues, "binds everything together in perfect harmony" (*Col 3:14*).
- 1845 The seven gifts of the Holy Spirit bestowed upon Christians are wisdom, understanding, counsel, fortitude, knowledge, piety, and fear of the Lord.

ARTICLE 8

SIN

I. MERCY AND SIN

- 430 1846 The Gospel is the revelation in Jesus Christ of God's mercy to sinners.¹¹³ The angel announced to Joseph: "You shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."¹¹⁴ The same
- 1365 is true of the Eucharist, the sacrament of redemption: "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins."¹¹⁵
- 387, 1455 1847 "God created us without us: but he did not will to save us without us."¹¹⁶ To receive his mercy, we must admit our faults. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just, and will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness."¹¹⁷
- 1848 As St. Paul affirms, "Where sin increased, grace abounded all the more."¹¹⁸ But to do its work grace must uncover sin so as to
- 385 convert our hearts and bestow on us "righteousness to eternal life

113 Cf. *Lk 15*.

114 *Mt 1:21*.

115 *Mt 26:28*.

116 St. Augustine, *Sermo* 169, 11, 13: PL 38, 923.

117 *1 Jn 8-9*.

118 *Rom 5:20*.

through Jesus Christ our Lord."¹¹⁹ Like a physician who probes the wound before treating it, God, by his Word and by his Spirit, casts a living light on sin:

Conversion *requires convincing of sin*; it includes the interior judgment of conscience, and this, being a proof of the action of the Spirit of truth in man's inmost being, becomes at the same time the start of a new grant of grace and love: "Receive the Holy Spirit." Thus in this "convincing concerning sin" we discover *a double gift*: the gift of the truth of conscience and the gift of the certainty of redemption. The Spirit of truth is the Consoler.¹²⁰ 1433

II. THE DEFINITION OF SIN

1849 Sin is an offense against reason, truth, and right conscience; it is failure in genuine love for God and neighbor caused by a perverse attachment to certain goods. It wounds the nature of man and injures human solidarity. It has been defined as "an utterance, a deed, or a desire contrary to the eternal law."¹²¹ 311 1952

1850 Sin is an offense against God: "Against you, you alone, have I sinned, and done that which is evil in your sight."¹²² Sin sets itself against God's love for us and turns our hearts away from it. Like the first sin, it is disobedience, a revolt against God through the will to become "like gods,"¹²³ knowing and determining good and evil. Sin is thus "love of oneself even to contempt of God."¹²⁴ 397 In this proud self-exaltation, sin is diametrically opposed to the obedience of Jesus, which achieves our salvation.¹²⁵ 615 616

1851 It is precisely in the Passion, when the mercy of Christ is about to vanquish it, that sin most clearly manifests its violence and its many forms: unbelief, murderous hatred, shunning and mockery by the leaders and the people, Pilate's cowardice and the cruelty of the soldiers, Judas' betrayal—so bitter to Jesus, Peter's denial and the disciples' flight. However, at the very hour of darkness, the hour of the prince of this world,¹²⁶ the sacrifice of 598 2746, 616

119 Rom 5:21.

120 John Paul II, *DeV* 31 § 2.

121 St. Augustine, *Contra Faustum* 22: PL 42, 418; St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I-II, 71, 6.

122 Ps 51:4.

123 Gen 3:5.

124 St. Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 14, 28: PL 41, 436.

125 Cf. Phil 2:6-9.

126 Cf. Jn 14:30.

Christ secretly becomes the source from which the forgiveness of our sins will pour forth inexhaustibly.

III. THE DIFFERENT KINDS OF SINS

1852 There are a great many kinds of sins. Scripture provides several lists of them. The *Letter to the Galatians* contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit: "Now the works of the flesh are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, factions, 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."¹²⁷

- 1751 **1853** Sins can be distinguished according to their objects, as can every human act; or according to the virtues they oppose, by excess or defect; or according to the commandments they violate. They can also be classed according to whether they concern God, neighbor, or oneself; they can be
2067 divided into spiritual and carnal sins, or again as sins in thought, word, deed, or omission. The root of sin is in the heart of man, in his free will, according to the teaching of the Lord: "For out of the heart come evil
368 thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication, theft, false witness, slander. These are what defile a man."¹²⁸ But in the heart also resides charity, the source of the good and pure works, which sin wounds.

IV. THE GRAVITY OF SIN: MORTAL AND VENIAL SIN

1854 Sins are rightly evaluated according to their gravity. The distinction between mortal and venial sin, already evident in Scripture,¹²⁹ became part of the tradition of the Church. It is corroborated by human experience.

- 1395 **1855** Mortal sin destroys charity in the heart of man by a grave violation of God's law; it turns man away from God, who is his ultimate end and his beatitude, by preferring an inferior good to him.

Venial sin allows charity to subsist, even though it offends and wounds it.

- 1856** Mortal sin, by attacking the vital principle within us—that
1446 is, charity—necessitates a new initiative of God's mercy and a

127 *Gal* 5:19-21; cf. *Rom* 1:28-32; *1 Cor* 6:9-10; *Eph* 5:3-5; *Col* 3:5-9; *1 Tim* 1:9-10; *2 Tim* 3:2-5.

128 *Mt* 15:19-20.

129 Cf. *1 Jn* 5:16-17.

conversion of heart which is normally accomplished within the setting of the sacrament of reconciliation:

When the will sets itself upon something that is of its nature incompatible with the charity that orients man toward his ultimate end, then the sin is mortal by its very object . . . whether it contradicts the love of God, such as blasphemy or perjury, or the love of neighbor, such as homicide or adultery. . . . But when the sinner's will is set upon something that of its nature involves a disorder, but is not opposed to the love of God and neighbor, such as thoughtless chatter or immoderate laughter and the like, such sins are venial.¹³⁰

1857 For a *sin* to be *mortal*, three conditions must together be met: "Mortal sin is sin whose object is grave matter and which is also committed with full knowledge and deliberate consent."¹³¹

1858 *Grave matter* is specified by the Ten Commandments, corresponding to the answer of Jesus to the rich young man: "Do not kill, Do not commit adultery, Do not steal, Do not bear false witness, Do not defraud, Honor your father and your mother."¹³² The gravity of sins is more or less great: murder is graver than theft. One must also take into account who is wronged: violence against parents is in itself graver than violence against a stranger. 2072 2214

1859 Mortal sin requires *full knowledge* and *complete consent*. It presupposes knowledge of the sinful character of the act, of its opposition to God's law. It also implies a consent sufficiently deliberate to be a personal choice. Feigned ignorance and hardness of heart¹³³ do not diminish, but rather increase, the voluntary character of a sin. 1734

1860 *Unintentional ignorance* can diminish or even remove the imputability of a grave offense. But no one is deemed to be ignorant of the principles of the moral law, which are written in the conscience of every man. The promptings of feelings and passions can also diminish the voluntary and free character of the offense, as can external pressures or pathological disorders. Sin committed through malice, by deliberate choice of evil, is the gravest. 1735 1767

130 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I-II, 88, 2, *corp. art.*

131 *RP* 17 § 12.

132 *Mk* 10:19.

133 Cf. *Mk* 3:5-6; *Lk* 16:19-31.

1742 **1861** Mortal sin is a radical possibility of human freedom, as is love itself. It results in the loss of charity and the privation of sanctifying grace, that is, of the state of grace. If it is not redeemed by repentance and God's forgiveness, it causes exclusion from Christ's kingdom and the eternal death of hell, for our freedom has
 1033 the power to make choices for ever, with no turning back. However, although we can judge that an act is in itself a grave offense, we must entrust judgment of persons to the justice and mercy of God.

1862 One commits venial sin when, in a less serious matter, he does not observe the standard prescribed by the moral law, or when he disobeys the moral law in a grave matter, but without full knowledge or without complete consent.

1394 **1863** Venial sin weakens charity; it manifests a disordered affection for created goods; it impedes the soul's progress in the exercise of the virtues and the practice of the moral good; it merits temporal
 1472 punishment. Deliberate and unrepented venial sin disposes us little by little to commit mortal sin. However venial sin does not break the covenant with God. With God's grace it is humanly reparable. "Venial sin does not deprive the sinner of sanctifying grace, friendship with God, charity, and consequently eternal happiness."¹³⁴

While he is in the flesh, man cannot help but have at least some light sins. But do not despise these sins which we call "light": if you take them for light when you weigh them, tremble when you count them. A number of light objects makes a great mass; a number of drops fills a river; a number of grains makes a heap. What then is our hope? Above all, confession. . . .¹³⁵

1864 "Therefore I tell you, every sin and blasphemy will be forgiven men, but the blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven."¹³⁶ There are no limits to the mercy of God, but anyone
 2091 who deliberately refuses to accept his mercy by repenting, rejects the forgiveness of his sins and the salvation offered by the Holy
 1037 Spirit.¹³⁷ Such hardness of heart can lead to final impenitence and eternal loss.

¹³⁴ John Paul II, *RP* 17 § 9.

¹³⁵ St. Augustine, *In ep. Jo.* 1, 6: PL 35, 1982.

¹³⁶ *Mt* 12:31; cf. *Mk* 3:29; *Lk* 12:10.

¹³⁷ Cf. John Paul II, *DeV* 46.

V. THE PROLIFERATION OF SIN

1865 Sin creates a proclivity to sin; it engenders vice by repetition of the same acts. This results in perverse inclinations which cloud conscience and corrupt the concrete judgment of good and evil. Thus sin tends to reproduce itself and reinforce itself, but it cannot destroy the moral sense at its root. 401 1768

1866 Vices can be classified according to the virtues they oppose, or also be linked to the *capital sins* which Christian experience has distinguished, following St. John Cassian and St. Gregory the Great. They are called “capital” because they engender other sins, other vices.¹³⁸ They are pride, avarice, envy, wrath, lust, gluttony, and sloth or acedia. 2539

1867 The catechetical tradition also recalls that there are “*sins that cry to heaven*”: the blood of Abel,¹³⁹ the sin of the Sodomites,¹⁴⁰ the cry of the people oppressed in Egypt,¹⁴¹ the cry of the foreigner, the widow, and the orphan,¹⁴² injustice to the wage earner.¹⁴³ 2268

1868 Sin is a personal act. Moreover, we have a responsibility for the sins committed by others when *we cooperate in them*: 1736

— by participating directly and voluntarily in them;

— by ordering, advising, praising, or approving them;

— by not disclosing or not hindering them when we have an obligation to do so;

— by protecting evil-doers.

1869 Thus sin makes men accomplices of one another and causes concupiscence, violence, and injustice to reign among them. Sins give rise to social situations and institutions that are contrary to the divine goodness. “Structures of sin” are the expression and effect of personal sins. They lead their victims to do evil in their turn. In an analogous sense, they constitute a “social sin.”¹⁴⁴ 408 1887

138 Cf. St. Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job*, 31, 45: PL 76, 621A.

139 Cf. *Gen* 4:10.

140 Cf. *Gen* 18:20; 19:13.

141 Cf. *Ex* 3:7-10.

142 Cf. *Ex* 20:20-22.

143 Cf. *Deut* 24:14-15; *Jas* 5:4.

144 John Paul II, *RP* 16.

IN BRIEF

- 1870** “God has consigned all men to disobedience, that he may have mercy upon all” (*Rom* 11:32).
- 1871** Sin is an utterance, a deed, or a desire contrary to the eternal law (St. Augustine, *Faust* 22: PL 42, 418). It is an offense against God. It rises up against God in a disobedience contrary to the obedience of Christ.
- 1872** Sin is an act contrary to reason. It wounds man’s nature and injures human solidarity.
- 1873** The root of all sins lies in man’s heart. The kinds and the gravity of sins are determined principally by their objects.
- 1874** To choose deliberately—that is, both knowing it and willing it—something gravely contrary to the divine law and to the ultimate end of man is to commit a mortal sin. This destroys in us the charity without which eternal beatitude is impossible. Unrepented, it brings eternal death.
- 1875** Venial sin constitutes a moral disorder that is reparable by charity, which it allows to subsist in us.
- 1876** The repetition of sins—even venial ones—engenders vices, among which are the capital sins.
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CHAPTER TWO

THE HUMAN COMMUNITY

1877 The vocation of humanity is to show forth the image of 355
God and to be transformed into the image of the Father's only Son.
This vocation takes a personal form since each of us is called to
enter into the divine beatitude; it also concerns the human commu-
nity as a whole.

ARTICLE 1

THE PERSON AND SOCIETY

I. THE COMMUNAL CHARACTER OF THE HUMAN VOCATION

1878 All men are called to the same end: God himself. There is
a certain resemblance between the unity of the divine persons and 1702
the fraternity that men are to establish among themselves in truth
and love.¹ Love of neighbor is inseparable from love for God.

1879 The human person needs to live in society. Society is not 1936
for him an extraneous addition but a requirement of his nature.
Through the exchange with others, mutual service and dialogue
with his brethren, man develops his potential; he thus responds to
his vocation.²

1880 A *society* is a group of persons bound together organically 771
by a principle of unity that goes beyond each one of them. As an
assembly that is at once visible and spiritual, a society endures
through time: it gathers up the past and prepares for the future. By
means of society, each man is established as an "heir" and receives
certain "talents" that enrich his identity and whose fruits he must
develop.³ He rightly owes loyalty to the communities of which he
is part and respect to those in authority who have charge of the
common good.

1 Cf. GS 24 § 3.
2 Cf. GS 25 § 1.
3 Cf. Lk 19:13, 15.

1881 Each community is defined by its purpose and consequently obeys specific rules; but “the *human person* . . . is and
 1929 ought to be the principle, the subject and the end of all social institutions.”⁴

1882 Certain societies, such as the family and the state, correspond more directly to the nature of man; they are necessary to him. To promote the participation of the greatest number in the life of a society, the creation of voluntary associations and institutions
 1913 must be encouraged “on both national and international levels, which relate to economic and social goals, to cultural and recreational activities, to sport, to various professions, and to political affairs.”⁵ This “*socialization*” also expresses the natural tendency for human beings to associate with one another for the sake of attaining objectives that exceed individual capacities. It develops the qualities of the person, especially the sense of initiative and responsibility, and helps guarantee his rights.⁶

1883 Socialization also presents dangers. Excessive intervention by the state can threaten personal freedom and initiative. The teaching of the Church has elaborated the principle of *subsidiarity*, according to which “a community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in
 2431 case of need and help to co-ordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good.”⁷

1884 God has not willed to reserve to himself all exercise of power. He entrusts to every creature the functions it is capable of
 307 performing, according to the capacities of its own nature. This mode of governance ought to be followed in social life. The way God acts in governing the world, which bears witness to such great regard for human freedom, should inspire the wisdom of those who govern human communities. They should behave as ministers
 302 of divine providence.

1885 The principle of subsidiarity is opposed to all forms of collectivism. It sets limits for state intervention. It aims at harmonizing the relationships between individuals and societies. It tends toward the establishment of true international order.

4 GS 25 § 1.

5 John XXIII, MM 60.

6 Cf. GS 25 § 2; CA 12.

7 CA 48 § 4; cf. Pius XI, *Quadragesimo anno* I, 184-186.

II. CONVERSION AND SOCIETY

1886 Society is essential to the fulfillment of the human vocation. To attain this aim, respect must be accorded to the just hierarchy of values, which “subordinates physical and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones:”⁸ 1779

Human society must primarily be considered something pertaining to the spiritual. Through it, in the bright light of truth, men should share their knowledge, be able to exercise their rights and fulfill their obligations, be inspired to seek spiritual values; mutually derive genuine pleasure from the beautiful, of whatever order it be; always be readily disposed to pass on to others the best of their own cultural heritage; and eagerly strive to make their own the spiritual achievements of others. These benefits not only influence, but at the same time give aim and scope to all that has bearing on cultural expressions, economic, and social institutions, political movements and forms, laws, and all other structures by which society is outwardly established and constantly developed.⁹ 2500

1887 The inversion of means and ends,¹⁰ which results in giving the value of ultimate end to what is only a means for attaining it, or in viewing persons as mere means to that end, engenders unjust structures which “make Christian conduct in keeping with the commandments of the divine Law-giver difficult and almost impossible.”¹¹ 909 1869

1888 It is necessary, then, to appeal to the spiritual and moral capacities of the human person and to the permanent need for his *inner conversion*, so as to obtain social changes that will really serve him. The acknowledged priority of the conversion of heart in no way eliminates but on the contrary imposes the obligation of bringing the appropriate remedies to institutions and living conditions when they are an inducement to sin, so that they conform to the norms of justice and advance the good rather than hinder it.¹² 407 1430

8 CA 36 § 2.

9 John XXIII, PT 36.

10 Cf. CA 41.

11 Pius XII, Address at Pentecost, June 1, 1941.

12 Cf. LG 36.

- 1889 Without the help of grace, men would not know how “to discern the often narrow path between the cowardice which gives in to evil, and the violence which under the illusion of fighting evil only makes it worse.”¹³ This is the path of charity, that is, of the
 1825 love of God and of neighbor. Charity is the greatest social commandment. It respects others and their rights. It requires the practice of justice, and it alone makes us capable of it. Charity inspires a life of self-giving: “Whoever seeks to gain his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life will preserve it.”¹⁴

IN BRIEF

- 1890 There is a certain resemblance between the unity of the divine persons and the fraternity that men ought to establish among themselves.
- 1891 The human person needs life in society in order to develop in accordance with his nature. Certain societies, such as the family and the state, correspond more directly to the nature of man.
- 1892 “The human person . . . is and ought to be the principle, the subject, and the object of every social organization” (GS 25 § 1).
- 1893 Widespread participation in voluntary associations and institutions is to be encouraged.
- 1894 In accordance with the principle of subsidiarity, neither the state nor any larger society should substitute itself for the initiative and responsibility of individuals and intermediary bodies.
- 1895 Society ought to promote the exercise of virtue, not obstruct it. It should be animated by a just hierarchy of values.
- 1896 Where sin has perverted the social climate, it is necessary to call for the conversion of hearts and appeal to the grace of God. Charity urges just reforms. There is no solution to the social question apart from the Gospel (cf. CA 3, 5).
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13 CA 25.

14 Lk 17:33.

ARTICLE 2

PARTICIPATION IN SOCIAL LIFE

I. AUTHORITY

1897 “Human society can be neither well-ordered nor prosperous unless it has some people invested with legitimate authority to preserve its institutions and to devote themselves as far as is necessary to work and care for the good of all.”¹⁵ 2234

By “authority” one means the quality by virtue of which persons or institutions make laws and give orders to men and expect obedience from them.

1898 Every human community needs an authority to govern it.¹⁶ The foundation of such authority lies in human nature. It is necessary for the unity of the state. Its role is to ensure as far as possible the common good of the society.

1899 The authority required by the moral order derives from God: “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 judgment.”¹⁷ 2235

1900 The duty of obedience requires all to give due honor to authority and to treat those who are charged to exercise it with respect, and, insofar as it is deserved, with gratitude and good-will. 2238

Pope St. Clement of Rome provides the Church’s most ancient prayer for political authorities:¹⁸ “Grant to them, Lord, health, peace, concord, and stability, so that they may exercise without offense the sovereignty that you have given them. Master, heavenly King of the ages, you give glory, honor, and power over the things of earth to the sons of men. Direct, Lord, their counsel, following what is pleasing and acceptable in your sight, so that by exercising with devotion and in peace and gentleness the power that you have given to them, they may find favor with you.”¹⁹ 2240

15 John XXIII, *PT* 46.

16 Cf. Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei*; *Diuturnum illud*.

17 *Rom* 13:1-2; cf. *1 Pet* 2:13-17.

18 Cf. as early as *1 Tim* 2:1-2.

19 St. Clement of Rome, *Ad Cor.* 61: SCh 167, 198-200.

1901 If authority belongs to the order established by God, “the choice of the political regime and the appointment of rulers are left to the free decision of the citizens.”²⁰

The diversity of political regimes is morally acceptable, provided they serve the legitimate good of the communities that
 2242 adopt them. Regimes whose nature is contrary to the natural law, to the public order, and to the fundamental rights of persons cannot achieve the common good of the nations on which they have been imposed.

1930 **1902** Authority does not derive its moral legitimacy from itself. It must not behave in a despotic manner, but must act for the common good as a “moral force based on freedom and a sense of responsibility”.²¹

1951 A human law has the character of law to the extent that it accords with right reason, and thus derives from the eternal law. Insofar as it falls short of right reason it is said to be an unjust law, and thus has not so much the nature of law as of a kind of violence.²²

1903 Authority is exercised legitimately only when it seeks the common good of the group concerned and if it employs morally licit means to attain it. If rulers were to enact unjust laws or take
 2242 measures contrary to the moral order, such arrangements would not be binding in conscience. In such a case, “authority breaks down completely and results in shameful abuse.”²³

1904 “It is preferable that each power be balanced by other powers and by other spheres of responsibility which keep it within proper bounds. This is the principle of the ‘rule of law,’ in which the law is sovereign and not the arbitrary will of men.”²⁴

II. THE COMMON GOOD

1905 In keeping with the social nature of man, the good of each
 801 individual is necessarily related to the common good, which in
 1881 turn can be defined only in reference to the human person:

20 GS 74 § 3.

21 GS 74 § 2.

22 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I-II, 93, 3, *ad* 2.

23 John XXIII, *PT* 51.

24 CA 44.

Do not live entirely isolated, having retreated into yourselves, as if you were already justified, but gather instead to seek the common good together.²⁵

1906 By common good is to be understood “the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily.”²⁶ The common good concerns the life of all. It calls for prudence from each, and even more from those who exercise the office of authority. It consists of *three essential elements*:

1907 First, the common good presupposes *respect for the person* 1929 as such. In the name of the common good, public authorities are bound to respect the fundamental and inalienable rights of the human person. Society should permit each of its members to fulfill his vocation. In particular, the common good resides in the conditions for the exercise of the natural freedoms indispensable for the development of the human vocation, such as “the right to act according to a sound norm of conscience and to safeguard . . . privacy, and rightful freedom also in matters of religion.”²⁷ 2106

1908 Second, the common good requires the *social well-being and development* of the group itself. Development is the epitome of all social duties. Certainly, it is the proper function of authority to 2441 arbitrate, in the name of the common good, between various particular interests; but it should make accessible to each what is needed to lead a truly human life: food, clothing, health, work, education and culture, suitable information, the right to establish a family, and so on.²⁸

1909 Finally, the common good requires *peace*, that is, the stabil- 2304 ity and security of a just order. It presupposes that authority should ensure by morally acceptable means the *security* of society and its members. It is the basis of the right to legitimate personal and 2310 collective defence.

1910 Each human community possesses a common good which permits it to be recognized as such; it is in the *political community* 2244 that its most complete realization is found. It is the role of the state to defend and promote the common good of civil society, its citizens, and intermediate bodies.

25 *Ep. Barnabae*, 4, 10: PG 2, 734.

26 GS 26 § 1; cf. GS 74 § 1.

27 GS 26 § 2.

28 Cf. GS 26 § 2.

1911 Human interdependence is increasing and gradually spreading throughout the world. The unity of the human family,
 2438 embracing people who enjoy equal natural dignity, implies a *universal common good*. This good calls for an organization of the community of nations able to “provide for the different needs of men; this will involve the sphere of social life to which belong questions of food, hygiene, education, . . . and certain situations arising here and there, as for example . . . alleviating the miseries of refugees dispersed throughout the world, and assisting migrants and their families.”²⁹

1912 The common good is always oriented towards the progress of persons: “The order of things must be subordinate to the
 1881 order of persons, and not the other way around.”³⁰ This order is founded on truth, built up in justice, and animated by love.

III. RESPONSIBILITY AND PARTICIPATION

1913 “Participation” is the voluntary and generous engagement of a person in social interchange. It is necessary that all participate, each according to his position and role, in promoting the common good. This obligation is inherent in the dignity of the human person.

1914 Participation is achieved first of all by taking charge of the areas for which one assumes *personal responsibility*: by the care
 1734 taken for the education of his family, by conscientious work, and so forth, man participates in the good of others and of society.³¹

2239 1915 As far as possible citizens should take an active part in *public life*. The manner of this participation may vary from one country or culture to another. “One must pay tribute to those nations whose systems permit the largest possible number of the citizens to take part in public life in a climate of genuine freedom.”³²

29 GS 84 § 2.

30 GS 26 § 3.

31 Cf. CA 43.

32 GS 31 § 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.³³

1917 It is incumbent on those who exercise authority to strengthen the values that inspire the confidence of the members of the group and encourage them to put themselves at the service of others. Participation begins with education and culture. "One is entitled to think that the future of humanity is in the hands of those who are capable of providing the generations to come with reasons for life and optimism."³⁴

IN BRIEF

- 1918** "There is no authority except from God, and those authorities that exist have been instituted by God" (*Rom* 13:1).
- 1919** Every human community needs an authority in order to endure and develop.
- 1920** "The political community and public authority are based on human nature and therefore . . . belong to an order established by God" (*GS* 74 § 3).
- 1921** Authority is exercised legitimately if it is committed to the common good of society. To attain this it must employ morally acceptable means.
- 1922** The diversity of political regimes is legitimate, provided they contribute to the good of the community.
- 1923** Political authority must be exercised within the limits of the moral order and must guarantee the conditions for the exercise of freedom.
- 1924** The common good comprises "the sum total of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as

33 Cf. *GS* 30 § 1.

34 *GS* 31 § 3.

individuals, to reach their fulfillment more fully and more easily" (GS 26 § 1).

- 1925** The common good consists of three essential elements: respect for and promotion of the fundamental rights of the person; prosperity, or the development of the spiritual and temporal goods of society; the peace and security of the group and of its members.
- 1926** The dignity of the human person requires the pursuit of the common good. Everyone should be concerned to create and support institutions that improve the conditions of human life.
- 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.

ARTICLE 3 SOCIAL JUSTICE

- 1928** Society ensures social justice when it provides the conditions that allow associations or individuals to obtain what is their due, according to their nature and their vocation. Social justice is linked to the common good and the exercise of authority.

I. RESPECT FOR THE HUMAN PERSON

- 1929** Social justice can be obtained only in respecting the transcendent dignity of man. The person represents the ultimate end of society, which is ordered to him:

What is at stake is the dignity of the human person, whose defense and promotion have been entrusted to us by the Creator, and to whom the men and women at every moment of history are strictly and responsibly in debt.³⁵

- 1930** Respect for the human person entails respect for the rights that flow from his dignity as a creature. These rights are prior to society and must be recognized by it. They are the basis of the moral

³⁵ John Paul II, *SRS* 47.

legitimacy of every authority: by flouting them, or refusing to recognize them in its positive legislation, a society undermines its own moral legitimacy.³⁶ If it does not respect them, authority can rely only on force or violence to obtain obedience from its subjects. It is the Church's role to remind men of good will of these rights and to distinguish them from unwarranted or false claims.

1931 Respect for the human person proceeds by way of respect for the principle that "everyone should look upon his neighbor 2212 (without any exception) as 'another self,' above all bearing in mind his life and the means necessary for living it with dignity."³⁷ No legislation could by itself do away with the fears, prejudices, and attitudes of pride and selfishness which obstruct the establishment of truly fraternal societies. Such behavior will cease only through 1825 the charity that finds in every man a "neighbor," a brother.

1932 The duty of making oneself a neighbor to others and actively serving them becomes even more urgent when it involves the disadvantaged, in whatever area this may be. "As you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me."³⁸ 2449

1933 This same duty extends to those who think or act differently from us. The teaching of Christ goes so far as to require the forgiveness of offenses. He extends the commandment of love, which is that of the New Law, to all enemies.³⁹ Liberation in the spirit of the Gospel is incompatible with hatred of one's enemy as 2303 a person, but not with hatred of the evil that he does as an enemy.

II. EQUALITY AND DIFFERENCES AMONG MEN

1934 Created in the image of the one God and equally endowed with rational souls, all men have the same nature and the same origin. Redeemed by the sacrifice of Christ, all are called to participate in the same divine beatitude: all therefore enjoy an equal 225 dignity.

36 Cf. John XXIII, *PT* 65.

37 GS 27 § 1.

38 Mt 25:40.

39 Cf. Mt 5:43-44.

1935 The equality of men rests essentially on their dignity as
 357 persons and the rights that flow from it:

Every form of social or cultural discrimination in fundamental personal rights on the grounds of sex, race, color, social conditions, language, or religion must be curbed and eradicated as incompatible with God's design.⁴⁰

1879 1936 On coming into the world, man is not equipped with everything he needs for developing his bodily and spiritual life. He needs others. Differences appear tied to age, physical abilities, intellectual or moral aptitudes, the benefits derived from social commerce, and the distribution of wealth.⁴¹ The "talents" are not distributed equally.⁴²

340 1937 These differences belong to God's plan, who wills that each receive what he needs from others, and that those endowed
 791 with particular "talents" share the benefits with those who need
 1202 them. These differences encourage and often oblige persons to practice generosity, kindness, and sharing of goods; they foster the mutual enrichment of cultures:

I distribute the virtues quite diversely; I do not give all of them to each person, but some to one, some to others. . . . I shall give principally charity to one; justice to another; humility to this one, a living faith to that one. . . . And so I have given many gifts and graces, both spiritual and temporal, with such diversity that I have not given everything to one single person, so that you may be constrained to practice charity towards one another. . . . I have willed that one should need another and that all should be my ministers in distributing the graces and gifts they have received from me.⁴³

2437 1938 There exist also *sinful inequalities* that affect millions of men and women. These are in open contradiction of the Gospel:

2317 Their equal dignity as persons demands that we strive for fairer and more humane conditions. Excessive economic and social disparity between individuals and peoples of the one human race is a source of scandal and militates against social justice, equity, human dignity, as well as social and international peace.⁴⁴

40 GS 29 § 2.

41 Cf. GS 29 § 2.

42 Cf. *Mt* 25:14-30; *Lk* 19:11-27.

43 St. Catherine of Siena, *Dial.* I, 7.

44 GS 29 § 3.

III. HUMAN SOLIDARITY

1939 The principle of solidarity, also articulated in terms of “friendship” or “social charity,” is a direct demand of human and Christian brotherhood.⁴⁵ 2213

An error, “today abundantly widespread, is disregard for the law of human solidarity and charity, dictated and imposed both by our common origin and by the equality in rational nature of all men, whatever nation they belong to. This law is sealed by the sacrifice of redemption offered by Jesus Christ on the altar of the Cross to his heavenly Father, on behalf of sinful humanity.”⁴⁶ 360

1940 Solidarity is manifested in the first place by the distribution of goods and remuneration for work. It also presupposes the effort for a more just social order where tensions are better able to be reduced and conflicts more readily settled by negotiation. 2402

1941 Socio-economic problems can be resolved only with the help of all the forms of solidarity: solidarity of the poor among themselves, between rich and poor, of workers among themselves, between employers and employees in a business, solidarity among nations and peoples. International solidarity is a requirement of the moral order; world peace depends in part upon this. 2317

1942 The virtue of solidarity goes beyond material goods. In spreading the spiritual goods of the faith, the Church has promoted, and often opened new paths for, the development of temporal goods as well. And so throughout the centuries has the Lord’s saying been verified: “Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well”.⁴⁷ 1887

2632

For two thousand years this sentiment has lived and endured in the soul of the Church, impelling souls then and now to the heroic charity of monastic farmers, liberators of slaves, healers of the sick, and messengers of faith, civilization, and science to all generations and all peoples for the sake of creating the social conditions capable of offering to everyone possible a life worthy of man and of a Christian.⁴⁸

45 Cf. John Paul II, *SRS* 38-40; *CA* 10.

46 Pius XII, *Summi pontificatus*, October 20, 1939; *AAS* 31 (1939) 423 ff.

47 *Mt* 6:33.

48 Pius XII, Discourse, June 1, 1941.

IN BRIEF

- 1943** Society ensures social justice by providing the conditions that allow associations and individuals to obtain their due.
- 1944** Respect for the human person considers the other “another self.” It presupposes respect for the fundamental rights that flow from the dignity intrinsic of the person.
- 1945** The equality of men concerns their dignity as persons and the rights that flow from it.
- 1946** The differences among persons belong to God’s plan, who wills that we should need one another. These differences should encourage charity.
- 1947** The equal dignity of human persons requires the effort to reduce excessive social and economic inequalities. It gives urgency to the elimination of sinful inequalities.
- 1948** Solidarity is an eminently Christian virtue. It practices the sharing of spiritual goods even more than material ones.
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CHAPTER THREE

GOD'S SALVATION: LAW AND GRACE

1949 Called to beatitude but wounded by sin, man stands in need of salvation from God. Divine help comes to him in Christ through the law that guides him and the grace that sustains him:

Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure.¹

ARTICLE 1

THE MORAL LAW

1950 The moral law is the work of divine Wisdom. Its biblical meaning can be defined as fatherly instruction, God's pedagogy. It prescribes for man the ways, the rules of conduct that lead to the promised beatitude; it proscribes the ways of evil which turn him away from God and his love. It is at once firm in its precepts and, in its promises, worthy of love. 53 1719

1951 Law is a rule of conduct enacted by competent authority for the sake of the common good. The moral law presupposes the rational order, established among creatures for their good and to serve their final end, by the power, wisdom, and goodness of the Creator. All law finds its first and ultimate truth in the eternal law. 295 306 Law is declared and established by reason as a participation in the providence of the living God, Creator and Redeemer of all. "Such an ordinance of reason is what one calls law."²

Alone among all animate beings, man can boast of having been counted worthy to receive a law from God: as an animal endowed with reason, capable of understanding and discernment, he is to govern his conduct by using his freedom and reason, in obedience to the One who has entrusted everything to him.³ 301

1 *Phil* 2:12-13.

2 Leo XIII, *Libertas præstantissimum*: AAS 20 (1887/88), 597; cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I-II, 90, 1.

3 Cf. Tertullian, *Adv. Marc*, 2, 4: PL 2, 288-289.

1952 There are different expressions of the moral law, all of them interrelated: eternal law—the source, in God, of all law; natural law; revealed law, comprising the Old Law and the New Law, or Law of the Gospel; finally, civil and ecclesiastical laws.

578 **1953** The moral law finds its fullness and its unity in Christ. Jesus Christ is in person the way of perfection. He is the end of the law, for only he teaches and bestows the justice of God: “For Christ is the end of the law, that every one who has faith may be justified.”⁴

I. THE NATURAL MORAL LAW

1954 Man participates in the wisdom and goodness of the Creator who gives him mastery over his acts and the ability to govern himself with a view to the true and the good. The natural law
307 expresses the original moral sense which enables man to discern
1776 by reason the good and the evil, the truth and the lie:

The natural law is written and engraved in the soul of each and every man, because it is human reason ordaining him to do good and forbidding him to sin . . . But this command of human reason would not have the force of law if it were not the voice and interpreter of a higher reason to which our spirit and our freedom must be submitted.⁵

1787 **1955** The “divine and natural” law⁶ shows man the way to follow so as to practice the good and attain his end. The natural law states the first and essential precepts which govern the moral
396 life. It hinges upon the desire for God and submission to him, who is the source and judge of all that is good, as well as upon the sense that the other is one’s equal. Its principal precepts are expressed in
2070 the Decalogue. This law is called “natural,” not in reference to the nature of irrational beings, but because reason which decrees it properly belongs to human nature:

Where then are these rules written, if not in the book of that light we call the truth? In it is written every just law; from it the law passes into the heart of the man who does justice, not that it migrates into it, but that it places its imprint on it, like a seal on a ring that passes onto wax, without leaving the ring.⁷

4 Rom 10:4.

5 Leo XIII, *Libertas præstantissimum*, 597.

6 GS 89 § 1.

7 St. Augustine, *De Trin.* 14, 15, 21: PL 42, 1052.

The natural law is nothing other than the light of understanding placed in us by God; through it we know what we must do and what we must avoid. God has given this light or law at the creation.⁸

1956 The natural law, present in the heart of each man and established by reason, is universal in its precepts and its authority extends to all men. It expresses the dignity of the person and determines the basis for his fundamental rights and duties: 2261

For there is a true law: right reason. It is in conformity with nature, is diffused among all men, and is immutable and eternal; its orders summon to duty; its prohibitions turn away from offense . . . To replace it with a contrary law is a sacrilege; failure to apply even one of its provisions is forbidden; no one can abrogate it entirely.⁹

1957 Application of the natural law varies greatly; it can demand reflection that takes account of various conditions of life according to places, times, and circumstances. Nevertheless, in the diversity of cultures, the natural law remains as a rule that binds men among themselves and imposes on them, beyond the inevitable differences, common principles.

1958 The natural law is *immutable* and permanent throughout the variations of history;¹⁰ it subsists under the flux of ideas and customs and supports their progress. The rules that express it remain substantially valid. Even when it is rejected in its very principles, it cannot be destroyed or removed from the heart of man. It always rises again in the life of individuals and societies: 2072

Theft is surely punished by your law, O Lord, and by the law that is written in the human heart, the law that iniquity itself does not efface.¹¹

1959 The natural law, the Creator's very good work, provides the solid foundation on which man can build the structure of moral rules to guide his choices. It also provides the indispensable moral foundation for building the human community. Finally, it provides the necessary basis for the civil law with which it is connected, whether by a reflection that draws conclusions from its principles, or by additions of a positive and juridical nature. 1879

8 St. Thomas Aquinas, *Dec. præg.* I.

9 Cicero, *Rep.* III, 22, 33.

10 Cf. GS 10.

11 St. Augustine, *Conf.* 2, 4, 9: PL 32, 678.

1960 The precepts of natural law are not perceived by everyone
clearly and immediately. In the present situation sinful man needs
2071 grace and revelation so moral and religious truths may be known
37 “by everyone with facility, with firm certainty and with no admix-
ture of error.”¹² The natural law provides revealed law and grace
with a foundation prepared by God and in accordance with the
work of the Spirit.

II. THE OLD LAW

62 1961 God, our Creator and Redeemer, chose Israel for himself
to be his people and revealed his Law to them, thus preparing for
the coming of Christ. The Law of Moses expresses many truths
naturally accessible to reason. These are stated and authenticated
within the covenant of salvation.

1962 The Old Law is the first stage of revealed Law. Its moral
prescriptions are summed up in the Ten Commandments. The
2058 precepts of the Decalogue lay the foundations for the vocation of
man fashioned in the image of God; they prohibit what is contrary
to the love of God and neighbor and prescribe what is essential to
it. The Decalogue is a light offered to the conscience of every man
to make God’s call and ways known to him and to protect him
against evil:

God wrote on the tables of the Law what men did not read
in their hearts.¹³

1963 According to Christian tradition, the Law is holy, spiritual,
and good,¹⁴ yet still imperfect. Like a tutor¹⁵ it shows what must
1610 be done, but does not of itself give the strength, the grace of the
Spirit, to fulfill it. Because of sin, which it cannot remove, it remains
a law of bondage. According to St. Paul, its special function is to
2542 denounce and *disclose sin*, which constitutes a “law of concupis-
2515 cence” in the human heart.¹⁶ However, the Law remains the first
stage on the way to the kingdom. It prepares and disposes the
chosen people and each Christian for conversion and faith in the

12 Pius XII, *Humani generis*: DS 3876; cf. *Dei Filius* 2: DS 3005.

13 St. Augustine, *En. in Ps.* 57, 1: PL 36, 673.

14 Cf. *Rom* 7:12, 14, 16.

15 Cf. *Gal* 3:24.

16 Cf. *Rom* 7.

Savior God. It provides a teaching which endures for ever, like the Word of God.

1964 The Old Law is a *preparation for the Gospel*. "The Law is a pedagogy and a prophecy of things to come."¹⁷ It prophesies and presages the work of liberation from sin which will be fulfilled in Christ: it provides the New Testament with images, "types," and symbols for expressing the life according to the Spirit. Finally, the Law is completed by the teaching of the sapiential books and the prophets which set its course toward the New Covenant and the Kingdom of heaven. 122

There were . . . under the regimen of the Old Covenant, people who possessed the charity and grace of the Holy Spirit and longed above all for the spiritual and eternal promises by which they were associated with the New Law. Conversely, there exist carnal men under the New Covenant, still distanced from the perfection of the New Law: the fear of punishment and certain temporal promises have been necessary, even under the New Covenant, to incite them to virtuous works. In any case, even though the Old Law prescribed charity, it did not give the Holy Spirit, through whom "God's charity has been poured into our hearts."¹⁸ 1828

III. THE NEW LAW OR THE LAW OF THE GOSPEL

1965 The New Law or the Law of the Gospel is the perfection here on earth of the divine law, natural and revealed. It is the work of Christ and is expressed particularly in the Sermon on the Mount. It is also the work of the Holy Spirit and through him it becomes the interior law of charity: "I will establish a New Covenant with the house of Israel. . . . I will put my laws into their minds, and write them on their hearts, and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."¹⁹ 459 581 715

1966 The New Law is the *grace of the Holy Spirit* given to the faithful through faith in Christ. It works through charity; it uses the Sermon on the Mount to teach us what must be done and makes use of the sacraments to give us the grace to do it: 1999

17 St. Irenæus, *Adv. haeres.* 4, 15, 1: PG 7/1, 1012.

18 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I-II, 107, 1 ad 2; cf. *Rom* 5:5.

19 *Heb* 8:8, 10; cf. *Jer* 31:31-34.

If anyone should meditate with devotion and perspicacity on the sermon our Lord gave on the mount, as we read in the Gospel of Saint Matthew, he will doubtless find there . . . the perfect way of the Christian life. . . . This sermon contains . . . all the precepts needed to shape one's life.²⁰

1967 The Law of the Gospel "fulfills," refines, surpasses, and leads the Old Law to its perfection.²¹ In the Beatitudes, the New
577 Law *fulfills the divine promises* by elevating and orienting them toward the "kingdom of heaven." It is addressed to those open to accepting this new hope with faith—the poor, the humble, the afflicted, the pure of heart, those persecuted on account of Christ—and so marks out the surprising ways of the Kingdom.

1968 The Law of the Gospel *fulfills the commandments* of the Law. The Lord's Sermon on the Mount, far from abolishing or devaluing the moral prescriptions of the Old Law, releases their hidden
129 potential and has new demands arise from them: it reveals their entire divine and human truth. It does not add new external precepts, but proceeds to reform the heart, the root of human acts,
582 where man chooses between the pure and the impure,²² where faith, hope, and charity are formed and with them the other virtues. The Gospel thus brings the Law to its fullness through imitation of the perfection of the heavenly Father, through forgiveness of enemies and prayer for persecutors, in emulation of the divine generosity.²³

1434 1969 The New Law *practices the acts of religion*: almsgiving, prayer and fasting, directing them to the "Father who sees in secret," in contrast with the desire to "be seen by men."²⁴ Its prayer is the Our Father.²⁵

1970 The Law of the Gospel requires us to make the decisive choice between "the two ways" and to put into practice the words
1696 of the Lord.²⁶ It is summed up in the *Golden Rule*, "Whatever you
1789 wish that men would do to you, do so to them; this is the law and the prophets."²⁷

20 St. Augustine, *De serm. Dom.* 1, 1: PL 34, 1229-1230.

21 Cf. Mt 5:17-19.

22 Cf. Mt 15:18-19.

23 Cf. Mt 5:44, 48.

24 Cf. Mt 6:1-6; 16-18.

25 Cf. Mt 6:9-13; Lk 11:2-4.

26 Cf. Mt 7:13-14, 21-27.

27 Mt 7:12; cf. Lk 6:31.

The entire Law of the Gospel is contained in the “*new commandment*” of Jesus, to love one another as he has loved us.²⁸ 1823

1971 To the Lord’s Sermon on the Mount it is fitting to add the *moral catechesis of the apostolic teachings*, such as *Romans* 12-15, *1 Corinthians* 12-13, *Colossians* 3-4, *Ephesians* 4-5, etc. This doctrine hands on the Lord’s teaching with the authority of the apostles, particularly in the presentation of the virtues that flow from faith in Christ and are animated by charity, the principal gift of the Holy Spirit. “Let charity be genuine. . . . Love one another with brotherly affection. . . . Rejoice in your hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. Contribute to the needs of the saints, practice hospitality.”²⁹ This catechesis also teaches us to deal with cases of conscience in the light of our relationship to Christ and to the Church.³⁰ 1789

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.³¹ 782 1828

1973 Besides its precepts, the New Law also includes the *evangelical counsels*. The traditional distinction between God’s commandments and the evangelical counsels is drawn in relation to charity, the perfection of Christian life. The precepts are intended to remove whatever is incompatible with charity. The aim of the counsels is to remove whatever might hinder the development of charity, even if it is not contrary to it.³² 2053 915

1974 The evangelical counsels manifest the living fullness of charity, which is never satisfied with not giving more. They attest its vitality and call forth our spiritual readiness. The perfection of the New Law consists essentially in the precepts of love of God and neighbor. The counsels point out the more direct ways, the readier means, and are to be practiced in keeping with the vocation of each: 2013

28 Cf. *Jn* 15:12; 13:34.

29 *Rom* 12:9-13.

30 Cf. *Rom* 14; *1 Cor* 5-10.

31 *Jn* 15:15; cf. *Jas* 1:25; 2:12; *Gal* 4:1-7. 21-31; *Rom* 8:15.

32 Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* II-II, 184, 3.

[God] does not want each person to keep all the counsels, but only those appropriate to the diversity of persons, times, opportunities, and strengths, as charity requires; for it is charity, as queen of all virtues, all commandments, all counsels, and, in short, of all laws and all Christian actions, that gives to all of them their rank, order, time, and value.³³

IN BRIEF

- 1975 According to Scripture the Law is a fatherly instruction by God which prescribes for man the ways that lead to the promised beatitude, and proscribes the ways of evil.
 - 1976 "Law is an ordinance of reason for the common good, promulgated by the one who is in charge of the community" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* I-II, 90, 4).
 - 1977 Christ is the end of the law (cf. *Rom* 10:4); only he teaches and bestows the justice of God.
 - 1978 The natural law is a participation in God's wisdom and goodness by man formed in the image of his Creator. It expresses the dignity of the human person and forms the basis of his fundamental rights and duties.
 - 1979 The natural law is immutable, permanent throughout history. The rules that express it remain substantially valid. It is a necessary foundation for the erection of moral rules and civil law.
 - 1980 The Old Law is the first stage of revealed law. Its moral prescriptions are summed up in the Ten Commandments.
 - 1981 The Law of Moses contains many truths naturally accessible to reason. God has revealed them because men did not read them in their hearts.
 - 1982 The Old Law is a preparation for the Gospel.
 - 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.
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33 St. Francis de Sales, *Love of God* 8, 6.

- 1984 The Law of the Gospel fulfills and surpasses the Old Law and brings it to perfection: its promises, through the Beatitudes of the Kingdom of heaven; its commandments, by reforming the heart, the root of human acts.
- 1985 The New Law is a law of love, a law of grace, a law of freedom.
- 1986 Besides its precepts the New Law includes the evangelical counsels. "The Church's holiness is fostered in a special way by the manifold counsels which the Lord proposes to his disciples in the Gospel" (LG 42 §2).

ARTICLE 2

GRACE AND JUSTIFICATION

I. JUSTIFICATION

1987 The grace of the Holy Spirit has the power to justify us, that is, to cleanse us from our sins and to communicate to us "the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ" and through Baptism.³⁴ 734

But if we have died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him. For we know that Christ being raised from the dead will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. The death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. So you also must consider yourselves as dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus.³⁵

1988 Through the power of the Holy Spirit we take part in Christ's Passion by dying to sin, and in his Resurrection by being born to a new life; we are members of his Body which is the Church, branches grafted onto the vine which is himself.³⁶ 654

[God] gave himself to us through his Spirit. By the participation of the Spirit, we become communicants in the divine nature. . . . For this reason, those in whom the Spirit dwells are divinized.³⁷ 460

34 Rom 3:22; cf. 6:3-4.

35 Rom 6:8-11.

36 Cf. 1 Cor 12; Jn 15:1-4.

37 St. Athanasius, *Ep. Serap.* 1, 24: PG 26, 585 and 588.

1989 The first work of the grace of the Holy Spirit is *conversion*,
 effecting justification in accordance with Jesus' proclamation at the
 1427 beginning of the Gospel: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at
 hand."³⁸ Moved by grace, man turns toward God and away from
 sin, thus accepting forgiveness and righteousness from on high.
 "Justification is not only the remission of sins, but also the sancti-
 fication and renewal of the interior man."³⁹

1990 Justification *detaches man from sin* which contradicts the
 love of God, and purifies his heart of sin. Justification follows upon
 1446 God's merciful initiative of offering forgiveness. It reconciles man
 1733 with God. It frees from the enslavement to sin, and it heals.

1991 Justification is at the same time *the acceptance of God's*
righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ. Righteousness (or "jus-
 tice") here means the rectitude of divine love. With justification,
 1812 faith, hope, and charity are poured into our hearts, and obedience
 to the divine will is granted us.

617 1992 Justification has been *merited for us by the Passion of Christ*
 who offered himself on the cross as a living victim, holy and
 pleasing to God, and whose blood has become the instrument of
 atonement for the sins of all men. Justification is conferred in
 1266 Baptism, the sacrament of faith. It conforms us to the righteousness
 of God, who makes us inwardly just by the power of his mercy. Its
 294 purpose is the glory of God and of Christ, and the gift of eternal
 life.⁴⁰

But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart
 from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to
 it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for
 all who believe. For there is no distinction: since all have
 sinned and fall short of the glory of God, they are justified
 by his grace as a gift, through the redemption which is in
 Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as an expiation by his
 blood, to be received by faith. This was to show God's
 righteousness, because in his divine forbearance he had
 passed over former sins; it was to prove at the present time
 that he himself is righteous and that he justifies him who has
 faith in Jesus.⁴¹

38 Mt 4:17.

39 Council of Trent (1547): DS 1528.

40 Cf. Council of Trent (1547): DS 1529.

41 Rom 3:21-26.

1993 Justification establishes *cooperation between God's grace and man's freedom*. On man's part it is expressed by the assent of faith to the Word of God, which invites him to conversion, and in the cooperation of charity with the prompting of the Holy Spirit who precedes and preserves his assent: 2008

When God touches man's heart through the illumination of the Holy Spirit, man himself is not inactive while receiving that inspiration, since he could reject it; and yet, without God's grace, he cannot by his own free will move himself toward justice in God's sight.⁴² 2068

1994 Justification is the *most excellent work of God's love* made manifest in Christ Jesus and granted by the Holy Spirit. It is the opinion of St. Augustine that "the justification of the wicked is a greater work than the creation of heaven and earth," because "heaven and earth will pass away but the salvation and justification of the elect . . . will not pass away."⁴³ He holds also that the justification of sinners surpasses the creation of the angels in justice, in that it bears witness to a greater mercy. 312 412

1995 The Holy Spirit is the master of the interior life. By giving birth to the "inner man,"⁴⁴ justification entails the *sanctification* of his whole being: 741

Just as you once yielded your members to impurity and to greater and greater iniquity, so now yield your members to righteousness for sanctification. . . . But now that you have been set free from sin and have become slaves of God, the return you get is sanctification and its end, eternal life.⁴⁵

II. GRACE

1996 Our justification comes from the grace of God. Grace is *favor, the free and undeserved help* that God gives us to respond to his call to become children of God, adoptive sons, partakers of the divine nature and of eternal life.⁴⁶ 153

1997 Grace is a *participation in the life of God*. It introduces us into the intimacy of Trinitarian life: by Baptism the Christian participates in the grace of Christ, the Head of his Body. As an "adopted 375 260

42 Council of Trent (1547): DS 1525.

43 St. Augustine, *In Jo. ev.* 72, 3: PL 35, 1823.

44 Cf. *Rom* 7:22; *Eph* 3:16.

45 *Rom* 6:19, 22.

46 Cf. *Jn* 1:12-18; 17:3; *Rom* 8:14-17; 2 *Pet* 1:3-4.

son" he can henceforth call God "Father," in union with the only Son. He receives the life of the Spirit who breathes charity into him and who forms the Church.

1719 **1998** This vocation to eternal life is *supernatural*. It depends entirely on God's gratuitous initiative, for he alone can reveal and give himself. It surpasses the power of human intellect and will, as that of every other creature.⁴⁷

1966 **1999** The grace of Christ is the gratuitous gift that God makes to us of his own life, infused by the Holy Spirit into our soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it. It is the *sanctifying* or *deifying* grace received in Baptism. It is in us the source of the work of sanctification.⁴⁸

Therefore if any one is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, behold, the new has come. All this is from God, who through Christ reconciled us to himself.⁴⁹

2000 Sanctifying grace is an habitual gift, a stable and supernatural disposition that perfects the soul itself to enable it to live with God, to act by his love. *Habitual grace*, the permanent disposition to live and act in keeping with God's call, is distinguished from *actual graces* which refer to God's interventions, whether at the beginning of conversion or in the course of the work of sanctification.

490 **2001** The *preparation of man* for the reception of grace is already a work of grace. This latter is needed to arouse and sustain our collaboration in justification through faith, and in sanctification through charity. God brings to completion in us what he has begun, "since he who completes his work by cooperating with our will began by working so that we might will it."⁵⁰

Indeed we also work, but we are only collaborating with God who works, for his mercy has gone before us. It has gone before us so that we may be healed, and follows us so that once healed, we may be given life; it goes before us so that we may be called, and follows us so that we may be glorified; it goes before us so that we may live devoutly, and follows us so that we may always live with God: for without him we can do nothing.⁵¹

47 Cf. 1 Cor 2:7-9.

48 Cf. Jn 4:14; 7:38-39.

49 2 Cor 5:17-18.

50 St. Augustine, *De gratia et libero arbitrio*, 17: PL 44, 901.

51 St. Augustine, *De natura et gratia*, 31: PL 44, 264.

2002 God's free initiative demands *man's free response*, for God has created man in his image by conferring on him, along with freedom, the power to know him and love him. The soul only enters freely into the communion of love. God immediately touches and directly moves the heart of man. He has placed in man a longing for truth and goodness that only he can satisfy. The promises of "eternal life" respond, beyond all hope, to this desire: 1742

If at the end of your very good works . . . , you rested on the seventh day, it was to foretell by the voice of your book that at the end of our works, which are indeed "very good" since you have given them to us, we shall also rest in you on the sabbath of eternal life.⁵²

2550

2003 Grace is first and foremost the gift of the Spirit who justifies and sanctifies us. But grace also includes the gifts that the Spirit grants us to associate us with his work, to enable us to collaborate in the salvation of others and in the growth of the Body of Christ, the Church. There are *sacramental graces*, gifts proper to the different sacraments. There are furthermore *special graces*, also called *charisms* after the Greek term used by St. Paul and meaning "favor," "gratuitous gift," "benefit."⁵³ Whatever their character—sometimes it is extraordinary, such as the gift of miracles or of tongues—charisms are oriented toward sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church. They are at the service of charity which builds up the Church.⁵⁴ 1108 1127 799-801

2004 Among the special graces ought to be mentioned the *graces of state* that accompany the exercise of the responsibilities of the Christian life and of the ministries within the Church:

Having gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let us use them: if prophecy, in proportion to our faith; if service, in our serving; he who teaches, in his teaching; he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who contributes, in liberality; he who gives aid, with zeal; he who does acts of mercy, with cheerfulness.⁵⁵

52 St. Augustine, *Conf.* 13, 36, 51: PL 32, 868; cf. *Gen* 1:31.

53 Cf. *LG* 12.

54 Cf. *1 Cor* 12.

55 *Rom* 12:6-8.

2005 Since it belongs to the supernatural order, grace *escapes our experience* and cannot be known except by faith. We cannot therefore rely on our feelings or our works to conclude that we are justified and saved.⁵⁶ However, according to the Lord's words—"Thus you will know them by their fruits"⁵⁷—reflection on God's blessings in our life and in the lives of the saints offers us a guarantee that grace is at work in us and spurs us on to an ever greater faith and an attitude of trustful poverty.

A pleasing illustration of this attitude is found in the reply of St. Joan of Arc to a question posed as a trap by her ecclesiastical judges: "Asked if she knew that she was in God's grace, she replied: 'If I am not, may it please God to put me in it; if I am, may it please God to keep me there.'"⁵⁸

III. MERIT

For you are praised in the company of your Saints and, in crowning their merits, you crown your own gifts.⁵⁹

1723 **2006** The term "merit" refers in general to the *recompense owed* by a community or a society for the action of one of its members, experienced either as beneficial or harmful, deserving reward or
1807 punishment. Merit is relative to the virtue of justice, in conformity with the principle of equality which governs it.

2007 With regard to God, there is no strict right to any merit on
42 the part of man. Between God and us there is an immeasurable inequality, for we have received everything from him, our Creator.

2008 The merit of man before God in the Christian life arises from the fact that *God has freely chosen to associate man with the work*
306 *of his grace*. The fatherly action of God is first on his own initiative,
155 and then follows man's free acting through his collaboration, so
970 that the merit of good works is to be attributed in the first place to the grace of God, then to the faithful. Man's merit, moreover, itself is due to God, for his good actions proceed in Christ, from the predispositions and assistance given by the Holy Spirit.

56 Cf. Council of Trent (1547): DS 1533-1534.

57 Mt 7:20.

58 Acts of the trial of St. Joan of Arc.

59 *Roman Missal*, Preface I of Saints; *Qui in Sanctorum concilio celebraris, et eorum coronando merita tua dona coronas*, citing the "Doctor of grace," St. Augustine, *En. in Ps.* 102, 7: PL 37, 1321-1322.

2009 Filial adoption, in making us partakers by grace in the divine nature, can bestow *true merit* on us as a result of God's gratuitous justice. This is our right by grace, the full right of love, making us "co-heirs" with Christ and worthy of obtaining "the promised inheritance of eternal life."⁶⁰ The merits of our good works are gifts of the divine goodness.⁶¹ "Grace has gone before us; now we are given what is due. . . . Our merits are God's gifts."⁶²

604

2010 Since the initiative belongs to God in the order of grace, *no one can merit the initial grace* of forgiveness and justification, at the beginning of conversion. Moved by the Holy Spirit and by charity, *we can then merit* for ourselves and for others the graces needed for our sanctification, for the increase of grace and charity, and for the attainment of eternal life. Even temporal goods like health and friendship can be merited in accordance with God's wisdom. These graces and goods are the object of Christian prayer. Prayer attends to the grace we need for meritorious actions.

1998

2011 *The charity of Christ is the source in us of all our merits* before God. Grace, by uniting us to Christ in active love, ensures the supernatural quality of our acts and consequently their merit before God and before men. The saints have always had a lively awareness that their merits were pure grace.

492

After earth's exile, I hope to go and enjoy you in the fatherland, but I do not want to lay up merits for heaven. I want to work for your *love alone*. . . . In the evening of this life, I shall appear before you with empty hands, for I do not ask you, Lord, to count my works. All our justice is blemished in your eyes. I wish, then, to be clothed in your own *justice* and to receive from your *love* the eternal possession of *yourself*.⁶³

1460

60 Council of Trent (1547): DS 1546.

61 Cf. Council of Trent (1547): DS 1548.

62 St. Augustine, *Sermo* 298, 4-5: PL 38, 1367.

63 St. Thérèse of Lisieux, "Act of Offering" in *Story of a Soul*, tr. John Clarke (Washington DC: ICS, 1981), 277.

IV. CHRISTIAN HOLINESS

2012 “We know that in everything God works for good with
those who love him . . . For those whom he foreknew he also
459 predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, in order that
he might be the first-born among many brethren. And those whom
he predestined he also called; and those whom he called he also
justified; and those whom he justified he also glorified.”⁶⁴

2013 “All Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the
915, 2545 fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity.”⁶⁵ All are
825 called to holiness: “Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect.”⁶⁶

In order to reach this perfection the faithful should use the
strength dealt out to them by Christ’s gift, so that . . . doing
the will of the Father in everything, they may wholeheart-
edly devote themselves to the glory of God and to the service
of their neighbor. Thus the holiness of the People of God will
grow in fruitful abundance, as is clearly shown in the history
of the Church through the lives of so many saints.⁶⁷

2014 Spiritual progress tends toward ever more intimate union
with Christ. This union is called “mystical” because it participates
774 in the mystery of Christ through the sacraments—“the holy mys-
teries”—and, in him, in the mystery of the Holy Trinity. God calls
us all to this intimate union with him, even if the special graces or
extraordinary signs of this mystical life are granted only to some
for the sake of manifesting the gratuitous gift given to all.

2015 The way of perfection passes by way of the Cross. There is
no holiness without renunciation and spiritual battle.⁶⁸ Spiritual
407, 2725 progress entails the asceticism and mortification that gradually lead
1438 to living in the peace and joy of the Beatitudes:

He who climbs never stops going from beginning to begin-
ning, through beginnings that have no end. He never stops
desiring what he already knows.⁶⁹

64 *Rom* 8:28-30.

65 *LG* 40 § 2.

66 *Mt* 5:48.

67 *LG* 40 § 2.

68 *Cf.* 2 *Tim* 4.

69 St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Hom. in Cant.* 8: PG 44, 941C.

2016 The children of our holy mother the Church rightly hope for *the grace of final perseverance and the recompense* of God their Father for the good works accomplished with his grace in communion with Jesus.⁷⁰ Keeping the same rule of life, believers share the “blessed hope” of those whom the divine mercy gathers into the “holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband.”⁷¹

IN BRIEF

- 2017** The grace of the Holy Spirit confers upon us the righteousness of God. Uniting us by faith and Baptism to the Passion and Resurrection of Christ, the Spirit makes us sharers in his life.
- 2018** Like conversion, justification has two aspects. Moved by grace, man turns toward God and away from sin, and so accepts forgiveness and righteousness from on high.
- 2019** Justification includes the remission of sins, sanctification, and the renewal of the inner man.
- 2020** Justification has been merited for us by the Passion of Christ. It is granted us through Baptism. It conforms us to the righteousness of God, who justifies us. It has for its goal the glory of God and of Christ, and the gift of eternal life. It is the most excellent work of God’s mercy.
- 2021** Grace is the help God gives us to respond to our vocation of becoming his adopted sons. It introduces us into the intimacy of the Trinitarian life.
- 2022** The divine initiative in the work of grace precedes, prepares, and elicits the free response of man. Grace responds to the deepest yearnings of human freedom, calls freedom to cooperate with it, and perfects freedom.
- 2023** Sanctifying grace is the gratuitous gift of his life that God makes to us; it is infused by the Holy Spirit into the soul to heal it of sin and to sanctify it.
- 2024** Sanctifying grace makes us “pleasing to God.” Charisms, special graces of the Holy Spirit, are

⁷⁰ Cf. Council of Trent (1547): DS 1576.

⁷¹ *Rev* 21:2.

oriented to sanctifying grace and are intended for the common good of the Church. God also acts through many actual graces, to be distinguished from habitual grace which is permanent in us.

- 2025 We can have merit in God's sight only because of God's free plan to associate man with the work of his grace. Merit is to be ascribed in the first place to the grace of God, and secondly to man's collaboration. Man's merit is due to God.
- 2026 The grace of the Holy Spirit can confer true merit on us, by virtue of our adoptive filiation, and in accordance with God's gratuitous justice. Charity is the principal source of merit in us before God.
- 2027 No one can merit the initial grace which is at the origin of conversion. Moved by the Holy Spirit, we can merit for ourselves and for others all the graces needed to attain eternal life, as well as necessary temporal goods.
- 2028 "All Christians . . . are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity" (LG 40 § 2). "Christian perfection has but one limit, that of having none" (St. Gregory of Nyssa, *De vita Mos.*: PG 44, 300D).
- 2029 "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me" (Mt 16:24).

ARTICLE 3

THE CHURCH, MOTHER AND TEACHER

- 2030 It is in the Church, in communion with all the baptized, that the Christian fulfills his vocation. From the Church he receives the Word of God containing the teachings of "the law of Christ."⁷² From the Church he receives the grace of the sacraments that sustains him on the "way." From the Church he learns the *example*
- 828 *of holiness* and recognizes its model and source in the all-holy Virgin Mary; he discerns it in the authentic witness of those who live it; he discovers it in the spiritual tradition and long history of the saints

72 Gal 6:2.

who have gone before him and whom the liturgy celebrates in the 1172
rhythms of the sanctoral cycle.

2031 *The moral life is spiritual worship.* We “present [our] bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God,”⁷³ within the Body of Christ that we form and in communion with the offering of his 1368
Eucharist. In the liturgy and the celebration of the sacraments, prayer and teaching are conjoined with the grace of Christ to enlighten and nourish Christian activity. As does the whole of the Christian life, the moral life finds its source and summit in the Eucharistic sacrifice.

I. MORAL LIFE AND THE MAGISTERIUM OF THE CHURCH 85-87 888-892

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.”⁷⁴ “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 2246
human affairs to the extent that they are required by the fundamental rights of the human person or the salvation of souls.”⁷⁵ 2420

2033 The *Magisterium of the Pastors of the Church* in moral matters is ordinarily exercised in catechesis and preaching, with the help of the works of theologians and spiritual authors. Thus from generation to generation, under the aegis and vigilance of the pastors, the “deposit” of Christian moral teaching has been handed 84
on, a deposit composed of a characteristic body of rules, commandments, and virtues proceeding from faith in Christ and animated by charity. Alongside the Creed and the Our Father, the basis for this catechesis has traditionally been the Decalogue which sets out the principles of moral life valid for all men.

2034 The Roman Pontiff and the bishops are “authentic teachers, that is, teachers endowed with the authority of Christ, who preach the faith to the people entrusted to them, the faith to be believed and put into practice.”⁷⁶ The *ordinary* and universal *Magisterium* of the Pope and the bishops in communion with him teach the faithful the truth to believe, the charity to practice, the beatitude to hope for.

73 Rom 12:1.

74 1 Tim 3:15; LG 17.

75 CIC, can. 747 § 2.

76 LG 25.

2035 The supreme degree of participation in the authority of Christ is ensured by the charism of *infallibility*. This infallibility extends as far as does the deposit of divine Revelation; it also extends to all those elements of doctrine, including morals, without which the saving truths of the faith cannot be preserved, explained, or observed.⁷⁷

2036 The authority of the Magisterium extends also to the specific precepts of the *natural law*, because their observance, demanded by the Creator, is necessary for salvation. In recalling the prescriptions of the natural law, the Magisterium of the Church exercises an essential part of its prophetic office of proclaiming to men what they truly are and reminding them of what they should be before God.⁷⁸

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.⁷⁹ 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.

2038 In the work of teaching and applying Christian morality, the Church needs the dedication of pastors, the knowledge of theologians, and the contribution of all Christians and men of good will. Faith and the practice of the Gospel provide each person with an experience of life “in Christ,” who enlightens him and makes him able to evaluate the divine and human realities according to the Spirit of God.⁸⁰ Thus the Holy Spirit can use the humblest to enlighten the learned and those in the highest positions.

⁷⁷ Cf. LG 25; CDF, declaration, *Mysterium Ecclesiae* 3.

⁷⁸ Cf. DH 14.

⁷⁹ Cf. CIC, can. 213.

⁸⁰ Cf. 1 Cor 2:10-15.

2039 Ministries should be exercised in a spirit of fraternal service and dedication to the Church, in the name of the Lord.⁸¹ At the same time the conscience of each person should avoid confining itself to individualistic considerations in its moral judgments of the person's own acts. As far as possible conscience should take account of the good of all, as expressed in the moral law, natural and revealed, and consequently in the law of the Church and in the authoritative teaching of the Magisterium on moral questions. Personal conscience and reason should not be set in opposition to the moral law or the Magisterium of the Church. 1783

2040 Thus a true *filial spirit toward the Church* can develop among Christians. It is the normal flowering of the baptismal grace which has begotten us in the womb of the Church and made us members of the Body of Christ. In her motherly care, the Church grants us the mercy of God which prevails over all our sins and is especially at work in the sacrament of reconciliation. With a mother's foresight, she also lavishes on us day after day in her liturgy the nourishment of the Word and Eucharist of the Lord. 167

II. THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH

2041 The precepts of the Church are set in the context of a moral life bound to and nourished by liturgical life. The obligatory character of these positive laws decreed by the pastoral authorities is meant to guarantee to the faithful the very necessary minimum in the spirit of prayer and moral effort, in the growth in love of God and neighbor:

2042 The first precept ("You shall attend Mass on Sundays and on holy days of obligation and rest from servile labor") requires the faithful to sanctify the day commemorating the Resurrection of the Lord as well as the principal liturgical feasts honoring the mysteries of the Lord, the Blessed Virgin Mary, and the saints; in the first place, by participating in the Eucharistic celebration, in which the Christian community is gathered, and by resting from those works and activities which could impede such a sanctification of these days.⁸² 1389 2180

The second precept ("You shall confess your sins at least once a year.") ensures preparation for the Eucharist by the reception of the sacrament of reconciliation, which continues Baptism's work of conversion and forgiveness.⁸³ 1457

81 Cf. *Rom* 12:8, 11.

82 Cf. CIC, cann. 1246-1248; CCEO, can. 880 § 3, 881 §§ 1, 2, 4.

83 Cf. CIC, can. 989; CCEO, can. 719.

1389 The third precept (“You shall receive the sacrament of the Eucharist at least during the Easter season”) guarantees as a minimum the reception of the Lord’s Body and Blood in connection with the Paschal feasts, the origin and center of the Christian liturgy.⁸⁴

2043 The fourth precept (“You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church”) ensures the times of asceticism and penance which prepare us for the liturgical feasts and help us acquire mastery over our instincts and freedom of heart.⁸⁵

1387 The fifth precept (“You shall help to provide for the needs of the Church”) means that the faithful are obliged to assist with the material needs of the Church, each according to his own ability.⁸⁶

1438 The faithful also have the duty of providing for the material needs of the Church, each according to his abilities.⁸⁷

III. MORAL LIFE AND MISSIONARY WITNESS

2044 The fidelity of the baptized is a primordial condition for the proclamation of the Gospel and for the Church’s mission in the world. In order that the message of salvation can show the power of its truth and radiance before men, it must be authenticated by the witness of the life of Christians. “The witness of a Christian life and good works done in a supernatural spirit have great power to draw men to the faith and to God.”⁸⁸

753 2045 Because they are members of the Body whose Head is Christ,⁸⁹ Christians contribute to *building up the Church* by the constancy of their convictions and their moral lives. The Church increases, grows, and develops through the holiness of her faithful, until “we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.”⁹⁰

2046 By living with the mind of Christ, Christians *hasten the coming of the Reign of God*, “a kingdom of justice, love and peace.”⁹¹ They do not, for all that, abandon their earthly tasks; faithful to their master, they fulfill them with uprightness, patience, and love.

84 Cf. CIC, can. 920; CCEO, cann. 708; 881 § 3.

85 Cf. CIC, cann. 1249-1251; CCEO can. 882.

86 Cf. CIC, can. 222; CCEO, can. 25; *Furthermore, episcopal conferences can establish other ecclesiastical precepts for their own territories* (Cf. CIC, can. 455).

87 Cf. CIC, can. 222.

88 AA 6 § 2.

89 Cf. Eph 1:22.

90 Eph 4:13; cf. LG 39.

91 *Roman Missal*, Preface for the Solemnity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, King of the Universe.

IN BRIEF

- 2047** The moral life is a spiritual worship. Christian activity finds its nourishment in the liturgy and the celebration of the sacraments.
- 2048** The precepts of the Church concern the moral and Christian life united with the liturgy and nourished by it.
- 2049** The Magisterium of the Pastors of the Church in moral matters is ordinarily exercised in catechesis and preaching, on the basis of the Decalogue which states the principles of moral life valid for every man.
- 2050** The Roman Pontiff and the bishops, as authentic teachers, preach to the People of God the faith which is to be believed and applied in moral life. It is also incumbent on them to pronounce on moral questions that fall within the natural law and reason.
- 2051** The infallibility of the Magisterium of the Pastors extends to all the elements of doctrine, including moral doctrine, without which the saving truths of the faith cannot be preserved, expounded, or observed.
-

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20:2-17

I am the LORD your God,
who brought you out
of the land of Egypt,
out of the house of bondage.

You shall have no other gods before me.
You shall not make for yourself a
graven image,
or any likeness of anything that is in
heaven above, or that is in the earth
beneath, or that is in the water under the
earth; you shall not bow down to them
or serve them; for I the LORD
your God am a jealous God, visiting
the iniquity of the fathers upon the
children to the third and the fourth
generation of those who hate me, but
showing steadfast love to thousands
of those who love me and keep my
commandments.

You shall not take
the name of the LORD
your God in vain;
for the LORD will not hold him guiltless
who takes his name in vain.

Remember the sabbath day, to keep
it holy. Six days you shall labor,
and do all your work; but the seventh
day is a sabbath to the LORD your
God; in it you shall not do any work,
you, or your son, or your daughter,
your manservant, or your
maidservant or your cattle, or the
sojourner who is within your gates;
for in six days the LORD made heaven
and earth, the sea, and all that is in
them, and rested the seventh day;
therefore the LORD blessed the
sabbath day and hallowed it.

Deuteronomy 5:6-21

I am the LORD
your God,
who brought you
out
of the land of
Egypt,
out of the house
of bondage.

You shall have
no other gods
before me . . .

You shall not take
the name of the
LORD
your God in vain . . .

Observe the
sabbath day, to
keep it holy . . .

A Traditional Catechetical Formula

1. I am the LORD
your God:
you shall not have
strange gods before
me.

2. You shall not take
the name of the
LORD your God in
vain.

3. Remember to
keep holy the
LORD's Day.

The Ten Commandments

Exodus 20:2-17

Honor your father and your mother,
that your days may be long in the land
which the LORD your God gives you.

You shall not kill.

You shall not commit adultery.

You shall not steal.

You shall not bear false witness against
your neighbor.

You shall not covet
your neighbor's house;
you shall not covet
your neighbor's wife,
or his manservant, or his
maidservant, or his ox,
or his ass, or anything
that is your neighbor's.

Deuteronomy 5:6-21

Honor your
father and your
mother . . .

You shall not kill.

Neither shall you
commit adultery.

Neither shall you
steal.

Neither shall you
bear false witness
against your
neighbor.

Neither shall you
covet your
neighbor's wife . . .

You shall not
desire . . .
anything that is
your neighbor's.

A Traditional Catechetical Formula

4. Honor your
father and your
mother.

5. You shall not
kill.

6. You shall not
commit adultery.

7. You shall not
steal.

8. You shall not
bear false witness
against your
neighbor.

9. You shall not
covet your
neighbor's wife.

10. You shall not
covet your
neighbor's goods.

SECTION TWO

THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

"Teacher, what must I do . . . ?"

2052 "Teacher, what good deed must I do, to have eternal life?" To the young man who asked this question, Jesus answers first by invoking the necessity to recognize God as the "One there is who is good," as the supreme Good and the source of all good. Then Jesus tells him: "If you would enter life, keep the commandments."
1858 And he cites for his questioner the precepts that concern love of neighbor: "You shall not kill, You shall not commit adultery, You shall not steal, You shall not bear false witness, Honor your father and mother." Finally Jesus sums up these commandments positively: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."¹

2053 To this first reply Jesus adds a second: "If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; and come, follow me."² This reply does not do away with the first: following Jesus Christ involves keeping the Commandments. The Law has not been abolished,³ but rather
1968 man is invited to rediscover it in the person of his Master who is its perfect fulfillment. In the three synoptic Gospels, Jesus' call to the rich young man to follow him, in the obedience of a disciple and in the observance of the Commandments, is joined to the call
1973 to poverty and chastity.⁴ The evangelical counsels are inseparable from the Commandments.

2054 Jesus acknowledged the Ten Commandments, but he also showed the power of the Spirit at work in their letter. He preached
581 a "righteousness [which] exceeds that of the scribes and Pharisees"⁵ as well as that of the Gentiles.⁶ He unfolded all the demands of the Commandments. "You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not kill.' . . . But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment."⁷

1 Mt 19:16-19.
2 Mt 19:21.
3 Cf. Mt 5:17.
4 Cf. Mt 19:6-12, 21, 23-29.
5 Mt 5:20.
6 Cf. Mt 5:46-47.
7 Mt 5:21-22.

2055 When someone asks him, "Which commandment in the Law is the greatest?"⁸ Jesus replies: "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 a second is like it: You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments hang all the Law and the prophets."⁹ The Decalogue must be interpreted in light of this twofold yet single commandment of love, the fullness of the Law: 129

The commandments: "You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, You shall not steal, You shall not covet," and any other commandment, are summed up in this sentence: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.¹⁰

The Decalogue in Sacred Scripture

2056 The word "Decalogue" means literally "ten words."¹¹ God revealed these "ten words" to his people on the holy mountain. They were written "with the finger of God,"¹² unlike the other commandments written by Moses.¹³ They are pre-eminently 700 the words of God. They are handed on to us in the books of *Exodus*¹⁴ and *Deuteronomy*.¹⁵ Beginning with the Old Testament, the sacred books refer to the "ten words,"¹⁶ but it is in the New Covenant in Jesus Christ that their full meaning will be revealed. 62

2057 The Decalogue must first be understood in the context of the Exodus, God's great liberating event at the center of the Old Covenant. Whether formulated as negative commandments, prohibitions, or as positive precepts such as: "Honor your father and mother," the "ten words" point out the conditions of a life freed from the slavery of sin. The Decalogue is a path of life: 2084

If you love the LORD your God, by walking in his ways, and by keeping his commandments and his statutes and his ordinances, then you shall live and multiply.¹⁷

8 Mt 22:36.

9 Mt 22:37-40; cf. *Deut* 6:5; *Lev* 19:18.

10 *Rom* 13:9-10.

11 *Ex* 34:28; *Deut* 4:13; 10:4.

12 *Ex* 31:18; *Deut* 5:22.

13 Cf. *Deut* 31:9, 24.

14 Cf. *Ex* 20:1-17.

15 Cf. *Deut* 5:6-22.

16 Cf. for example *Hos* 4:2; *Jer* 7:9; *Ezek* 18:5-9.

17 *Deut* 30:16.

2170 This liberating power of the Decalogue appears, for example, in the commandment about the sabbath rest, directed also to foreigners and slaves:

You shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out thence with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm.¹⁸

1962 **2058** The “ten words” sum up and proclaim God’s law: “These words the LORD spoke to all your assembly at the mountain out of the midst of the fire, the cloud, and the thick darkness, with a loud voice; and he added no more. And he wrote them upon two tablets of stone, and gave them to me.”¹⁹ For this reason these two tablets are called “the Testimony.” In fact, they contain the terms of the covenant concluded between God and his people. These “tablets of the Testimony” were to be deposited in “the ark.”²⁰

707 **2059** The “ten words” are pronounced by God in the midst of a theophany (“The LORD spoke with you face to face at the mountain, out of the midst of the fire.”²¹). They belong to God’s revelation of himself and his glory. The gift of the Commandments is the gift of
2823 God himself and his holy will. In making his will known, God reveals himself to his people.

2060 The gift of the commandments and of the Law is part of the covenant God sealed with his own. In *Exodus*, the revelation of the “ten words” is granted between the proposal of the covenant²² and its conclusion—after the people had committed themselves to “do” all that the Lord had said, and to “obey” it.²³ The Decalogue
62 is never handed on without first recalling the covenant (“The LORD our God made a covenant with us in Horeb.”).²⁴

2061 The Commandments take on their full meaning within the covenant. According to Scripture, man’s moral life has all its meaning in and through the covenant. The first of the “ten words” recalls that God loved his people first:

18 *Deut* 5:15.

19 *Deut* 5:22.

20 *Ex* 25:16; 31:18; 32:15; 34:29; 40:1-2.

21 *Deut* 5:4.

22 Cf. *Ex* 19.

23 Cf. *Ex* 24:7.

24 *Deut* 5:2.

Since there was a passing from the paradise of freedom to the slavery of this world, in punishment for sin, the first phrase of the Decalogue, the first word of God's commandments, bears on freedom: "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery."²⁵ 2086

2062 The Commandments properly so-called come in the second place: they express the implications of belonging to God through the establishment of the covenant. Moral existence is a *response* to the Lord's loving initiative. It is the acknowledgement 142 and homage given to God and a worship of thanksgiving. It is 2002 cooperation with the plan God pursues in history.

2063 The covenant and dialogue between God and man are also attested to by the fact that all the obligations are stated in the first person ("I am the Lord.") and addressed by God to another personal subject ("you"). In all God's commandments, the *singular* personal pronoun designates the recipient. God makes his will 878 known to each person in particular, at the same time as he makes it known to the whole people:

The Lord prescribed love towards God and taught justice towards neighbor, so that man would be neither unjust, nor unworthy of God. Thus, through the Decalogue, God prepared man to become his friend and to live in harmony with his neighbor. . . . The words of the Decalogue remain likewise for us Christians. Far from being abolished, they have received amplification and development from the fact of the coming of the Lord in the flesh.²⁶

The Decalogue in the Church's tradition

2064 In fidelity to Scripture and in conformity with the example of Jesus, the tradition of the Church has acknowledged the primordial importance and significance of the Decalogue.

2065 Ever since St. Augustine, the Ten Commandments have occupied a predominant place in the catechesis of baptismal candidates and the faithful. In the fifteenth century, the custom arose of expressing the commandments of the Decalogue in rhymed formulae, easy to memorize and in positive form. They are still in use today. The catechisms of the Church have often expounded Christian morality by following the order of the Ten Commandments.

25 Origen, *Hom. in Ex.* 8, 1: PG 12, 350; cf. *Ex* 20:2; *Deut* 5:6.

26 St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.*, 4, 16, 3-4: PG 7/1, 1017-1018.

2066 The division and numbering of the Commandments have varied in the course of history. The present catechism follows the division of the Commandments established by St. Augustine, which has become traditional in the Catholic Church. It is also that of the Lutheran confessions. The Greek Fathers worked out a slightly different division, which is found in the Orthodox Churches and Reformed communities.

2067 The Ten Commandments state what is required in the love of God and love of neighbor. The first three concern love of God,
 1853 and the other seven love of neighbor.

As charity comprises the two commandments to which the Lord related the whole Law and the prophets... so the Ten Commandments were themselves given on two tablets. Three were written on one tablet and seven on the other.²⁷

2068 The Council of Trent teaches that the Ten Commandments are obligatory for Christians and that the justified man is still bound
 1993 to keep them;²⁸ the Second Vatican Council confirms: "The bishops, successors of the apostles, receive from the Lord . . . the mission of teaching all peoples, and of preaching the Gospel to every
 888 creature, so that all men may attain salvation through faith, Baptism and the observance of the Commandments."²⁹

The unity of the Decalogue

2069 The Decalogue forms a coherent whole. Each "word" refers to each of the others and to all of them; they reciprocally
 2534 condition one another. The two tablets shed light on one another; they form an organic unity. To transgress one commandment is to infringe all the others.³⁰ One cannot honor another person without blessing God his Creator. One cannot adore God without loving all men, his creatures. The Decalogue brings man's religious and social life into unity.

The Decalogue and the natural law

1955 **2070** The Ten Commandments belong to God's revelation. At the same time they teach us the true humanity of man. They bring to light the essential duties, and therefore, indirectly, the fundamental rights inherent in the nature of the human person. The Decalogue contains a privileged expression of the natural law:

²⁷ St. Augustine, *Sermo* 33, 2, 2: PL 38, 208.

²⁸ Cf. DS 1569-1570.

²⁹ LG 24.

³⁰ Cf. *Jas* 2:10-11.

From the beginning, God had implanted in the heart of man the precepts of the natural law. Then he was content to remind him of them. This was the Decalogue.³¹

2071 The commandments of the Decalogue, although accessible to reason alone, have been revealed. To attain a complete and certain understanding of the requirements of the natural law, sinful humanity needed this revelation: 1960

A full explanation of the commandments of the Decalogue became necessary in the state of sin because the light of reason was obscured and the will had gone astray.³²

We know God's commandments through the divine revelation proposed to us in the Church, and through the voice of moral conscience. 1777

The obligation of the Decalogue

2072 Since they express man's fundamental duties towards God and towards his neighbor, the Ten Commandments reveal, in their primordial content, *grave* obligations. They are fundamentally immutable, and they oblige always and everywhere. No one can dispense from them. The Ten Commandments are engraved by God in the human heart. 1858 1958

2073 Obedience to the Commandments also implies obligations in matter which is, in itself, light. Thus abusive language is forbidden by the fifth commandment, but would be a grave offense only as a result of circumstances or the offender's intention.

"Apart from me you can do nothing"

2074 Jesus says: "I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he it is that bears much fruit, for apart from me you can do nothing."³³ The fruit referred to in this saying is the holiness of a life made fruitful by union with Christ. When we believe in Jesus Christ, partake of his mysteries, and keep his commandments, the Savior himself comes to love, in us, his Father and his brethren, our Father and our brethren. His person becomes, through the Spirit, the living and interior rule of our activity. "This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you."³⁴ 2732 521

31 St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 4, 15, 1: PG 7/1, 1012.

32 St. Bonaventure, *Comm. sent.* 4, 37, 1, 3.

33 *Jn* 15:5.

34 *Jn* 15:12.

IN BRIEF

- 2075 “What good deed must I do, to have eternal life?”—
“If you would enter into life, keep the command-
ments” (*Mt* 19:16–17).
- 2076 By his life and by his preaching Jesus attested to the
permanent validity of the Decalogue.
- 2077 The gift of the Decalogue is bestowed from within the
covenant concluded by God with his people. God’s
commandments take on their true meaning in and
through this covenant.
- 2078 In fidelity to Scripture and in conformity with Jesus’
example, the tradition of the Church has always ac-
knowledged the primordial importance and signifi-
cance of the Decalogue.
- 2079 The Decalogue forms an organic unity in which each
“word” or “commandment” refers to all the others
taken together. To transgress one commandment is to
infringe the whole Law (cf. *Jas* 2:10–11).
- 2080 The Decalogue contains a privileged expression of
the natural law. It is made known to us by divine rev-
elation and by human reason.
- 2081 The Ten Commandments, in their fundamental con-
tent, state grave obligations. However, obedience to
these precepts also implies obligations in matter
which is, in itself, light.
- 2082 What God commands he makes possible by his grace.
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CHAPTER ONE

“YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND”

2083 Jesus summed up man’s duties toward God in this saying: 367
 “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all
 your soul, and with all your mind.”¹ This immediately echoes the
 solemn call: “Hear, O Israel: the LORD our God is one LORD.”²

God has loved us first. The love of the One God is recalled 199
 in the first of the “ten words.” The commandments then make
 explicit the response of love that man is called to give to his God.

ARTICLE 1

THE FIRST COMMANDMENT

I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land
 of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. You shall have no
 other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself a
 graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven
 above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water
 under the earth; you shall not bow down to them or serve
 them.³

It is written: “You shall worship the Lord your God and him
 only shall you serve.”⁴

I. “YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND HIM ONLY SHALL YOU SERVE”

2084 God makes himself known by recalling his all-powerful,
 loving, and liberating action in the history of the one he addresses:
 “I brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of 2057
 bondage.” The first word contains the first commandment of the
 Law: “You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve him. . . .
 You shall not go after other gods.”⁵ God’s first call and just demand
 is that man accept him and worship him. 398

1 Mt 22:37; cf. Lk 10:27: “. . . and with all your strength.”

2 Deut 6:4.

3 Ex 20:2-5; cf. Deut 5:6-9.

4 Mt 4:10.

5 Deut 6:13-14.

2085 The one and true God first reveals his glory to Israel.⁶ The
 200 revelation of the vocation and truth of man is linked to the revela-
 1701 tion of God. Man's vocation is to make God manifest by acting in
 conformity with his creation "in the image and likeness of God":

There will never be another God, Trypho, and there has been
 no other since the world began . . . than he who made and
 ordered the universe. We do not think that our God is
 different from yours. He is the same who brought your
 fathers out of Egypt "by his powerful hand and his out-
 stretched arm." We do not place our hope in some other god,
 for there is none, but in the same God as you do: the God of
 Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.⁷

2086 "The first commandment embraces faith, hope, and char-
 ity. When we say 'God' we confess a constant, unchangeable being,
 212 always the same, faithful and just, without any evil. It follows that
 we must necessarily accept his words and have complete faith in
 him and acknowledge his authority. He is almighty, merciful, and
 infinitely beneficent. . . . Who could not place all hope in him? Who
 could not love him when contemplating the treasures of goodness
 and love he has poured out on us? Hence the formula God em-
 2061 ploys in the Scripture at the beginning and end of his command-
 ments: 'I am the LORD.'"⁸

1814-1816 Faith

2087 Our moral life has its source in faith in God who reveals
 his love to us. St. Paul speaks of the "obedience of faith"⁹ as our
 143 first obligation. He shows that "ignorance of God" is the principle
 and explanation of all moral deviations.¹⁰ Our duty toward God is
 to believe in him and to bear witness to him.

2088 The first commandment requires us to nourish and protect
 our faith with prudence and vigilance, and to reject everything that
 is opposed to it. There are various ways of sinning against faith:

157 *Voluntary doubt* about the faith disregards or refuses to
 hold as true what God has revealed and the Church proposes for
 belief. *Involuntary doubt* refers to hesitation in believing, difficulty

6 Cf. Ex 19:16-25; 24:15-18.

7 St. Justin, *Dial. cum Tryphone Judaeo* 11, 1: PG 6, 497.

8 *Roman Catechism* 3, 24.

9 *Rom* 1:5; 16:26.

10 Cf. *Rom* 1:18-32.

in overcoming objections connected with the faith, or also anxiety aroused by its obscurity. If deliberately cultivated doubt can lead to spiritual blindness.

2089 *Incredulity* is the neglect of revealed truth or the willful refusal to assent to it. "*Heresy* is the obstinate post-baptismal denial of some truth which must be believed with divine and catholic faith, or it is likewise an obstinate doubt concerning the same; *apostasy* is the total repudiation of the Christian faith; *schism* is the refusal of submission to the Roman Pontiff or of communion with the members of the Church subject to him."¹¹

Hope

1817-1821

2090 When God reveals Himself and calls him, man cannot fully respond to the divine love by his own powers. He must hope that God will give him the capacity to love Him in return and to act in conformity with the commandments of charity. Hope is the confident expectation of divine blessing and the beatific vision of God; it is also the fear of offending God's love and of incurring punishment. 1996

2091 The first commandment is also concerned with sins against hope, namely, despair and presumption:

By *despair*, man ceases to hope for his personal salvation from God, for help in attaining it or for the forgiveness of his sins. Despair is contrary to God's goodness, to his justice—for the Lord is faithful to his promises—and to his mercy. 1864

2092 There are two kinds of *presumption*. Either man presumes upon his own capacities, (hoping to be able to save himself without help from on high), or he presumes upon God's almighty power or his mercy (hoping to obtain his forgiveness without conversion and glory without merit). 2732

11 CIC, can. 751: emphasis added.

1822-1829 **Charity**

2093 Faith in God's love encompasses the call and the obligation to respond with sincere love to divine charity. The first commandment enjoins us to love God above everything and all creatures for him and because of him.¹²

2094 One can sin against God's love in various ways:

— *indifference* neglects or refuses to reflect on divine charity; it fails to consider its convenient goodness and denies its power.

— *ingratitude* fails or refuses to acknowledge divine charity and to return him love for love.

— *lukewarmness* is hesitation or negligence in responding to divine love; it can imply refusal to give oneself over to the prompting of charity.

2733 — *acedia* or spiritual sloth goes so far as to refuse the joy that comes from God and to be repelled by divine goodness.

2303 — *hatred of God* comes from pride. It is contrary to love of God, whose goodness it denies, and whom it presumes to curse as the one who forbids sins and inflicts punishments.

II. "HIM ONLY SHALL YOU SERVE"

2095 The theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity inform and give life to the moral virtues. Thus charity leads us to render
1807 to God what we as creatures owe him in all justice. The *virtue of religion* disposes us to have this attitude.

2628 **Adoration**

2096 Adoration is the first act of the virtue of religion. To adore God is to acknowledge him as God, as the Creator and Savior, the Lord and Master of everything that exists, as infinite and merciful Love. "You shall worship the Lord your God, and him only shall you serve," says Jesus, citing *Deuteronomy*.¹³

¹² Cf. *Deut* 6:4-5.

¹³ *Lk* 4:8; cf. *Deut* 6:13.

2097 To adore God is to acknowledge, in respect and absolute submission, the “nothingness of the creature” who would not exist but for God. To adore God is to praise and exalt him and to humble oneself, as Mary did in the Magnificat, confessing with gratitude that he has done great things and holy is his name.¹⁴ The worship of the one God sets man free from turning in on himself, from the slavery of sin and the idolatry of the world. 2807

Prayer

2558

2098 The acts of faith, hope, and charity enjoined by the first commandment are accomplished in prayer. Lifting up the mind toward God is an expression of our adoration of God: prayer of praise and thanksgiving, intercession and petition. Prayer is an indispensable condition for being able to obey God’s commandments. “[We] ought always to pray and not lose heart.”¹⁵ 2742

Sacrifice

2099 It is right to offer sacrifice to God as a sign of adoration and gratitude, supplication and communion: “Every action done so as to cling to God in communion of holiness, and thus achieve blessedness, is a true sacrifice.”¹⁶ 613

2100 Outward sacrifice, to be genuine, must be the expression of spiritual sacrifice: “The sacrifice acceptable to God is a broken spirit. . . .”¹⁷ The prophets of the Old Covenant often denounced sacrifices that were not from the heart or not coupled with love of neighbor.¹⁸ Jesus recalls the words of the prophet Hosea: “I desire mercy, and not sacrifice.”¹⁹ The only perfect sacrifice is the one that Christ offered on the cross as a total offering to the Father’s love and for our salvation.²⁰ By uniting ourselves with his sacrifice we can make our lives a sacrifice to God. 2711 614 618

14 Cf. *Lk* 1:46-49.

15 *Lk* 18:1.

16 St. Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 10, 6: PL 41, 283.

17 *Ps* 51:17.

18 Cf. *Am* 5:21-25; *Isa* 1:10-20.

19 *Mt* 9:13; 12:7; cf. *Hos* 6:6.

20 Cf. *Heb* 9:13-14.

Promises and vows

1237 **2101** In many circumstances, the Christian is called to make *promises* to God. Baptism and Confirmation, Matrimony and Holy Orders always entail promises. Out of personal devotion, the Christian may also promise to God this action, that prayer, this
1064 alms-giving, that pilgrimage, and so forth. Fidelity to promises made to God is a sign of the respect owed to the divine majesty and of love for a faithful God.

2102 “A *vow* is a deliberate and free promise made to God concerning a possible and better good which must be fulfilled by reason of the virtue of religion.”²¹ A vow is an act of *devotion* in which the Christian dedicates himself to God or promises him some good work. By fulfilling his vows he renders to God what has been promised and consecrated to Him. The *Acts of the Apostles* shows us St. Paul concerned to fulfill the vows he had made.²²

1973 **2103** The Church recognizes an exemplary value in the vows to practice the *evangelical counsels*.²³

914 Mother Church rejoices that she has within herself many men and women who pursue the Savior’s self-emptying more closely and show it forth more clearly, by undertaking poverty with the freedom of the children of God, and renouncing their own will: they submit themselves to man for the sake of God, thus going beyond what is of precept in the matter of perfection, so as to conform themselves more fully to the obedient Christ.²⁴

The Church can, in certain cases and for proportionate reasons, dispense from vows and promises.²⁵

The social duty of religion and the right to religious freedom

2467 **2104** “All men are bound to seek the truth, especially in what concerns God and his Church, and to embrace it and hold on to it as they come to know it.”²⁶ This duty derives from “the very dignity of the human person.”²⁷ It does not contradict a “sincere respect” for different religions which frequently “reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men,”²⁸ nor the requirement of
851 charity, which urges Christians “to treat with love, prudence and

21 CIC, can. 1191 § 1.

22 Cf. *Acts* 18:18; 21:23-24.

23 Cf. CIC, can. 654.

24 LG 42 § 2.

25 Cf. CIC, cann. 692; 1196-1197.

26 DH 1 § 2.

27 DH 2 § 1.

28 NA 2 § 2.

patience those who are in error or ignorance with regard to the faith."²⁹

2105 The duty of offering God genuine worship concerns man both individually and socially. This is "the traditional Catholic teaching on the moral duty of individuals and societies toward the true religion and the one Church of Christ."³⁰ By constantly evangelizing men, the Church works toward enabling them "to infuse 854 the Christian spirit into the mentality and mores, laws and structures of the communities in which [they] live."³¹ The social duty of 898 Christians is to respect and awaken in each man the love of the true and the good. It requires them to make known the worship of the one true religion which subsists in the Catholic and apostolic Church.³² Christians are called to be the light of the world. Thus, the Church shows forth the kingship of Christ over all creation and in particular over human societies.³³

2106 "Nobody may be forced to act against his convictions, nor 160 is anyone to be restrained from acting in accordance with his 1782 conscience in religious matters in private or in public, alone or in 1738 association with others, within due limits."³⁴ This right is based on the very nature of the human person, whose dignity enables him freely to assent to the divine truth which transcends the temporal order. For this reason it "continues to exist even in those who do not live up to their obligation of seeking the truth and adhering to it."³⁵

2107 "If because of the circumstances of a particular people special civil recognition is given to one religious community in the constitutional organization of a state, the right of all citizens and religious communities to religious freedom must be recognized and respected as well."³⁶

2108 The right to religious liberty is neither a moral license to 1740 adhere to error, nor a supposed right to error,³⁷ but rather a natural right of the human person to civil liberty, i.e., immunity, within

29 DH 14 § 4.

30 DH 1 § 3.

31 AA 13 § 1.

32 Cf. DH 1.

33 Cf. AA 13; Leo XIII, *Immortale Dei* 3, 17; Pius XI, *Quas primas* 8, 20.

34 DH 2 § 1.

35 DH 2 § 2.

36 DH 6 § 3.

37 Cf. Leo XIII, *Libertas praestantissimum* 18; Pius XII, AAS 1953, 799.

just limits, from external constraint in religious matters by political authorities. This natural right ought to be acknowledged in the juridical order of society in such a way that it constitutes a civil right.³⁸

- 2244 **2109** The right to religious liberty can of itself be neither unlimited nor limited only by a “public order” conceived in a positivist or naturalist manner.³⁹ The “due limits” which are inherent in it must be determined for each social situation by political prudence, according to the requirements of the common good, and ratified by the civil authority in accordance with “legal principles which are in conformity with the objective moral order.”⁴⁰
- 1906

III. “YOU SHALL HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME”

2110 The first commandment forbids honoring gods other than the one Lord who has revealed himself to his people. It proscribes superstition and irreligion. Superstition in some sense represents a perverse excess of religion; irreligion is the vice contrary by defect to the virtue of religion.

Superstition

2111 Superstition is the deviation of religious feeling and of the practices this feeling imposes. It can even affect the worship we offer the true God, e.g., when one attributes an importance in some way magical to certain practices otherwise lawful or necessary. To attribute the efficacy of prayers or of sacramental signs to their mere external performance, apart from the interior dispositions that they demand, is to fall into superstition.⁴¹

Idolatry

- 2112** The first commandment condemns *polytheism*. It requires man neither to believe in, nor to venerate, other divinities than the one true God. Scripture constantly recalls this rejection of “idols, [of] silver and gold, the work of men’s hands. They have mouths, but do not speak; eyes, but do not see.” These empty idols make their worshippers empty: “Those who make them are like them; so
- 210

38 Cf. *DH* 2.

39 Cf. Pius VI, *Quod aliquantum* (1791)10; Pius IX, *Quanta cura* 3.

40 *DH* 7 § 3.

41 Cf. *Mt* 23:16-22.

are all who trust in them."⁴² God, however, is the "living God"⁴³ who gives life and intervenes in history.

2113 Idolatry not only refers to false pagan worship. It remains a constant temptation to faith. Idolatry consists in divinizing what is not God. Man commits idolatry whenever he honors and reveres a creature in place of God, whether this be gods or demons (for example, satanism), power, pleasure, race, ancestors, the state, money, etc. Jesus says, "You cannot serve God and mammon."⁴⁴ Many martyrs died for not adoring "the Beast"⁴⁵ refusing even to simulate such worship. Idolatry rejects the unique Lordship of God; it is therefore incompatible with communion with God.⁴⁶

2114 Human life finds its unity in the adoration of the one God. The commandment to worship the Lord alone integrates man and saves him from an endless disintegration. Idolatry is a perversion of man's innate religious sense. An idolater is someone who "transfers his indestructible notion of God to anything other than God."⁴⁷

Divination and magic

2115 God can reveal the future to his prophets or to other saints. Still, a sound Christian attitude consists in putting oneself confidently into the hands of Providence for whatever concerns the future, and giving up all unhealthy curiosity about it. Improvidence, however, can constitute a lack of responsibility.

2116 All forms of *divination* are to be rejected: recourse to Satan or demons, conjuring up the dead or other practices falsely supposed to "unveil" the future.⁴⁸ Consulting horoscopes, astrology, palm reading, interpretation of omens and lots, the phenomena of clairvoyance, and recourse to mediums all conceal a desire for power over time, history, and, in the last analysis, other human beings, as well as a wish to conciliate hidden powers. They contradict the honor, respect, and loving fear that we owe to God alone.

2117 All practices of magic or sorcery, by which one attempts to tame occult powers, so as to place them at one's service and have a supernatural power over others—even if this were for the sake

42 Ps 115:4-5, 8; cf. Isa 44:9-20; Jer 10:1-16; Dan 14:1-30; Bar 6; Wis 13:1-15:19.

43 Josh 3:10; Ps 42:3; etc.

44 Mt 6:24.

45 Cf. Rev 13-14.

46 Cf. Gal 5:20; Eph 5:5.

47 Origen, *Contra Celsum* 2, 40: PG 11, 861.

48 Cf. Deut 18:10; Jer 29:8.

of restoring their health—are gravely contrary to the virtue of religion. These practices are even more to be condemned when accompanied by the intention of harming someone, or when they have recourse to the intervention of demons. Wearing charms is also reprehensible. *Spiritism* often implies divination or magical practices; the Church for her part warns the faithful against it. Recourse to so-called traditional cures does not justify either the invocation of evil powers or the exploitation of another's credulity.

Irreligion

2118 God's first commandment condemns the main sins of irreligion: tempting God, in words or deeds, sacrilege, and simony.

2119 *Tempting God* consists in putting his goodness and almighty power to the test by word or deed. Thus Satan tried to induce Jesus to throw himself down from the Temple and, by this gesture, force God to act.⁴⁹ Jesus opposed Satan with the word of God: "You shall not put the LORD your God to the test."⁵⁰ The challenge contained in such tempting of God wounds the respect and trust we owe our Creator and Lord. It always harbors doubt about his love, his providence, and his power.⁵¹

2120 *Sacrilege* consists in profaning or treating unworthily the sacraments and other liturgical actions, as well as persons, things, or places consecrated to God. Sacrilege is a grave sin especially when committed against the Eucharist, for in this sacrament the true Body of Christ is made substantially present for us.⁵²

2121 *Simony* is defined as the buying or selling of spiritual things.⁵³ To Simon the magician, who wanted to buy the spiritual power he saw at work in the apostles, St. Peter responded: "Your silver perish with you, because you thought you could obtain God's gift with money!"⁵⁴ Peter thus held to the words of Jesus: "You received without pay, give without pay."⁵⁵ It is impossible to appropriate to oneself spiritual goods and behave toward them as their owner or master, for they have their source in God. One can receive them only from him, without payment.

49 Cf. *Lk* 4:9.

50 *Deut* 6:16.

51 Cf. *1 Cor* 10:9; *Ex* 17:2-7; *Ps* 95:9.

52 Cf. CIC, cann. 1367; 1376.

53 Cf. *Acts* 8:9-24.

54 *Acts* 8:20.

55 *Mt* 10:8; cf. already *Isa* 55:1.

2122 “The minister should ask nothing for the administration of the sacraments beyond the offerings defined by the competent authority, always being careful that the needy are not deprived of the help of the sacraments because of their poverty.”⁵⁶ The competent authority determines these “offerings” in accordance with the principle that the Christian people ought to contribute to the support of the Church’s ministers. “The laborer deserves his food.”⁵⁷

Atheism

2123 “Many . . . of our contemporaries either do not at all perceive, or explicitly reject, this intimate and vital bond of man to God. Atheism must therefore be regarded as one of the most 29 serious problems of our time.”⁵⁸

2124 The name “atheism” covers many very different phenomena. One common form is the practical materialism which restricts its needs and aspirations to space and time. Atheistic humanism falsely considers man to be “an end to himself, and the sole maker, with supreme control, of his own history.”⁵⁹ Another form of contemporary atheism looks for the liberation of man through economic and social liberation. “It holds that religion, of its very nature, thwarts such emancipation by raising man’s hopes in a future life, thus both deceiving him and discouraging him from working for a better form of life on earth.”⁶⁰

2125 Since it rejects or denies the existence of God, atheism is a sin against the virtue of religion.⁶¹ The imputability of this offense can be significantly diminished in virtue of the intentions and the 1735 circumstances. “Believers can have more than a little to do with the rise of atheism. To the extent that they are careless about their instruction in the faith, or present its teaching falsely, or even fail in their religious, moral, or social life, they must be said to conceal rather than to reveal the true nature of God and of religion.”⁶²

2126 Atheism is often based on a false conception of human autonomy, exaggerated to the point of refusing any dependence on God.⁶³ Yet, “to acknowledge God is in no way to oppose the 396 dignity of man, since such dignity is grounded and brought to 154

⁵⁶ CIC, can. 848.

⁵⁷ *Mt* 10:10; cf. *Lk* 10:7; *1 Cor* 9:5-18; *1 Tim* 5:17-18.

⁵⁸ *GS* 19 § 1.

⁵⁹ *GS* 20 § 1.

⁶⁰ *GS* 20 § 2.

⁶¹ Cf. *Rom* 1:18.

⁶² *GS* 19 § 3.

⁶³ Cf. *GS* 20 § 1.

perfection in God. . . ."⁶⁴ "For the Church knows full well that her message is in harmony with the most secret desires of the human heart."⁶⁵

Agnosticism

2127 Agnosticism assumes a number of forms. In certain cases the agnostic refrains from denying God; instead he postulates the existence of a transcendent being which is incapable of revealing itself, and about which nothing can be said. In other cases, the
36 agnostic makes no judgment about God's existence, declaring it impossible to prove, or even to affirm or deny.

2128 Agnosticism can sometimes include a certain search for
1036 God, but it can equally express indifferentism, a flight from the ultimate question of existence, and a sluggish moral conscience. Agnosticism is all too often equivalent to practical atheism.

1159-1162 IV. "YOU SHALL NOT MAKE FOR YOURSELF A GRAVEN IMAGE . . ."

2129 The divine injunction included the prohibition of every representation of God by the hand of man. *Deuteronomy* explains: "Since you saw no form on the day that the LORD spoke to you at Horeb out of the midst of the fire, beware lest you act corruptly by making a graven image for yourselves, in the form of any figure. . . ."⁶⁶ It is the absolutely transcendent God who revealed
300 himself to Israel. "He is the all," but at the same time "he is greater
2500 than all his works."⁶⁷ He is "the author of beauty."⁶⁸

2130 Nevertheless, already in the Old Testament, God ordained or permitted the making of images that pointed symbolically toward salvation by the incarnate Word: so it was with the bronze serpent, the ark of the covenant, and the cherubim.⁶⁹

2131 Basing itself on the mystery of the incarnate Word, the seventh ecumenical council at Nicaea (787) justified against the
476 iconoclasts the veneration of icons—of Christ, but also of the Mother of God, the angels, and all the saints. By becoming incarnate, the Son of God introduced a new "economy" of images.

64 GS 21 § 3.

65 GS 21 § 7.

66 *Deut* 4:15-16.

67 *Sir* 43:27-28.

68 *Wis* 13:3.

69 Cf. *Num* 21:4-9; *Wis* 16:5-14; *Jn* 3:14-15; *Ex* 25:10-22; *1 Kings* 6:23-28; 7:23-26.

2132 The Christian veneration of images is not contrary to the first commandment which proscribes idols. Indeed, “the honor rendered to an image passes to its prototype,” and “whoever venerates an image venerates the person portrayed in it.”⁷⁰ The honor paid to sacred images is a “respectful veneration,” not the adoration due to God alone:

Religious worship is not directed to images in themselves, considered as mere things, but under their distinctive aspect as images leading us on to God incarnate. The movement toward the image does not terminate in it as image, but tends toward that whose image it is.⁷¹

IN BRIEF

- 2133** “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your strength” (*Deut* 6:5).
- 2134** The first commandment summons man to believe in God, to hope in him, and to love him above all else.
- 2135** “You shall worship the Lord your God” (*Mt* 4:10). Adoring God, praying to him, offering him the worship that belongs to him, fulfilling the promises and vows made to him are acts of the virtue of religion which fall under obedience to the first commandment.
- 2136** The duty to offer God authentic worship concerns man both as an individual and as a social being.
- 2137** “Men of the present day want to profess their religion freely in private and in public” (*DH* 15).
- 2138** Superstition is a departure from the worship that we give to the true God. It is manifested in idolatry, as well as in various forms of divination and magic.
- 2139** Tempting God in words or deeds, sacrilege, and simony are sins of irreligion forbidden by the first commandment.
- 2140** Since it rejects or denies the existence of God, atheism is a sin against the first commandment.
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70 St. Basil, *De Spiritu Sancto* 18, 45: PG 32, 149C; Council of Nicaea II: DS 601; cf. Council of Trent: DS 1821-1825; Vatican Council II: SC 126; LG 67.

71 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* II-II, 81, 3 ad 3.

- 2141 The veneration of sacred images is based on the mystery of the Incarnation of the Word of God. It is not contrary to the first commandment.

ARTICLE 2

THE SECOND COMMANDMENT

You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.⁷²

You have heard that it was said to the men of old, "You shall not swear falsely. . . ." But I say to you, Do not swear at all.⁷³

2807-2815 I. THE NAME OF THE LORD IS HOLY

2142 The second commandment *prescribes respect for the Lord's name*. Like the first commandment, it belongs to the virtue of religion and more particularly it governs our use of speech in sacred matters.

2143 Among all the words of Revelation, there is one which is unique: the revealed name of God. God confides his name to those
203 who believe in him; he reveals himself to them in his personal mystery. The gift of a name belongs to the order of trust and intimacy.
435 "The Lord's name is holy." For this reason man must not abuse it. He must keep it in mind in silent, loving adoration. He will not introduce it into his own speech except to bless, praise, and glorify it.⁷⁴

2144 Respect for his name is an expression of the respect owed to the mystery of God himself and to the whole sacred reality it evokes. The *sense of the sacred* is part of the virtue of religion:

Are these feelings of fear and awe Christian feelings or not? . . . I say this, then, which I think no one can reasonably dispute. They are the class of feelings we *should* have—yes, have to an intense degree—if we literally had the sight of Almighty God; therefore they are the class of feelings which we shall have, *if* we realize His presence. In proportion as we believe that He is present, we shall have them; and not to have them, is not to realize, not to believe that He is present.⁷⁵

72 Ex 20:7; Deut 5:11.

73 Mt 5:33-34.

74 Cf. Zech 2:13; Ps 29:2; 96:2; 113:1-2.

75 John Henry Cardinal Newman, *Parochial and Plain Sermons* V, 2 (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1907), 21-22.

2145 The faithful should bear witness to the Lord's name by confessing the faith without giving way to fear.⁷⁶ Preaching and catechizing should be permeated with adoration and respect for the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. 2472 427

2146 The second commandment *forbids the abuse of God's name*, i.e., every improper use of the names of God, Jesus Christ, but also of the Virgin Mary and all the saints.

2147 *Promises* made to others in God's name engage the divine honor, fidelity, truthfulness, and authority. They must be respected in justice. To be unfaithful to them is to misuse God's name and in some way to make God out to be a liar.⁷⁷ 2101

2148 *Blasphemy* is directly opposed to the second commandment. It consists in uttering against God—inwardly or outwardly—words of hatred, reproach, or defiance; in speaking ill of God; in failing in respect toward him in one's speech; in misusing God's name. St. James condemns those "who blaspheme that honorable name [of Jesus] by which you are called."⁷⁸ The prohibition of blasphemy extends to language against Christ's Church, the saints, and sacred things. It is also blasphemous to make use of God's name to cover up criminal practices, to reduce peoples to servitude, to torture persons or put them to death. The misuse of God's name to commit a crime can provoke others to repudiate religion.

Blasphemy is contrary to the respect due God and his holy name. It is in itself a grave sin.⁷⁹ 1756

2149 *Oaths* which misuse God's name, though without the intention of blasphemy, show lack of respect for the Lord. The second commandment also forbids *magical use* of the divine name.

[God's] name is great when spoken with respect for the greatness of his majesty. God's name is holy when said with veneration and fear of offending him.⁸⁰

76 Cf. Mt 10:32; 1 Tim 6:12.

77 Cf. 1 Jn 1:10.

78 Jas 2:7.

79 Cf. CIC, can. 1369.

80 St. Augustine, *De serm. Dom. in monte* 2, 5, 19: PL 34, 1278.

II. TAKING THE NAME OF THE LORD IN VAIN

2150 The second commandment *forbids false oaths*. Taking an oath or swearing is to take God as witness to what one affirms. It is to invoke the divine truthfulness as a pledge of one's own truthfulness. An oath engages the Lord's name. "You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve him, and swear by his name."⁸¹

2151 Rejection of false oaths is a duty toward God. As Creator and Lord, God is the norm of all truth. Human speech is either in
 215 accord with or in opposition to God who is Truth itself. When it is truthful and legitimate, an oath highlights the relationship of human speech with God's truth. A false oath calls on God to be witness to a lie.

2476 **2152** A person commits *perjury* when he makes a promise under oath with no intention of keeping it, or when after promising on oath he does not keep it. Perjury is a grave lack of respect for the
 1756 Lord of all speech. Pledging oneself by oath to commit an evil deed is contrary to the holiness of the divine name.

2153 In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus explained the second commandment: "You have heard that it was said to the men of old, 'You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn.' But I say to you, Do not swear at all. . . . Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one."⁸² Jesus teaches that every oath involves a reference to God and that God's presence and his truth must be honored in all speech. Discretion in calling upon God is allied with
 2466 a respectful awareness of his presence, which all our assertions either witness to or mock.

2154 Following St. Paul,⁸³ the tradition of the Church has understood Jesus' words as not excluding oaths made for grave and right reasons (for example, in court). "An oath, that is the invocation of the divine name as a witness to truth, cannot be taken unless in truth, in judgment, and in justice."⁸⁴

81 *Deut* 6:13.

82 *Mt* 5:33-34, 37; cf. *Jas* 5:12.

83 Cf. *2 Cor* 1:23; *Gal* 1:20.

84 CIC, can. 1199 § 1.

2155 The holiness of the divine name demands that we neither use it for trivial matters, nor take an oath which on the basis of the circumstances could be interpreted as approval of an authority unjustly requiring it. When an oath is required by illegitimate civil authorities, it may be refused. It must be refused when it is required for purposes contrary to the dignity of persons or to ecclesial communion. 1903

III. THE CHRISTIAN NAME

2156 The sacrament of Baptism is conferred “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.”⁸⁵ In Baptism, the Lord’s name sanctifies man, and the Christian receives his name in the Church. This can be the name of a saint, that is, of a disciple who has lived a life of exemplary fidelity to the Lord. The patron saint provides a model of charity; we are assured of his intercession. The “baptismal name” can also express a Christian mystery or Christian virtue. “Parents, sponsors, and the pastor are to see that a name is not given which is foreign to Christian sentiment.”⁸⁶ 232 1267

2157 The Christian begins his day, his prayers, and his activities with the Sign of the Cross: “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.” The baptized person dedicates the day to the glory of God and calls on the Savior’s grace which lets him act in the Spirit as a child of the Father. The sign of the cross strengthens us in temptations and difficulties. 1235 1668

2158 God calls each one by name.⁸⁷ Everyone’s name is sacred. The name is the icon of the person. It demands respect as a sign of the dignity of the one who bears it.

2159 The name one receives is a name for eternity. In the kingdom, the mysterious and unique character of each person marked with God’s name will shine forth in splendor. “To him who conquers . . . I will give a white stone, with a new name written on the stone which no one knows except him who receives it.”⁸⁸ “Then I looked, and Lo, on Mount Zion stood the Lamb, and with him a hundred and forty-four thousand who had his name and his Father’s name written on their foreheads.”⁸⁹

85 Mt 28:19.

86 CIC, can. 855.

87 Cf. Isa 43:1; Jn 10:3.

88 Rev 2:17.

89 Rev 14:1.

IN BRIEF

- 2160** “O Lord, our Lord, how majestic is your name in all the earth” (*Ps* 8:1)!
- 2161** The second commandment enjoins respect for the Lord’s name. The name of the Lord is holy.
- 2162** The second commandment forbids every improper use of God’s name. Blasphemy is the use of the name of God, of Jesus Christ, of the Virgin Mary, and of the saints in an offensive way.
- 2163** False oaths call on God to be witness to a lie. Perjury is a grave offence against the Lord who is always faithful to his promises.
- 2164** “Do not swear whether by the Creator, or any creature, except truthfully, of necessity, and with reverence” (St. Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, 38).
- 2165** In Baptism, the Christian receives his name in the Church. Parents, godparents, and the pastor are to see that he be given a Christian name. The patron saint provides a model of charity and the assurance of his prayer.
- 2166** The Christian begins his prayers and activities with the Sign of the Cross: “in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen.”
- 2167** God calls each one by name (cf. *Isa* 43:1).
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ARTICLE 3

THE THIRD COMMANDMENT

Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do all your work; but the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; in it you shall not do any work.⁹⁰

The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath; so the Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath.⁹¹

I. THE SABBATH DAY

346-348

2168 The third commandment of the Decalogue recalls the holiness of the sabbath: "The seventh day is a sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the LORD."⁹²

2169 In speaking of the sabbath Scripture recalls creation: "For in six days the LORD made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that is in them, and rested the seventh day; therefore the LORD blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it."⁹³ 2057

2170 Scripture also reveals in the Lord's day a *memorial of Israel's liberation* from bondage in Egypt: "You shall remember that you were a servant in the land of Egypt, and the LORD your God brought you out thence with mighty hand and outstretched arm; therefore the LORD your God commanded you to keep the sabbath day."⁹⁴

2171 God entrusted the sabbath to Israel to keep as a *sign of the irrevocable covenant*.⁹⁵ The sabbath is for the Lord, holy and set apart for the praise of God, his work of creation, and his saving actions on behalf of Israel.

2172 God's action is the model for human action. If God "rested and was refreshed" on the seventh day, man too ought to "rest" and should let others, especially the poor, "be refreshed."⁹⁶ The sabbath brings everyday work to a halt and provides a respite. It is a day of protest against the servitude of work and the worship of money.⁹⁷ 2184

90 Ex 20:8-10; cf. Deut 5:12-15.

91 Mk 2:27-28.

92 Ex 31:15.

93 Ex 20:11.

94 Deut 5:15.

95 Cf. Ex 31:16.

96 Ex 31:17; cf. 23:12.

97 Cf. Neh 13:15-22; 2 Chr 36:21.

2173 The Gospel reports many incidents when Jesus was accused of violating the sabbath law. But Jesus never fails to respect
 582 the holiness of this day.⁹⁸ He gives this law its authentic and authoritative interpretation: "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath."⁹⁹ With compassion, Christ declares the sabbath for doing good rather than harm, for saving life rather than killing.¹⁰⁰ The sabbath is the day of the Lord of mercies and a day to honor God.¹⁰¹ "The Son of Man is lord even of the sabbath."¹⁰²

II. THE LORD'S DAY

This is the day which the LORD has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it.¹⁰³

The day of the Resurrection: the new creation

638 2174 Jesus rose from the dead "on the first day of the week."¹⁰⁴ Because it is the "first day," the day of Christ's Resurrection recalls the first creation. Because it is the "eighth day" following the
 349 sabbath,¹⁰⁵ it symbolizes the new creation ushered in by Christ's Resurrection. For Christians it has become the first of all days, the first of all feasts, the Lord's Day (*he kuriake hemera, dies dominica*)—Sunday:

We all gather on the day of the sun, for it is the first day [after the Jewish sabbath, but also the first day] when God, separating matter from darkness, made the world; and on this same day Jesus Christ our Savior rose from the dead.¹⁰⁶

Sunday—fulfillment of the sabbath

2175 Sunday is expressly distinguished from the sabbath which it follows chronologically every week; for Christians its ceremonial
 1166 observance replaces that of the sabbath. In Christ's Passover,

98 Cf. Mk 1:21; Jn 9:16.

99 Mk 2:27.

100 Cf. Mk 3:4.

101 Cf. Mt 12:5; Jn 7:23.

102 Mk 2:28.

103 Ps 118:24.

104 Cf. Mt 28:1; Mk 16:2; Lk 24:1; Jn 20:1.

105 Cf. Mk 16:1; Mt 28:1.

106 St. Justin, I *Apol.* 67: PG 6, 429 and 432.

Sunday fulfills the spiritual truth of the Jewish sabbath and announces man's eternal rest in God. For worship under the Law prepared for the mystery of Christ, and what was done there prefigured some aspects of Christ.¹⁰⁷

Those who lived according to the old order of things have come to a new hope, no longer keeping the sabbath, but the Lord's Day, in which our life is blessed by him and by his death.¹⁰⁸

2176 The celebration of Sunday observes the moral commandment inscribed by nature in the human heart to render to God an outward, visible, public, and regular worship "as a sign of his universal beneficence to all."¹⁰⁹ Sunday worship fulfills the moral command of the Old Covenant, taking up its rhythm and spirit in the weekly celebration of the Creator and Redeemer of his people.

The Sunday Eucharist

2177 The Sunday celebration of the Lord's Day and his Eucharist is at the heart of the Church's life. "Sunday is the day on which the paschal mystery is celebrated in light of the apostolic tradition and is to be observed as the foremost holy day of obligation in the universal Church."¹¹⁰

"Also to be observed are the day of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ, the Epiphany, the Ascension of Christ, the feast of the Body and Blood of Christi, the feast of Mary the Mother of God, her Immaculate Conception, her Assumption, the feast of Saint Joseph, the feast of the Apostles Saints Peter and Paul, and the feast of All Saints."¹¹¹

2178 This practice of the Christian assembly dates from the beginnings of the apostolic age.¹¹² The *Letter to the Hebrews* reminds the faithful "not to neglect to meet together, as is the habit of some, but to encourage one another."¹¹³

¹⁰⁷ Cf. 1 Cor 10:11.

¹⁰⁸ St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Magn.* 9, 1: SCh 10, 88.

¹⁰⁹ St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* II-II, 122, 4.

¹¹⁰ CIC, can. 1246 § 1.

¹¹¹ CIC, can. 1246 § 2: "The conference of bishops can abolish certain holy days of obligation or transfer them to a Sunday with prior approval of the Apostolic See."

¹¹² Cf. Acts 2:42-46; 1 Cor 11:17.

¹¹³ Heb 10:25.

Tradition preserves the memory of an ever-timely exhortation: Come to Church early, approach the Lord, and confess your sins, repent in prayer. . . . Be present at the sacred and divine liturgy, conclude its prayer and do not leave before the dismissal. . . . We have often said: "This day is given to you for prayer and rest. This is the day that the Lord has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it."¹¹⁴

- 1567 **2179** "A *parish* is a definite community of the Christian faithful established on a stable basis within a particular church; the pastoral care of the parish is entrusted to a pastor as its own shepherd under
2691 the authority of the diocesan bishop."¹¹⁵ It is the place where all the faithful can be gathered together for the Sunday celebration of the Eucharist. The parish initiates the Christian people into the
2226 ordinary expression of the liturgical life: it gathers them together in this celebration; it teaches Christ's saving doctrine; it practices the charity of the Lord in good works and brotherly love:

You cannot pray at home as at church, where there is a great multitude, where exclamations are cried out to God as from one great heart, and where there is something more: the union of minds, the accord of souls, the bond of charity, the prayers of the priests.¹¹⁶

The Sunday obligation

- 2042 **2180** The precept of the Church specifies the law of the Lord more precisely: "On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass."¹¹⁷ "The precept
1389 of participating in the Mass is satisfied by assistance at a Mass which is celebrated anywhere in a Catholic rite either on the holy day or on the evening of the preceding day."¹¹⁸

114 *Sermo de die dominica* 2 et 6: PG 86/1, 416C and 421C.

115 CIC, can. 515 § 1.

116 St. John Chrysostom, *De incomprehensibili* 3, 6: PG 48, 725.

117 CIC, can. 1247.

118 CIC, can. 1248 § 1.

2181 The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. For this reason the faithful are obliged to participate in the Eucharist on days of obligation, unless excused for a serious reason (for example, illness, the care of infants) or dispensed by their own pastor.¹¹⁹ Those who deliberately fail in this obligation commit a grave sin.

2182 Participation in the communal celebration of the Sunday Eucharist is a testimony of belonging and of being faithful to Christ and to his Church. The faithful give witness by this to their communion in faith and charity. Together they testify to God's holiness and their hope of salvation. They strengthen one another under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. 815

2183 "If because of lack of a sacred minister or for other grave cause participation in the celebration of the Eucharist is impossible, it is specially recommended that the faithful take part in the Liturgy of the Word if it is celebrated in the parish church or in another sacred place according to the prescriptions of the diocesan bishop, or engage in prayer for an appropriate amount of time personally or in a family or, as occasion offers, in groups of families."¹²⁰

A day of grace and rest from work

2184 Just as God "rested on the seventh day from all his work which he had done,"¹²¹ human life has a rhythm of work and rest. 2172 The institution of the Lord's Day helps everyone enjoy adequate rest and leisure to cultivate their familial, cultural, social, and religious lives.¹²²

2185 On Sundays and other holy days of obligation, the faithful are to refrain from engaging in work or activities that hinder the worship owed to God, the joy proper to the Lord's Day, the performance of the works of mercy, and the appropriate relaxation of mind and body.¹²³ Family needs or important social service can legitimately excuse from the obligation of Sunday rest. The faithful should see to it that legitimate excuses do not lead to habits prejudicial to religion, family life, and health. 2428

119 Cf. CIC, can. 1245.

120 CIC, can. 1248 § 2.

121 *Gen* 2:2.

122 Cf. *GS* 67 § 3.

123 Cf. CIC, can. 1247.

The charity of truth seeks holy leisure; the necessity of charity accepts just work.¹²⁴

- 2186 Those Christians who have leisure should be mindful of their brethren who have the same needs and the same rights, yet cannot rest from work because of poverty and misery. Sunday is traditionally consecrated by Christian piety to good works and
- 2447 humble service of the sick, the infirm, and the elderly. Christians will also sanctify Sunday by devoting time and care to their families and relatives, often difficult to do on other days of the week. Sunday is a time for reflection, silence, cultivation of the mind, and meditation which furthers the growth of the Christian interior life.
- 2187 Sanctifying Sundays and holy days requires a common effort. Every Christian should avoid making unnecessary demands on others that would hinder them from observing the Lord's Day. Traditional activities (sport, restaurants, etc.), and social necessities (public services, etc.), require some people to work on Sundays, but everyone should still take care
- 2289 to set aside sufficient time for leisure. With temperance and charity the faithful will see to it that they avoid the excesses and violence sometimes associated with popular leisure activities. In spite of economic constraints, public authorities should ensure citizens a time intended for rest and divine worship. Employers have a similar obligation toward their employees.
- 2105 2188 In respecting religious liberty and the common good of all, Christians should seek recognition of Sundays and the Church's holy days as legal holidays. They have to give everyone a public example of prayer, respect, and joy and defend their traditions as a precious contribution to the spiritual life of society. If a country's legislation or other reasons require work on Sunday, the day should nevertheless be lived as the day of our deliverance which lets us share in this "festal gathering," this "assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven."¹²⁵

124 St. Augustine, *De civ. Dei* 19, 19: PL 41, 647.

125 *Heb* 12:22-23.

IN BRIEF

- 2189** “Observe the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (*Deut* 5:12). “The seventh day is a sabbath of solemn rest, holy to the Lord” (*Ex* 31:15).
- 2190** The sabbath, which represented the completion of the first creation, has been replaced by Sunday which recalls the new creation inaugurated by the Resurrection of Christ.
- 2191** The Church celebrates the day of Christ’s Resurrection on the “eighth day,” Sunday, which is rightly called the Lord’s Day (cf. SC 106).
- 2192** “Sunday . . . is to be observed as the foremost holy day of obligation in the universal Church” (CIC, can. 1246 § 1). “On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound to participate in the Mass” (CIC, can. 1247).
- 2193** “On Sundays and other holy days of obligation the faithful are bound . . . to abstain from those labors and business concerns which impede the worship to be rendered to God, the joy which is proper to the Lord’s Day, or the proper relaxation of mind and body” (CIC, can. 1247).
- 2194** The institution of Sunday helps all “to be allowed sufficient rest and leisure to cultivate their familial, cultural, social, and religious lives” (GS 67 § 3).
- 2195** Every Christian should avoid making unnecessary demands on others that would hinder them from observing the Lord’s Day.
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CHAPTER TWO

“YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF”

Jesus said to his disciples: “Love one another even as I have loved you.”¹

2196 In response to the question about the first of the commandments, Jesus says: “The first is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one; and you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.’ The second is this, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”²

2822 The apostle St. Paul reminds us of this: “He who loves his neighbor has fulfilled the law. The commandments, ‘*You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,*’ and any other commandment, are summed up in this sentence, ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.”³

ARTICLE 4

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the Lord your God gives you.⁴

He was obedient to them.⁵

The Lord Jesus himself recalled the force of this “commandment of God.”⁶ The Apostle teaches: “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.’”⁷

1 Jn 13:34.

2 Mk 12:29-31; cf. Deut 6:4-5; Lev 19:18; Mt 22:34-40; Lk 10:25-28.

3 Rom 13:8-10.

4 Ex 20:12; Deut 5:16.

5 Lk 2:51.

6 Mk 7:8-13.

7 Eph 6:1-3; cf. Deut 5:16.

2197 The fourth commandment opens the second table of the Decalogue. It shows us the order of charity. God has willed that, after him, we should honor our parents to whom we owe life and who have handed on to us the knowledge of God. We are obliged to honor and respect all those whom God, for our good, has vested with his authority.

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2198 This commandment is expressed in positive terms of duties to be fulfilled. It introduces the subsequent commandments which are concerned with particular respect for life, marriage, earthly goods, and speech. It constitutes one of the foundations of the social doctrine of the Church.

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2199 The fourth commandment is addressed expressly to children in their relationship to their father and mother, because this relationship is the most universal. It likewise concerns the ties of kinship between members of the extended family. It requires honor, affection, and gratitude toward elders and ancestors. Finally, it extends to the duties of pupils to teachers, employees to employers, subordinates to leaders, citizens to their country, and to those who administer or govern it.

This commandment includes and presupposes the duties of parents, instructors, teachers, leaders, magistrates, those who govern, all who exercise authority over others or over a community of persons.

2200 Observing the fourth commandment brings its reward: "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long in the land which the LORD your God gives you."⁸ Respecting this commandment provides, along with spiritual fruits, temporal fruits of peace and prosperity. Conversely, failure to observe it brings great harm to communities and to individuals.

2304

I. THE FAMILY IN GOD'S PLAN

The nature of the family

2201 The conjugal community is established upon the consent of the spouses. Marriage and the family are ordered to the good of the spouses and to the procreation and education of children. The love of the spouses and the begetting of children create among

1625

members of the same family personal relationships and primordial responsibilities.

1882 **2202** A man and a woman united in marriage, together with their children, form a family. This institution is prior to any recognition by public authority, which has an obligation to recognize it. It should be considered the normal reference point by which the different forms of family relationship are to be evaluated.

369 **2203** In creating man and woman, God instituted the human family and endowed it with its fundamental constitution. Its members are persons equal in dignity. For the common good of its members and of society, the family necessarily has manifold responsibilities, rights, and duties.

1655-1658 **The Christian family**

2204 “The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion, and for this reason it can and
533 should be called a *domestic church*.”⁹ It is a community of faith, hope, and charity; it assumes singular importance in the Church, as is evident in the New Testament.¹⁰

1702 **2205** The Christian family is a communion of persons, a sign and image of the communion of the Father and the Son in the Holy Spirit. In the procreation and education of children it reflects the Father’s work of creation. It is called to partake of the prayer and sacrifice of Christ. Daily prayer and the reading of the Word of God strengthen it in charity. The Christian family has an evangelizing and missionary task.

2206 The relationships within the family bring an affinity of feelings, affections and interests, arising above all from the members’ respect for one another. The family is a *privileged community* called to achieve a “sharing of thought and common deliberation by the spouses as well as their eager cooperation as parents in the children’s upbringing.”¹¹

9 FC 21; cf. LG 11.

10 Cf. Eph 5:21-6:4; Col 3:18-21; 1 Pet 3:1-7.

11 GS 52 § 1.

II. THE FAMILY AND SOCIETY

2207 The family is the *original cell of social life*. It is the natural society in which husband and wife are called to give themselves in love and in the gift of life. Authority, stability, and a life of relationships within the family constitute the foundations for freedom, security, and fraternity within society. The family is the community in which, from childhood, one can learn moral values, begin to honor God, and make good use of freedom. Family life is an initiation into life in society. 1880 372 1603

2208 The family should live in such a way that its members learn to care and take responsibility for the young, the old, the sick, the handicapped, and the poor. There are many families who are at times incapable of providing this help. It devolves then on other persons, other families, and, in a subsidiary way, society to provide for their needs: "Religion that is pure and undefiled before God and the Father is this: to visit orphans and widows in their affliction and to keep oneself unstained from the world."¹²

2209 The family must be helped and defended by appropriate social measures. Where families cannot fulfill their responsibilities, other social bodies have the duty of helping them and of supporting the institution of the family. Following the principle of subsidiarity, larger communities should take care not to usurp the family's prerogatives or interfere in its life. 1883

2210 The importance of the family for the life and well-being of society¹³ entails a particular responsibility for society to support and strengthen marriage and the family. Civil authority should consider it a grave duty "to acknowledge the true nature of marriage and the family, to protect and foster them, to safeguard public morality, and promote domestic prosperity."¹⁴

2211 The political community has a duty to honor the family, to assist it, and to ensure especially:

- the freedom to establish a family, have children, and bring them up in keeping with the family's own moral and religious convictions;
- the protection of the stability of the marriage bond and the institution of the family;
- the freedom to profess one's faith, to hand it on, and raise one's children in it, with the necessary means and institutions;

¹² Jas 1:27.

¹³ Cf. GS 47 § 1.

¹⁴ GS 52 § 2.

- the right to private property, to free enterprise, to obtain work and housing, and the right to emigrate;
- in keeping with the country's institutions, the right to medical care, assistance for the aged, and family benefits;
- the protection of security and health, especially with respect to dangers like drugs, pornography, alcoholism, etc.;
- the freedom to form associations with other families and so to have representation before civil authority.¹⁵

2212 The fourth commandment *illuminates other relationships in society*. In our brothers and sisters we see the children of our parents; in our cousins, the descendants of our ancestors; in our fellow citizens, the children of our country; in the baptized, the children of our mother the Church; in every human person, a son
 225 or daughter of the One who wants to be called "our Father." In this way our relationships with our neighbors are recognized as personal in character. The neighbor is not a "unit" in the human
 1931 collective; he is "someone" who by his known origins deserves particular attention and respect.

2213 Human communities are *made up of persons*. Governing them well is not limited to guaranteeing rights and fulfilling duties such as honoring contracts. Right relations between employers and employees, between those who govern and citizens, presuppose a natural good will in keeping with the dignity of human persons
 1939 concerned for justice and fraternity.

III. THE DUTIES OF FAMILY MEMBERS

The duties of children

2214 The divine fatherhood is the source of human fatherhood;¹⁶ this is the foundation of the honor owed to parents. The respect of children, whether minors or adults, for their father and mother¹⁷ is nourished by the natural affection born of the bond
 1858 uniting them. It is required by God's commandment.¹⁸

2215 Respect for parents (*filial piety*) derives from *gratitude* toward those who, by the gift of life, their love and their work, have brought their children into the world and enabled them to grow in

¹⁵ Cf. FC 46.

¹⁶ Cf. Eph 3:14.

¹⁷ Cf. Prov 1:8; Tob 4:3-4.

¹⁸ Cf. Ex 20:12.

stature, wisdom, and grace. "With all your heart honor your father, and do not forget the birth pangs of your mother. Remember that through your parents you were born; what can you give back to them that equals their gift to you?"¹⁹

2216 Filial respect is shown by true docility and *obedience*. "My son, keep your father's commandment, and forsake not your mother's teaching. . . . When you walk, they will lead you; when you lie down, they will watch over you; and when you awake, they will talk with you."²⁰ "A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke."²¹ 532

2217 As long as a child lives at home with his parents, the child should obey his parents in all that they ask of him when it is for his good or that of the family. "Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord."²² Children should also obey the reasonable directions of their teachers and all to whom their parents have entrusted them. But if a child is convinced in conscience that it would be morally wrong to obey a particular order, he must not do so.

As they grow up, children should continue to respect their parents. They should anticipate their wishes, willingly seek their advice, and accept their just admonitions. Obedience toward parents ceases with the emancipation of the children; not so respect, which is always owed to them. This respect has its roots in the fear of God, one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit. 1831

2218 The fourth commandment reminds grown children of their *responsibilities toward their parents*. As much as they can, they must give them material and moral support in old age and in times of illness, loneliness, or distress. Jesus recalls this duty of gratitude.²³

For the Lord honored the father above the children, and he confirmed the right of the mother over her sons. Whoever honors his father atones for sins, and whoever glorifies his mother is like one who lays up treasure. Whoever honors his father will be gladdened by his own children, and when he prays he will be heard. Whoever glorifies his father will have long life, and whoever obeys the Lord will refresh his mother.²⁴

19 Sir 7:27-28.

20 Prov 6:20-22.

21 Prov 13:1.

22 Col 3:20; cf. Eph 6:1.

23 Cf. Mk 7:10-12.

24 Sir 3:2-6.

O son, help your father in his old age, and do not grieve him as long as he lives; even if he is lacking in understanding, show forbearance; in all your strength do not despise him. . . . Whoever forsakes his father is like a blasphemer, and whoever angers his mother is cursed by the Lord.²⁵

2219 Filial respect promotes harmony in all of family life; it also concerns *relationships between brothers and sisters*. Respect toward parents fills the home with light and warmth. "Grandchildren are the crown of the aged."²⁶ "With all humility and meekness, with patience, [support] one another in charity."²⁷

2220 For Christians a special gratitude is due to those from whom they have received the gift of faith, the grace of Baptism, and life in the Church. These may include parents, grandparents, other members of the family, pastors, catechists, and other teachers or friends. "I am reminded of your sincere faith, a faith that dwelt first in your grandmother Lois and your mother Eunice and now, I am sure, dwells in you."²⁸

The duties of parents

2221 The fecundity of conjugal love cannot be reduced solely to the procreation of children, but must extend to their moral education and their spiritual formation. "The role of parents in education
1653 is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute."²⁹ The right and the duty of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable.³⁰

2222 Parents must regard their children as *children of God* and respect them as *human persons*. Showing themselves obedient to the
494 will of the Father in heaven, they educate their children to fulfill God's law.

25 Sir 3:12-13, 16.

26 Prov 17:6.

27 Eph 4:2.

28 2 Tim 1:5.

29 GE 3.

30 Cf. FC 36.

2223 Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by *creating a home* where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for *education in the virtues*. This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment, and self-mastery—the preconditions of all true freedom. Parents should teach their children to subordinate the “material and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones.”³¹ Parents have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children. By knowing how to acknowledge their own failings to their children, parents will be better able to guide and correct them: 1804

He who loves his son will not spare the rod. . . . He who disciplines his son will profit by him.³²

Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.³³

2224 The home is the natural environment for initiating a human being into solidarity and communal responsibilities. Parents should teach children to avoid the compromising and degrading influences which threaten human societies. 1939

2225 Through the grace of the sacrament of marriage, parents receive the responsibility and privilege of *evangelizing their children*. Parents should initiate their children at an early age into the mysteries of the faith of which they are the “first heralds” for their children. They should associate them from their tenderest years with the life of the Church.³⁴ A wholesome family life can foster interior dispositions that are a genuine preparation for a living faith and remain a support for it throughout one’s life. 1656

2226 *Education in the faith* by the parents should begin in the child’s earliest years. This already happens when family members help one another to grow in faith by the witness of a Christian life in keeping with the Gospel. Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith. Parents have the mission of teaching their children to pray and to discover their vocation as children of God.³⁵ The parish is the Eucharistic 2179

31 CA 36 § 2.

32 Sir 30:1-2.

33 Eph 6:4.

34 LG 11 § 2.

35 Cf. LG 11.

community and the heart of the liturgical life of Christian families; it is a privileged place for the catechesis of children and parents.

2013 **2227** Children in turn contribute to the *growth in holiness* of their parents.³⁶ Each and everyone should be generous and tireless in forgiving one another for offenses, quarrels, injustices, and neglect. Mutual affection suggests this. The charity of Christ demands it.³⁷

2228 Parents' respect and affection are expressed by the care and attention they devote to bringing up their young children and *providing for their physical and spiritual needs*. As the children grow up, the same respect and devotion lead parents to educate them in the right use of their reason and freedom.

2229 As those first responsible for the education of their children, parents have the right to *choose a school for them* which corresponds to their own convictions. This right is fundamental. As far as possible parents have the duty of choosing schools that will best help them in their task as Christian educators.³⁸ Public authorities have the duty of guaranteeing this parental right and of ensuring the concrete conditions for its exercise.

2230 When they become adults, children have the right and duty to *choose their profession and state of life*. They should assume their new responsibilities within a trusting relationship with their parents, willingly asking and receiving their advice and counsel. Parents should be careful not to exert pressure on their children
1625 either in the choice of a profession or in that of a spouse. This necessary restraint does not prevent them—quite the contrary—from giving their children judicious advice, particularly when they are planning to start a family.

2231 Some forgo marriage in order to care for their parents or brothers and sisters, to give themselves more completely to a profession, or to serve other honorable ends. They can contribute greatly to the good of the human family.

36 Cf. GS 48 § 4.

37 Cf. Mt 18:21-22; Lk 17:4.

38 Cf. GE 6.

IV. THE FAMILY AND THE KINGDOM

2232 Family ties are important but not absolute. Just as the child grows to maturity and human and spiritual autonomy, so his unique vocation which comes from God asserts itself more clearly and forcefully. Parents should respect this call and encourage their children to follow it. They must be convinced that the first vocation of the Christian is to *follow Jesus*: “He who loves father or mother 1618 more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me.”³⁹

2233 Becoming a disciple of Jesus means accepting the invitation to belong to *God’s family*, to live in conformity with His way of life: “For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my 542 brother, and sister, and mother.”⁴⁰

Parents should welcome and respect with joy and thanksgiving the Lord’s call to one of their children to follow him in virginity for the sake of the Kingdom in the consecrated life or in priestly ministry.

V. THE AUTHORITIES IN CIVIL SOCIETY

2234 God’s fourth commandment also enjoins us to honor all who for our good have received authority in society from God. It clarifies the duties of those who exercise authority as well as those 1897 who benefit from it.

Duties of civil authorities

2235 Those who exercise authority should do so as a service. “Whoever would be great among you must be your servant.”⁴¹ The exercise of authority is measured morally in terms of its divine origin, its reasonable nature and its specific object. No one can command or establish what is contrary to the dignity of persons 1899 and the natural law.

2236 The exercise of authority is meant to give outward expression to a just hierarchy of values in order to facilitate the exercise of freedom and responsibility by all. Those in authority should practice distributive justice wisely, taking account of the needs and 2411

39 Mt 10:37; cf. 16:25.

40 Mt 12:49.

41 Mt 20:26.

contribution of each, with a view to harmony and peace. They should take care that the regulations and measures they adopt are not a source of temptation by setting personal interest against that of the community.⁴²

2237 *Political authorities* are obliged to respect the fundamental rights of the human person. They will dispense justice humanely
357 by respecting the rights of everyone, especially of families and the disadvantaged.

The political rights attached to citizenship can and should be granted according to the requirements of the common good. They cannot be suspended by public authorities without legitimate and proportionate reasons. Political rights are meant to be exercised for the common good of the nation and the human community.

The duties of citizens

2238 Those subject to authority should regard those in authority as representatives of God, who has made them stewards of his gifts.⁴³
1900 "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."⁴⁴ Their loyal collaboration includes the right, and at times the duty, to voice their just criticisms of that which seems harmful to the dignity of persons and to the good of the community.

1915 2239 It is the *duty of citizens* to contribute along with the civil authorities to the good of society in a spirit of truth, justice, solidarity, and freedom. The love and service of *one's country* follow from
2310 the duty of gratitude and belong to the order of charity. Submission to legitimate authorities and service of the common good require citizens to fulfill their roles in the life of the political community.

2240 Submission to authority and co-responsibility for the common good make it morally obligatory to pay taxes, to exercise the
2265 right to vote, and to defend one's country:

Pay to all of them their dues, taxes to whom taxes are due, revenue to whom revenue is due, respect to whom respect is due, honor to whom honor is due.⁴⁵

42 Cf. CA 25.

43 Cf. *Rom* 13:1-2.

44 *1 Pet* 2:13, 16.

45 *Rom* 13:7.

[Christians] reside in their own nations, but as resident aliens. They participate in all things as citizens and endure all things as foreigners. . . . They obey the established laws and their way of life surpasses the laws. . . . So noble is the position to which God has assigned them that they are not allowed to desert it.⁴⁶

The Apostle exhorts us to offer prayers and thanksgiving for kings and all who exercise authority, "that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life, godly and respectful in every way."⁴⁷ 1900

2241 The more prosperous nations are obliged, to the extent they are able, to welcome the *foreigner* in search of the security and the means of livelihood which he cannot find in his country of origin. Public authorities should see to it that the natural right is respected that places a guest under the protection of those who receive him.

Political authorities, for the sake of the common good for which they are responsible, may make the exercise of the right to immigrate subject to various juridical conditions, especially with regard to the immigrants' duties toward their country of adoption. Immigrants are obliged to respect with gratitude the material and spiritual heritage of the country that receives them, to obey its laws and to assist in carrying civic burdens.

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."⁴⁸ "We must obey God rather than men":⁴⁹ 1903 2313 450

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.⁵⁰ 1901

46 *Ad Diognetum* 5, 5 and 10; 6, 10: PG 2, 1173 and 1176.

47 *1 Tim* 2:2.

48 *Mt* 22:21.

49 *Acts* 5:29.

50 *GS* 74 § 5.

- 2309 **2243** Armed *resistance* to oppression by political authority is not legitimate, unless all the following conditions are met: 1) there is certain, grave, and prolonged violation of fundamental rights; 2) all other means of redress have been exhausted; 3) such resistance will not provoke worse disorders; 4) there is well-founded hope of success; and 5) it is impossible reasonably to foresee any better solution.

The political community and the Church

- 1910 **2244** Every institution is inspired, at least implicitly, by a vision of man and his destiny, from which it derives the point of reference for its judgment, its hierarchy of values, its line of conduct. Most societies have formed their institutions in the recognition of a certain preeminence of man over things. Only the divinely revealed religion has clearly recognized man's origin and destiny in God, the Creator and Redeemer. The Church invites political
1881 authorities to measure their judgments and decisions against this
2109 inspired truth about God and man:

Societies not recognizing this vision or rejecting it in the name of their independence from God are brought to seek their criteria and goal in themselves or to borrow them from some ideology. Since they do not admit that one can defend an objective criterion of good and evil, they arrogate to themselves an explicit or implicit totalitarian power over man and his destiny, as history shows.⁵¹

- 2245** The Church, because of her commission and competence, is not to be confused in any way with the political community. She
912 is both the sign and the safeguard of the transcendent character of the human person. "The Church respects and encourages the political freedom and responsibility of the citizen."⁵²

- 2246** It is a part of the Church's mission "to pass moral judgments even in matters related to politics, whenever the fundamental rights of man or the salvation of souls requires it. The means, the
2032 only means, she may use are those which are in accord with the Gospel and the welfare of all men according to the diversity of
2420 times and circumstances."⁵³

51 Cf. CA 45; 46.

52 GS 76 § 3.

53 GS 76 § 5.

IN BRIEF

- 2247 “Honor your father and your mother” (*Deut* 5:16; *Mk* 7:10).
- 2248 According to the fourth commandment, God has willed that, after him, we should honor our parents and those whom he has vested with authority for our good.
- 2249 The conjugal community is established upon the covenant and consent of the spouses. Marriage and family are ordered to the good of the spouses, to the procreation and the education of children.
- 2250 “The well-being of the individual person and of both human and Christian society is closely bound up with the healthy state of conjugal and family life” (*GS* 47 § 1).
- 2251 Children owe their parents respect, gratitude, just obedience, and assistance. Filial respect fosters harmony in all of family life.
- 2252 Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children in the faith, prayer, and all the virtues. They have the duty to provide as far as possible for the physical and spiritual needs of their children.
- 2253 Parents should respect and encourage their children’s vocations. They should remember and teach that the first calling of the Christian is to follow Jesus.
- 2254 Public authority is obliged to respect the fundamental rights of the human person and the conditions for the exercise of his freedom.
- 2255 It is the duty of citizens to work with civil authority for building up society in a spirit of truth, justice, solidarity, and freedom.
- 2256 Citizens are obliged in conscience not to follow the directives of civil authorities when they are contrary to the demands of the moral order. “We must obey God rather than men” (*Acts* 5:29).
- 2257 Every society’s judgments and conduct reflect a vision of man and his destiny. Without the light the Gospel sheds on God and man, societies easily become totalitarian.
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ARTICLE 5

THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not kill.⁵⁴

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 every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment.⁵⁵

356 **2258** “*Human life is sacred* because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains for ever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being.”⁵⁶

I. RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE

The witness of sacred history

401 **2259** In the account of Abel’s murder by his brother Cain,⁵⁷ Scripture reveals the presence of anger and envy in man, consequences of original sin, from the beginning of human history. Man has become the enemy of his fellow man. God declares the wickedness of this fratricide: “What have you done? The voice of your brother’s blood is crying to me from the ground. And now you are cursed from the ground, which has opened its mouth to receive your brother’s blood from your hand.”⁵⁸

2260 The covenant between God and mankind is interwoven with reminders of God’s gift of human life and man’s murderous violence:

For your lifeblood I will surely require a reckoning. . . . Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed; for God made man in his own image.⁵⁹

54 Ex 20:13; cf. Deut 5:17.

55 Mt 5:21-22.

56 CDF, instruction, *Donum vitae*, intro. 5.

57 Cf. Gen 4:8-12.

58 Gen 4:10-11.

59 Gen 9:5-6.

The Old Testament always considered blood a sacred sign of life.⁶⁰ This teaching remains necessary for all time.

2261 Scripture specifies the prohibition contained in the fifth commandment: "Do not slay the innocent and the righteous."⁶¹ The deliberate murder of an innocent person is gravely contrary to the dignity of the human being, to the golden rule, and to the holiness of the Creator. The law forbidding it is universally valid: it obliges each and everyone, always and everywhere. 1756 1956

2262 In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord recalls the commandment, "You shall not kill,"⁶² and adds to it the proscription of anger, hatred, and vengeance. Going further, Christ asks his disciples to turn the other cheek, to love their enemies.⁶³ He did not defend himself and told Peter to leave his sword in its sheath.⁶⁴ 2844

Legitimate defense

2263 The legitimate defense of persons and societies is not an exception to the prohibition against the murder of the innocent that constitutes intentional killing. "The act of self-defense can have a double effect: the preservation of one's own life; and the killing of the aggressor. . . . The one is intended, the other is not."⁶⁵ 1737

2264 Love toward oneself remains a fundamental principle of morality. Therefore it is legitimate to insist on respect for one's own right to life. Someone who defends his life is not guilty of murder even if he is forced to deal his aggressor a lethal blow: 2196

If a man in self-defense uses more than necessary violence, it will be unlawful: whereas if he repels force with moderation, his defense will be lawful. . . . Nor is it necessary for salvation that a man omit the act of moderate self-defense to avoid killing the other man, since one is bound to take more care of one's own life than of another's.⁶⁶

2265 Legitimate defense can be not only a right but a grave duty for one who is responsible for the lives of others. The defense of the common good requires that an unjust aggressor be rendered 2240

60 Cf. *Lev* 17:14.

61 *Ex* 23:7.

62 *Mt* 5:21.

63 Cf. *Mt* 5:22-39; 5:44.

64 Cf. *Mt* 26:52.

65 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* II-II, 64, 7, corp. art.

66 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* II-II, 64, 7, corp. art.

unable to cause harm. For this reason, those who legitimately hold authority also have the right to use arms to repel aggressors against the civil community entrusted to their responsibility.

2266 The efforts of the state to curb the spread of behavior harmful to people's rights and to the basic rules of civil society correspond to the requirement of safeguarding the common good. Legitimate public authority has the right and the duty to inflict punishment proportionate to the gravity of the offense. Punishment has the primary aim of redressing the disorder introduced by the offense.

1897-1898

2308 When it is willingly accepted by the guilty party, it assumes the value of expiation. Punishment then, in addition to defending public order and protecting people's safety, has a medicinal purpose: as far as possible, it must contribute to the correction of the guilty party.⁶⁷

2267 Recourse to the death penalty on the part of legitimate authority, following a fair trial, was long considered an appropriate response to the gravity of certain crimes and an acceptable, albeit extreme, means of safeguarding the common good.

Today, however, there is an increasing awareness that the dignity of the person is not lost even after the commission of very serious crimes. In addition, a new understanding has emerged of the significance of penal sanctions imposed by the state. Lastly, more effective systems of detention have been developed, which ensure the due protection of citizens but, at the same time, do not definitively deprive the guilty of the possibility of redemption.

2306

Consequently, the Church teaches, in the light of the Gospel, that "the death penalty is inadmissible because it is an attack on the inviolability and dignity of the person",⁶⁸ and she works with determination for its abolition worldwide.

⁶⁷ Cf. Lk 23:4-43.

⁶⁸ FRANCIS, *Address to Participants in the Meeting organized by the Pontifical Council of the Promotion of the New Evangelization*, 11 October 2017: *L'Osservatore Romano*, 13 October 2017, 5.

Intentional homicide

2268 The fifth commandment forbids *direct and intentional killing* as gravely sinful. The murderer and those who cooperate voluntarily in murder commit a sin that cries out to heaven for vengeance.⁶⁹

1867

Infanticide,⁷⁰ fratricide, parricide, and the murder of a spouse are especially grave crimes by reason of the natural bonds which they break. Concern for eugenics or public health cannot justify any murder, even if commanded by public authority.

2269 The fifth commandment forbids doing anything with the intention of *indirectly* bringing about a person's death. The moral law prohibits exposing someone to mortal danger without grave reason, as well as refusing assistance to a person in danger.

The acceptance by human society of murderous famines, without efforts to remedy them, is a scandalous injustice and a grave offense. Those whose usurious and avaricious dealings lead to the hunger and death of their brethren in the human family indirectly commit homicide, which is imputable to them.⁷¹

Unintentional killing is not morally imputable. But one is not exonerated from grave offense if, without proportionate reasons, he has acted in a way that brings about someone's death, even without the intention to do so.

2290

Abortion

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.⁷²

1703

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Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you.⁷³

My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately wrought in the depths of the earth.⁷⁴

⁶⁹ Cf. *Gen* 4:10.

⁷⁰ Cf. *GS* 51 § 3.

⁷¹ Cf. *Am* 8:4-10.

⁷² Cf. CDF, *Donum vitae* I, 1.

⁷³ *Jer* 1:5; cf. *Job* 10:8-12; *Pss* 22:10-11.

⁷⁴ *Pss* 139:15.

2271 Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable. Direct abortion, that is to say, abortion willed either as an end or a means, is gravely contrary to the moral law:

You shall not kill the embryo by abortion and shall not cause the newborn to perish.⁷⁵

God, the Lord of life, has entrusted to men the noble mission of safeguarding life, and men must carry it out in a manner worthy of themselves. Life must be protected with the utmost care from the moment of conception: abortion and infanticide are abominable crimes.⁷⁶

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*,"⁷⁷ "by the very commission of the offense,"⁷⁸ and subject to the conditions provided by Canon Law.⁷⁹ 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.

1930 2273 The inalienable right to life of every innocent human individual is a *constitutive element of a civil society and its legislation*:

"The inalienable rights of the person must be recognized and respected by civil society and the political authority. These human rights depend neither on single individuals nor on parents; nor do they represent a concession made by society and the state; they belong to human nature and are inherent in the person by virtue of the creative act from which the person took his origin. Among such fundamental rights one should mention in this regard every human being's right to life and physical integrity from the moment of conception until death."⁸⁰

"The moment a positive law deprives a category of human beings of the protection which civil legislation ought to accord them, the state is denying the equality of all before the law. When the state does not place its power at the service of the rights of each citizen, and in particular of the more vulnerable, the very foundations of a state based on law are undermined. . . . As a consequence of the respect and protection which must be

⁷⁵ *Didache* 2, 2: SCh 248, 148; cf. *Ep. Barnabae* 19, 5: PG 2, 777; *Ad Diognetum* 5, 6: PG 2, 1173; Tertullian, *Apol.* 9: PL 1, 319-320.

⁷⁶ GS 51 § 3.

⁷⁷ CIC, can. 1398.

⁷⁸ CIC, can. 1314.

⁷⁹ Cf. CIC, cann. 1323-1324.

⁸⁰ CDF, *Donum vitae* III.

ensured for the unborn child from the moment of conception, the law must provide appropriate penal sanctions for every deliberate violation of the child's rights."⁸¹

2274 Since it must be treated from conception as a person, the embryo must be defended in its integrity, cared for, and healed, as far as possible, like any other human being.

Prenatal diagnosis is morally licit, "if it respects the life and integrity of the embryo and the human fetus and is directed toward its safeguarding or healing as an individual. . . . It is gravely opposed to the moral law when this is done with the thought of possibly inducing an abortion, depending upon the results: a diagnosis must not be the equivalent of a death sentence."⁸²

2275 "One must hold as licit procedures carried out on the human embryo which respect the life and integrity of the embryo and do not involve disproportionate risks for it, but are directed toward its healing, the improvement of its condition of health, or its individual survival."⁸³

"It is immoral to produce human embryos intended for exploitation as disposable biological material."⁸⁴

"Certain attempts to *influence chromosomal or genetic inheritance* are not therapeutic but are aimed at producing human beings selected according to sex or other predetermined qualities. Such manipulations are contrary to the personal dignity of the human being and his integrity and identity"⁸⁵ which are unique and unrepeatable.

Euthanasia

2276 Those whose lives are diminished or weakened deserve special respect. Sick or handicapped persons should be helped to lead lives as normal as possible. 1503

2277 Whatever its motives and means, direct euthanasia consists in putting an end to the lives of handicapped, sick, or dying persons. It is morally unacceptable.

Thus an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering constitutes a murder gravely contrary to the dignity of the human person and to the respect due to the living God, his Creator. The error of judgment into which one can fall in good faith does not change the nature of this murderous act, which must always be forbidden and excluded.

81 CDF, *Donum vitae* III.

82 CDF, *Donum vitae* I, 2.

83 CDF, *Donum vitae* I, 3.

84 CDF, *Donum vitae* I, 5.

85 CDF, *Donum vitae* I, 6.

2278 Discontinuing medical procedures that are burdensome, dangerous, extraordinary, or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be legitimate; it is the refusal of "over-zealous" treatment. Here one does not will to cause death; one's inability to impede it is merely accepted. The decisions should be made by the patient if he is competent and able or, if not, by those legally entitled to act for the patient, whose reasonable will and legitimate interests must always be respected.

2279 Even if death is thought imminent, the ordinary care owed to a sick person cannot be legitimately interrupted. The use of painkillers to alleviate the sufferings of the dying, even at the risk of shortening their days, can be morally in conformity with human dignity if death is not willed as either an end or a means, but only foreseen and tolerated as inevitable. Palliative care is a special form of disinterested charity. As such it should be encouraged.

Suicide

2280 Everyone is responsible for his life before God who has given it to him. It is God who remains the sovereign Master of life.

2258 We are obliged to accept life gratefully and preserve it for his honor and the salvation of our souls. We are stewards, not owners, of the life God has entrusted to us. It is not ours to dispose of.

2281 Suicide contradicts the natural inclination of the human being to preserve and perpetuate his life. It is gravely contrary to the just love of self. It likewise offends love of neighbor because it unjustly breaks the ties of solidarity with family, nation, and other human societies to which we continue to have obligations. Suicide is contrary to love for the living God.

2282 If suicide is committed with the intention of setting an example, especially to the young, it also takes on the gravity of scandal.

1735 Voluntary co-operation in suicide is contrary to the moral law.

Grave psychological disturbances, anguish, or grave fear of hardship, suffering, or torture can diminish the responsibility of the one committing suicide.

2283 We should not despair of the eternal salvation of persons who have taken their own lives. By ways known to him alone, God can provide the opportunity for salutary repentance. The Church prays for persons who have taken their own lives.

II. RESPECT FOR THE DIGNITY OF PERSONS

Respect for the souls of others: scandal

2284 Scandal is an attitude or behavior which leads another to do evil. The person who gives scandal becomes his neighbor's tempter. He damages virtue and integrity; he may even draw his brother into spiritual death. Scandal is a grave offense if by deed or omission another is deliberately led into a grave offense. 2847

2285 Scandal takes on a particular gravity by reason of the authority of those who cause it or the weakness of those who are scandalized. It prompted our Lord to utter this curse: "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea."⁸⁶ Scandal is grave when given by those who by nature or office are obliged to teach and educate others. Jesus reproaches the scribes and Pharisees on this account: he likens them to wolves in sheep's clothing.⁸⁷ 1903

2286 Scandal can be provoked by laws or institutions, by fashion or opinion.

Therefore, they are guilty of scandal who establish laws or social structures leading to the decline of morals and the corruption of religious practice, or to "social conditions that, intentionally or not, make Christian conduct and obedience to the Commandments difficult and practically impossible."⁸⁸ This is also true of business leaders who make rules encouraging fraud, teachers who provoke their children to anger,⁸⁹ or manipulators of public opinion who turn it away from moral values. 1887 2498

2287 Anyone who uses the power at his disposal in such a way that it leads others to do wrong becomes guilty of scandal and responsible for the evil that he has directly or indirectly encouraged. "Temptations to sin are sure to come; but woe to him by whom they come!"⁹⁰

Respect for health

2288 Life and physical health are precious gifts entrusted to us by God. We must take reasonable care of them, taking into account the needs of others and the common good. 1503

⁸⁶ Mt 18:6; cf. 1 Cor 8:10-13.

⁸⁷ Cf. Mt 7:15.

⁸⁸ Pius XII, *Discourse*, June 1, 1941.

⁸⁹ Cf. Eph 6:4; Col 3:21.

⁹⁰ Lk 17:1.

- 1509 *Concern for the health* of its citizens requires that society help in the attainment of living-conditions that allow them to grow and reach maturity: food and clothing, housing, health care, basic education, employment, and social assistance.
- 364 **2289** If morality requires respect for the life of the body, it does not make it an absolute value. It rejects a neo-pagan notion that
2113 tends to promote the *cult of the body*, to sacrifice everything for its sake, to idolize physical perfection and success at sports. By its selective preference of the strong over the weak, such a conception can lead to the perversion of human relationships.
- 1809 **2290** The virtue of temperance disposes us to *avoid every kind of excess*: the abuse of food, alcohol, tobacco, or medicine. Those incur grave guilt who, by drunkenness or a love of speed, endanger their own and others' safety on the road, at sea, or in the air.
- 2291** The *use of drugs* inflicts very grave damage on human health and life. Their use, except on strictly therapeutic grounds, is a grave offense. Clandestine production of and trafficking in drugs are scandalous practices. They constitute direct co-operation in evil, since they encourage people to practices gravely contrary to the moral law.

Respect for the person and scientific research

- 2292** Scientific, medical, or psychological experiments on human individuals or groups can contribute to healing the sick and the advancement of public health.
- 159 **2293** Basic scientific research, as well as applied research, is a significant expression of man's dominion over creation. Science and technology are precious resources when placed at the service of man and promote his integral development for the benefit of all. By themselves however they cannot disclose the meaning of existence and of human progress. Science and technology are ordered to man, from whom they take their origin and development; hence they find in the person and in his moral values both
1703 evidence of their purpose and awareness of their limits.
- 2294** It is an illusion to claim moral neutrality in scientific research and its applications. On the other hand, guiding principles cannot be inferred from simple technical efficiency, or from the usefulness accruing to some at the expense of others or, even worse, from prevailing ideologies. Science and technology by their very nature require unconditional respect for
2375 fundamental moral criteria. They must be at the service of the human person, of his inalienable rights, of his true and integral good, in conformity with the plan and the will of God.

2295 Research or experimentation on the human being cannot legitimate acts that are in themselves contrary to the dignity of persons and to the moral law. The subjects' potential consent does not justify such acts. Experimentation on human beings is not morally legitimate if it exposes the subject's life or physical and psychological integrity to disproportionate or avoidable risks. Experimentation on human beings does not conform to the dignity of the person if it takes place without the informed consent of the subject or those who legitimately speak for him. 1753

2296 *Organ transplants* are in conformity with the moral law if the physical and psychological dangers and risks to the donor are proportionate to the good that is sought for the recipient. Organ donation after death is a noble and meritorious act and is to be encouraged as an expression of generous solidarity. It is not morally acceptable if the donor or his proxy has not given explicit consent. Moreover, it is not morally admissible directly to bring about the disabling mutilation or death of a human being, even in order to delay the death of other persons. 2301

Respect for bodily integrity

2297 *Kidnapping* and *hostage taking* bring on a reign of terror; by means of threats they subject their victims to intolerable pressures. They are morally wrong. *Terrorism* threatens, wounds, and kills indiscriminately; it is gravely against justice and charity. *Torture* which uses physical or moral violence to extract confessions, punish the guilty, frighten opponents, or satisfy hatred is contrary to respect for the person and for human dignity. Except when performed for strictly therapeutic medical reasons, directly intended *amputations, mutilations, and sterilizations* performed on innocent persons are against the moral law.⁹¹

2298 In times past, cruel practices were commonly used by legitimate governments to maintain law and order, often without protest from the Pastors of the Church, who themselves adopted in their own tribunals the prescriptions of Roman law concerning torture. Regrettable as these facts are, the Church always taught the duty of clemency and mercy. She forbade clerics to shed blood. In recent times it has become evident that these cruel practices were neither necessary for public order, nor in conformity with the legitimate rights of the human person. On the contrary, these practices led to ones even more degrading. It is necessary to work for their abolition. We must pray for the victims and their tormentors. 2267

91 Cf. DS 3722.

Respect for the dead

2299 The dying should be given attention and care to help them live their last moments in dignity and peace. They will be helped by the prayer of their relatives, who must see to it that the sick
1525 receive at the proper time the sacraments that prepare them to meet the living God.

1681-1690 **2300** The bodies of the dead must be treated with respect and charity, in faith and hope of the Resurrection. The burial of the dead is a corporal work of mercy;⁹² it honors the children of God, who are temples of the Holy Spirit.

2301 Autopsies can be morally permitted for legal inquests or scientific research. The free gift of organs after death is legitimate and can be meritorious.

The Church permits cremation, provided that it does not demonstrate a denial of faith in the resurrection of the body.⁹³

III. SAFEGUARDING PEACE

Peace

2302 By recalling the commandment, "You shall not kill,"⁹⁴ our Lord asked for peace of heart and denounced murderous anger and
1765 hatred as immoral.

Anger is a desire for revenge. "To desire vengeance in order to do evil to someone who should be punished is illicit," but it is praiseworthy to impose restitution "to correct vices and maintain justice."⁹⁵ If anger reaches the point of a deliberate desire to kill or seriously wound a neighbor, it is gravely against charity; it is a mortal sin. The Lord says, "Everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment."⁹⁶

2094 **2303** Deliberate *hatred* is contrary to charity. Hatred of the neighbor is a sin when one deliberately wishes him evil. Hatred of the neighbor
1933 is a grave sin when one deliberately desires him grave harm. "But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven."⁹⁷

⁹² Cf. *Tob* 1:16-18.

⁹³ Cf. CIC, can. 1176 § 3.

⁹⁴ *Mt* 5:21.

⁹⁵ St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* II-II, 158, 1 ad 3.

⁹⁶ *Mt* 5:22.

⁹⁷ *Mt* 5:44-45.

2304 Respect for and development of human life require peace. 1909
 Peace is not merely the absence of war, and it is not limited to maintaining a balance of powers between adversaries. Peace cannot be attained on earth without safeguarding the goods of persons, free communication among men, respect for the dignity of persons and peoples, and the assiduous practice of fraternity. Peace is "the tranquillity of order."⁹⁸ Peace is the work of justice and the 1807
 effect of charity.⁹⁹

2305 Earthly peace is the image and fruit of the peace of Christ, the messianic "Prince of Peace."¹⁰⁰ By the blood of his Cross, "in his own person he killed the hostility,"¹⁰¹ he reconciled men with 1468
 God and made his Church the sacrament of the unity of the human race and of its union with God. "He is our peace."¹⁰² He has declared: "Blessed are the peacemakers."¹⁰³

2306 Those who renounce violence and bloodshed and, in order to safeguard human rights, make use of those means of defense available to the weakest, bear witness to evangelical charity, provided they do so without harming the rights and obligations of 2267
 other men and societies. They bear legitimate witness to the gravity of the physical and moral risks of recourse to violence, with all its destruction and death.¹⁰⁴

Avoiding war

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.¹⁰⁵

2308 All citizens and all governments are obliged to work for the avoidance of war.

98 St. Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 19, 13, 1: PL 41, 640.

99 Cf. *Isa* 32:17; cf. *GS* 78 §§ 1-2.

100 *Isa* 9:5.

101 *Eph* 2:16 J.B.; cf. *Col* 1:20-22.

102 *Eph* 2:14.

103 *Mt* 5:9.

104 Cf. *GS* 78 § 5.

105 Cf. *GS* 81 § 4.

However, “as long as the danger of war persists and there is no international authority with the necessary competence and power, governments cannot be denied the right of lawful self-defense, once all peace efforts have failed.”¹⁰⁶

2309 The strict conditions for *legitimate defense by military force* require rigorous consideration. The gravity of such a decision makes it subject to rigorous conditions of moral legitimacy. At one and the same time:

— the damage inflicted by the aggressor on the nation or community of nations must be lasting, grave, and certain;

— all other means of putting an end to it must have been shown to be impractical or ineffective;

— there must be serious prospects of success;

— the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated. The power of modern means of destruction weighs very heavily in evaluating this condition.

These are the traditional elements enumerated in what is called the “just war” doctrine.

The evaluation of these conditions for moral legitimacy belongs to the prudential judgment of those who have responsibility for the common good.

2310 Public authorities, in this case, have the right and duty to impose on citizens the *obligations necessary for national defense*.

Those who are sworn to serve their country in the armed forces are servants of the security and freedom of nations. If they carry out their duty honorably, they truly contribute to the common good of the nation and the maintenance of peace.¹⁰⁷

2311 Public authorities should make equitable provision for those who for reasons of conscience refuse to bear arms; these are nonetheless obliged to serve the human community in some other way.¹⁰⁸

2312 The Church and human reason both assert the permanent validity of the *moral law during armed conflict*. “The mere fact that war has regrettably broken out does not mean that everything becomes licit between the warring parties.”¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁶ GS 79 § 4.

¹⁰⁷ Cf. GS 79 § 5.

¹⁰⁸ Cf. GS 79 § 3.

¹⁰⁹ GS 79 § 4.

2313 Non-combatants, wounded soldiers, and prisoners must be respected and treated humanely.

Actions deliberately contrary to the law of nations and to its universal principles are crimes, as are the orders that command such actions. Blind obedience does not suffice to excuse those who carry them out. Thus the extermination of a people, nation, or ethnic minority must be condemned as a mortal sin. One is morally bound to resist orders that command genocide. 2242

2314 “Every act of war directed to the indiscriminate destruction of whole cities or vast areas with their inhabitants is a crime against God and man, which merits firm and unequivocal condemnation.”¹¹⁰ A danger of modern warfare is that it provides the opportunity to those who possess modern scientific weapons—especially atomic, biological, or chemical weapons—to commit such crimes.

2315 The *accumulation of arms* strikes many as a paradoxically suitable way of deterring potential adversaries from war. They see it as the most effective means of ensuring peace among nations. This method of deterrence gives rise to strong moral reservations. The *arms race* does not ensure peace. Far from eliminating the causes of war, it risks aggravating them. Spending enormous sums to produce ever new types of weapons impedes efforts to aid needy populations;¹¹¹ it thwarts the development of peoples. *Over-armament* multiplies reasons for conflict and increases the danger of escalation.

2316 *The production and the sale of arms* affect the common good of nations and of the international community. Hence public authorities have the right and duty to regulate them. The short-term pursuit of private or collective interests cannot legitimate undertakings that promote violence and conflict among nations and compromise the international juridical order. 1906

2317 Injustice, excessive economic or social inequalities, envy, distrust, and pride raging among men and nations constantly threaten peace and cause wars. Everything done to overcome these disorders contributes to building up peace and avoiding war: 1938 2538 1941

Insofar as men are sinners, the threat of war hangs over them and will so continue until Christ comes again; but insofar as they can vanquish sin by coming together in charity, vio-

110 GS 80 § 3.

111 Cf. Paul VI, *PP* 53.

lence itself will be vanquished and these words will be fulfilled: "they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more."¹¹²

IN BRIEF

- 2318 "In [God's] hand is the life of every living thing and the breath of all mankind" (*Job* 12:10).
 - 2319 Every human life, from the moment of conception until death, is sacred because the human person has been willed for its own sake in the image and likeness of the living and holy God.
 - 2320 The murder of a human being is gravely contrary to the dignity of the person and the holiness of the Creator.
 - 2321 The prohibition of murder does not abrogate the right to render an unjust aggressor unable to inflict harm. Legitimate defense is a grave duty for whoever is responsible for the lives of others or the common good.
 - 2322 From its conception, the child has the right to life. Direct abortion, that is, abortion willed as an end or as a means, is a "criminal" practice (GS 27 § 3), gravely contrary to the moral law. The Church imposes the canonical penalty of excommunication for this crime against human life.
 - 2323 Because it should be treated as a person from conception, the embryo must be defended in its integrity, cared for, and healed like every other human being.
 - 2324 Intentional euthanasia, whatever its forms or motives, is murder. It is gravely contrary to the dignity of the human person and to the respect due to the living God, his Creator.
 - 2325 Suicide is seriously contrary to justice, hope, and charity. It is forbidden by the fifth commandment.
 - 2326 Scandal is a grave offense when by deed or omission it deliberately leads others to sin gravely.
-

112 GS 78 § 6; cf. *Isa* 2:4.

- 2327** Because of the evils and injustices that all war brings with it, we must do everything reasonably possible to avoid it. The Church prays: "From famine, pestilence, and war, O Lord, deliver us."
- 2328** The Church and human reason assert the permanent validity of the moral law during armed conflicts. Practices deliberately contrary to the law of nations and to its universal principles are crimes.
- 2329** "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" (GS 81 § 3).
- 2330** "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God" (Mt 5:9).
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ARTICLE 6

THE SIXTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not commit adultery.¹¹³

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.¹¹⁴

369-373 I. "MALE AND FEMALE HE CREATED THEM . . ."

2331 "God is love and in himself he lives a mystery of personal loving communion. Creating the human race in his own image . . . , God inscribed in the humanity of man and woman the *vocation*, and thus the capacity and responsibility, of love and communion."¹¹⁵

1604

"God created man in his own image . . . male and female he created them";¹¹⁶ He blessed them and said, "Be fruitful and multiply";¹¹⁷ "When God created man, he made him in the likeness of God. Male and female he created them, and he blessed them and named them Man when they were created."¹¹⁸

2332 *Sexuality* affects all aspects of the human person in the unity of his body and soul. It especially concerns affectivity, the capacity to love and to procreate, and in a more general way the aptitude for forming bonds of communion with others.

362

2333 Everyone, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual *identity*. Physical, moral, and spiritual *difference* and *complementarity* are oriented toward the goods of marriage and the flourishing of family life. The harmony of the couple and of society depends in part on the way in which the complementarity, needs, and mutual support between the sexes are lived out.

1603

113 Ex 20:14; Deut 5:18.

114 Mt 5:27-28.

115 FC 11.

116 Gen 1:27.

117 Gen 1:28.

118 Gen 5:1-2.

2334 “In creating men ‘male and female,’ God gives man and woman an equal personal dignity.”¹¹⁹ “Man is a person, man and woman equally so, since both were created in the image and likeness of the personal God.”¹²⁰ 357

2335 Each of the two sexes is an image of the power and tenderness of God, with equal dignity though in a different way. The *union of man and woman* in marriage is a way of imitating in the flesh the Creator’s generosity and fecundity: “Therefore a man leaves his father and his mother and cleaves to his wife, and they become one flesh.”¹²¹ All human generations proceed from this union.¹²² 2205

2336 Jesus came to restore creation to the purity of its origins. 1614 In the Sermon on the Mount, he interprets God’s plan strictly: “You have heard that it was said, ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ But I say to you that every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”¹²³ What God has joined together, let not man put asunder.¹²⁴

The tradition of the Church has understood the sixth commandment as encompassing the whole of human sexuality.

II. THE VOCATION TO CHASTITY

2337 Chastity means the successful integration of sexuality 2349 within the person and thus the inner unity of man in his bodily and 2520 spiritual being. Sexuality, in which man’s belonging to the bodily and biological world is expressed, becomes personal and truly human when it is integrated into the relationship of one person to another, in the complete and lifelong mutual gift of a man and a woman.

The virtue of chastity therefore involves the integrity of the person and the integrality of the gift.

119 FC 22; cf. GS 49 § 2.

120 MD 6.

121 Gen 2:24.

122 Cf. Gen 4:1-2, 25-26; 5:1.

123 Mt 5:27-28.

124 Cf. Mt 19:6.

The integrity of the person

2338 The chaste person maintains the integrity of the powers of life and love placed in him. This integrity ensures the unity of the person; it is opposed to any behavior that would impair it. It tolerates neither a double life nor duplicity in speech.¹²⁵

2339 Chastity includes an *apprenticeship in self-mastery* which is a training in human freedom. The alternative is clear: either man governs his passions and finds peace, or he lets himself be dominated by them and becomes unhappy.¹²⁶ “Man’s dignity therefore requires him to act out of conscious and free choice, as moved and drawn in a personal way from within, and not by blind impulses in himself or by mere external constraint. Man gains such dignity when, ridding himself of all slavery to the passions, he presses forward to his goal by freely choosing what is good and, by his diligence and skill, effectively secures for himself the means suited to this end.”¹²⁷

2340 Whoever wants to remain faithful to his baptismal promises and resist temptations will want to adopt the *means* for doing so: self-knowledge, practice of an asceticism adapted to the situations that confront him, obedience to God’s commandments, exercise of the moral virtues, and fidelity to prayer. “Indeed it is through chastity that we are gathered together and led back to the unity from which we were fragmented into multiplicity.”¹²⁸

2341 The virtue of chastity comes under the cardinal virtue of *temperance*, which seeks to permeate the passions and appetites of the senses with reason.

2342 Self-mastery is a *long and exacting work*. One can never consider it acquired once and for all. It presupposes renewed effort at all stages of life.¹²⁹ The effort required can be more intense in certain periods, such as when the personality is being formed during childhood and adolescence.

¹²⁵ Cf. Mt 5:37.

¹²⁶ Cf. Sir 1:22.

¹²⁷ GS 17.

¹²⁸ St. Augustine, *Conf.* 10, 29, 40: PL 32, 796.

¹²⁹ Cf. *Titus* 2:1-6.

2343 Chastity has *laws of growth* which progress through stages marked by imperfection and too often by sin. "Man . . . day by day builds himself up through his many free decisions; and so he 2223 knows, loves, and accomplishes moral good by stages of growth."¹³⁰

2344 Chastity represents an eminently personal task; it also 2525 involves a *cultural effort*, for there is "an interdependence between personal betterment and the improvement of society."¹³¹ Chastity presupposes respect for the rights of the person, in particular the right to receive information and an education that respect the moral and spiritual dimensions of human life.

2345 Chastity is a moral virtue. It is also a gift from God, a *grace*, 1810 a fruit of spiritual effort.¹³² The Holy Spirit enables one whom the water of Baptism has regenerated to imitate the purity of Christ.¹³³

The integrality of the gift of self

2346 Charity is the *form* of all the virtues. Under its influence, 1827 chastity appears as a school of the gift of the person. Self-mastery is ordered to the gift of self. Chastity leads him who practices it to become a witness to his neighbor of God's fidelity and loving 210 kindness.

2347 The virtue of chastity blossoms in *friendship*. It shows the 374 disciple how to follow and imitate him who has chosen us as his friends,¹³⁴ who has given himself totally to us and allows us to participate in his divine estate. Chastity is a promise of immortality.

Chastity is expressed notably in *friendship with one's neighbor*. Whether it develops between persons of the same or opposite sex, friendship represents a great good for all. It leads to spiritual communion.

130 FC 34.

131 GS 25 § 1.

132 Cf. Gal 5:22.

133 Cf. 1 Jn 3:3.

134 Cf. Jn 15:15.

The various forms of chastity

2348 All the baptized are called to chastity. The Christian has “put on Christ,”¹³⁵ the model for all chastity. All Christ’s faithful are called to lead a chaste life in keeping with their particular states of life. At the moment of his Baptism, the Christian is pledged to lead his affective life in chastity.

- 1620 **2349** “People should cultivate [chastity] in the way that is suited to their state of life. Some profess virginity or consecrated celibacy which enables them to give themselves to God alone with an undivided heart in a remarkable manner. Others live in the way prescribed for all by the moral law, whether they are married or single.”¹³⁶ Married people are called to live conjugal chastity; others practice chastity in continence:

There are three forms of the virtue of chastity: the first is that of spouses, the second that of widows, and the third that of virgins. We do not praise any one of them to the exclusion of the others. . . . This is what makes for the richness of the discipline of the Church.¹³⁷

- 1632 **2350** Those who are *engaged to marry* are called to live chastity in continence. They should see in this time of testing a discovery of mutual respect, an apprenticeship in fidelity, and the hope of receiving one another from God. They should reserve for marriage the expressions of affection that belong to married love. They will help each other grow in chastity.

Offenses against chastity

- 2528 **2351** *Lust* is disordered desire for or inordinate enjoyment of sexual pleasure. Sexual pleasure is morally disordered when sought for itself, isolated from its procreative and unitive purposes.

2352 By *masturbation* is to be understood the deliberate stimulation of the genital organs in order to derive sexual pleasure. “Both the Magisterium of the Church, in the course of a constant tradition, and the moral sense of the faithful have been in no doubt and have firmly maintained that masturbation is an intrinsically and gravely disordered action.”¹³⁸ “The deliberate use of the sexual faculty, for whatever reason, outside of marriage is essentially contrary to its

¹³⁵ Gal 3:27.

¹³⁶ CDF, *Persona humana* 11.

¹³⁷ St. Ambrose, *De viduis* 4, 23: PL 16, 255A.

¹³⁸ CDF, *Persona humana* 9.

purpose." For here sexual pleasure is sought outside of "the sexual relationship which is demanded by the moral order and in which the total meaning of mutual self-giving and human procreation in the context of true love is achieved."¹³⁹

To form an equitable judgment about the subjects' moral responsibility and to guide pastoral action, one must take into account the affective immaturity, force of acquired habit, conditions of anxiety, or other psychological or social factors that can lessen, if not even reduce to a minimum, moral culpability. 1735

2353 *Fornication* is carnal union between an unmarried man and an unmarried woman. It is gravely contrary to the dignity of persons and of human sexuality which is naturally ordered to the good of spouses and the generation and education of children. Moreover, it is a grave scandal when there is corruption of the young.

2354 *Pornography* consists in removing real or simulated sexual acts from the intimacy of the partners, in order to display them deliberately to third parties. It offends against chastity because it perverts the conjugal act, the intimate giving of spouses to each other. It does grave injury to the dignity of its participants (actors, vendors, the public), since each one becomes an object of base pleasure and illicit profit for others. It immerses all who are involved in the illusion of a fantasy world. It is a grave offense. Civil authorities should prevent the production and distribution of pornographic materials. 2523

2355 *Prostitution* does injury to the dignity of the person who engages in it, reducing the person to an instrument of sexual pleasure. The one who pays sins gravely against himself: he violates the chastity to which his Baptism pledged him and defiles his body, the temple of the Holy Spirit.¹⁴⁰ Prostitution is a social scourge. It usually involves women, but also men, children, and adolescents (The latter two cases involve the added sin of scandal.). While it is always gravely sinful to engage in prostitution, the imputability of the offense can be attenuated by destitution, blackmail, or social pressure. 1735

139 CDF, *Persona humana* 9.

140 Cf. 1 Cor 6:15-20.

2356 *Rape* is the forcible violation of the sexual intimacy of
 another person. It does injury to justice and charity. Rape deeply
 wounds the respect, freedom, and physical and moral integrity to
 which every person has a right. It causes grave damage that can
 2297 mark the victim for life. It is always an intrinsically evil act. Graver
 1756 still is the rape of children committed by parents (incest) or those
 2388 responsible for the education of the children entrusted to them.

Chastity and homosexuality

2357 Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between
 women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attrac-
 tion toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of
 forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its
 psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on
 Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave
 depravity,¹⁴¹ tradition has always declared that "homosexual acts
 are intrinsically disordered."¹⁴² They are contrary to the natural law.
 2333 They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from
 a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circum-
 stances can they be approved.

2358 The number of men and women who have deep-seated
 homosexual tendencies is not negligible. This inclination, which is
 objectively disordered, constitutes for most of them a trial. They
 must be accepted with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every
 sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided.
 These persons are called to fulfill God's will in their lives and, if
 they are Christians, to unite to the sacrifice of the Lord's Cross the
 difficulties they may encounter from their condition.

2347 2359 Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues
 of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the
 support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental
 grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach
 Christian perfection.

141 Cf. *Gen* 19:1-29; *Rom* 1:24-27; *1 Cor* 6:10; *1 Tim* 1:10.

142 CDF, *Persona humana* 8.

III. THE LOVE OF HUSBAND AND WIFE

2360 Sexuality is ordered to the conjugal love of man and woman. In marriage the physical intimacy of the spouses becomes a sign and pledge of spiritual communion. Marriage bonds between baptized persons are sanctified by the sacrament. 1601

2361 "Sexuality, by means of which man and woman give themselves to one another through the acts which are proper and exclusive to spouses, is not something simply biological, but concerns the innermost being of the human person as such. It is realized in a truly human way only if it is an integral part of the love by which a man and woman commit themselves totally to one another until death."¹⁴³ 1643 2332

Tobias got out of bed and said to Sarah, "Sister, get up, and let us pray and implore our Lord that he grant us mercy and safety." So she got up, and they began to pray and implore that they might be kept safe. Tobias began by saying, "Blessed are you, O God of our fathers. . . . You made Adam, and for him you made his wife Eve as a helper and support. From the two of them the race of mankind has sprung. You said, 'It is not good that the man should be alone; let us make a helper for him like himself.' I now am taking this kinswoman of mine, not because of lust, but with sincerity. Grant that she and I may find mercy and that we may grow old together." And they both said, "Amen, Amen." Then they went to sleep for the night.¹⁴⁴ 1611

2362 "The acts in marriage by which the intimate and chaste union of the spouses takes place are noble and honorable; the truly human performance of these acts fosters the self-giving they signify and enriches the spouses in joy and gratitude."¹⁴⁵ Sexuality is a source of joy and pleasure:

The Creator himself . . . established that in the [generative] function, spouses should experience pleasure and enjoyment of body and spirit. Therefore, the spouses do nothing evil in seeking this pleasure and enjoyment. They accept what the Creator has intended for them. At the same time, spouses should know how to keep themselves within the limits of just moderation.¹⁴⁶

143 FC 11.

144 *Tob* 8:4-9.

145 GS 49 § 2.

146 Pius XII, Discourse, October 29, 1951.

2363 The spouses' union achieves the twofold end of marriage: the good of the spouses themselves and the transmission of life. These two meanings or values of marriage cannot be separated without altering the couple's spiritual life and compromising the goods of marriage and the future of the family.

The conjugal love of man and woman thus stands under the twofold obligation of fidelity and fecundity.

1646-1648 **Conjugal fidelity**

1603 **2364** The married couple forms "the intimate partnership of life and love established by the Creator and governed by his laws; it is rooted in the conjugal covenant, that is, in their irrevocable personal consent."¹⁴⁷ Both give themselves definitively and totally to one another. They are no longer two; from now on they form one flesh. The covenant they freely contracted imposes on the spouses the obligation to preserve it as unique and indissoluble.¹⁴⁸ "What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder."¹⁴⁹

2365 Fidelity expresses constancy in keeping one's given word. God is faithful. The Sacrament of Matrimony enables man and
1640 woman to enter into Christ's fidelity for his Church. Through conjugal chastity, they bear witness to this mystery before the world.

St. John Chrysostom suggests that young husbands should say to their wives: I have taken you in my arms, and I love you, and I prefer you to my life itself. For the present life is nothing, and my most ardent dream is to spend it with you in such a way that we may be assured of not being separated in the life reserved for us. . . . I place your love above all things, and nothing would be more bitter or painful to me than to be of a different mind than you.¹⁵⁰

147 GS 48 § 1.

148 Cf. CIC, can. 1056.

149 Mk 10:9; cf. Mt 19:1-12; 1 Cor 7:10-11.

150 St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Eph.* 20, 8: PG 62, 146-147.

The fecundity of marriage

1652-1653

2366 Fecundity is a gift, an *end of marriage*, for conjugal love naturally tends to be fruitful. A child does not come from outside as something added on to the mutual love of the spouses, but springs from the very heart of that mutual giving, as its fruit and fulfillment. So the Church, which is “on the side of life,”¹⁵¹ teaches that “it is necessary that each and every marriage act remain ordered *per se* to the procreation of human life.”¹⁵² “This particular doctrine, expounded on numerous occasions by the Magisterium, is based on the inseparable connection, established by God, which man on his own initiative may not break, between the unitive significance and the procreative significance which are both inherent to the marriage act.”¹⁵³

2367 Called to give life, spouses share in the creative power and fatherhood of God.¹⁵⁴ “Married couples should regard it as their proper mission to transmit human life and to educate their children; they should realize that they are thereby *cooperating with* the love of *God the Creator* and are, in a certain sense, its interpreters. They will fulfill this duty with a sense of human and Christian responsibility.”¹⁵⁵ 2205

2368 A particular aspect of this responsibility concerns the *regulation of procreation*. For just reasons, spouses may wish to space the births of their children. It is their duty to make certain that their desire is not motivated by selfishness but is in conformity with the generosity appropriate to responsible parenthood. Moreover, they should conform their behavior to the objective criteria of morality:

When it is a question of harmonizing married love with the responsible transmission of life, the morality of the behavior does not depend on sincere intention and evaluation of motives alone; but it must be determined by objective criteria, criteria drawn from the nature of the person and his acts, criteria that respect the total meaning of mutual self-giving and human procreation in the context of true love; this is possible only if the virtue of married chastity is practiced with sincerity of heart.¹⁵⁶

151 FC 30.

152 HV 11.

153 HV 12; cf. Pius XI, encyclical, *Casti connubii*.

154 Cf. Eph 3:14; Mt 23:9.

155 GS 50 § 2.

156 GS 51 § 3.

2369 “By safeguarding both these essential aspects, the unitive and the procreative, the conjugal act preserves in its fullness the sense of true mutual love and its orientation toward man’s exalted vocation to parenthood.”¹⁵⁷

2370 Periodic continence, that is, the methods of birth regulation based on self-observation and the use of infertile periods, is in conformity with the objective criteria of morality.¹⁵⁸ These methods respect the bodies of the spouses, encourage tenderness between them, and favor the education of an authentic freedom. In contrast, “every action which, whether in anticipation of the conjugal act, or in its accomplishment, or in the development of its natural consequences, proposes, whether as an end or as a means, to render procreation impossible” is intrinsically evil.¹⁵⁹

Thus the innate language that expresses the total reciprocal self-giving of husband and wife is overlaid, through contraception, by an objectively contradictory language, namely, that of not giving oneself totally to the other. This leads not only to a positive refusal to be open to life but also to a falsification of the inner truth of conjugal love, which is called upon to give itself in personal totality. . . . The difference, both anthropological and moral, between contraception and recourse to the rhythm of the cycle . . . involves in the final analysis two irreconcilable concepts of the human person and of human sexuality.¹⁶⁰

2371 “Let all be convinced that human life and the duty of transmitting it are not limited by the horizons of this life only: their true evaluation and full significance can be understood only in reference
1703 to *man’s eternal destiny*.”¹⁶¹

2372 The state has a responsibility for its citizens’ well-being. In this capacity it is legitimate for it to intervene to orient the demography of the population. This can be done by means of objective and respectful information, but certainly not by authoritarian, coercive measures. The state may not legitimately usurp the initiative of spouses, who have the primary
2209 responsibility for the procreation and education of their children.¹⁶² In this area, it is not authorized to employ means contrary to the moral law.

157 Cf. HV 12.

158 HV 16.

159 HV 14.

160 FC 32.

161 GS 51 § 4.

162 Cf. HV 23; PP 37.

The gift of a child

2373 Sacred Scripture and the Church's traditional practice see in *large families* a sign of God's blessing and the parents' generosity.¹⁶³

2374 Couples who discover that they are sterile suffer greatly. ¹⁶⁵⁴ "What will you give me," asks Abraham of God, "for I continue childless?"¹⁶⁴ And Rachel cries to her husband Jacob, "Give me children, or I shall die!"¹⁶⁵

2375 Research aimed at reducing human sterility is to be en- ²²⁹³ couraged, on condition that it is placed "at the service of the human person, of his inalienable rights, and his true and integral good according to the design and will of God."¹⁶⁶

2376 Techniques that entail the dissociation of husband and wife, by the intrusion of a person other than the couple (donation of sperm or ovum, surrogate uterus), are gravely immoral. These techniques (heterologous artificial insemination and fertilization) infringe the child's right to be born of a father and mother known to him and bound to each other by marriage. They betray the spouses' "right to become a father and a mother only through each other."¹⁶⁷

2377 Techniques involving only the married couple (homologous artificial insemination and fertilization) are perhaps less reprehensible, yet remain morally unacceptable. They dissociate the sexual act from the procreative act. The act which brings the child into existence is no longer an act by which two persons give themselves to one another, but one that "entrusts the life and identity of the embryo into the power of doctors and biologists and establishes the domination of technology over the origin and destiny of the human person. Such a relationship of domination is in itself contrary to the dignity and equality that must be common to parents and children."¹⁶⁸ "Under the moral aspect procreation is deprived of its proper perfection when it is not willed as the fruit of the conjugal act, that is to say, of the specific act of the spouses' union . . . Only respect for the link between the meanings of the conjugal act and respect for the unity of the human being make possible procreation in conformity with the dignity of the person."¹⁶⁹

¹⁶³ Cf. GS 50 § 2.

¹⁶⁴ *Gen* 15:2.

¹⁶⁵ *Gen* 30:1.

¹⁶⁶ CDF, *Donum vitae* intro., 2.

¹⁶⁷ CDF, *Donum vitae* II, 1.

¹⁶⁸ CDF, *Donum vitae* II, 5.

¹⁶⁹ CDF, *Donum vitae* II, 4.

2378 A child is not something *owed* to one, but is a *gift*. The “supreme gift of marriage” is a human person. A child may not be considered a piece of property, an idea to which an alleged “right to a child” would lead. In this area, only the child possesses genuine rights: the right “to be the fruit of the specific act of the conjugal love of his parents,” and “the right to be respected as a person from the moment of his conception.”¹⁷⁰

2379 The Gospel shows that physical sterility is not an absolute evil. Spouses who still suffer from infertility after exhausting legitimate medical procedures should unite themselves with the Lord’s Cross, the source of all spiritual fecundity. They can give expression to their generosity by adopting abandoned children or performing demanding services for others.

IV. OFFENSES AGAINST THE DIGNITY OF MARRIAGE

Adultery

2380 *Adultery* refers to marital infidelity. When two partners, of whom at least one is married to another party, have sexual relations—even transient ones—they commit adultery. Christ condemns even adultery of mere desire.¹⁷¹ The sixth commandment and the New Testament forbid adultery absolutely.¹⁷² The prophets denounce the gravity of adultery; they see it as an image of the sin of idolatry.¹⁷³

2381 Adultery is an injustice. He who commits adultery fails in his commitment. He does injury to the sign of the covenant which the marriage bond is, transgresses the rights of the other spouse, and undermines the institution of marriage by breaking the contract on which it is based. He compromises the good of human generation and the welfare of children who need their parents’ stable union.

¹⁷⁰ CDF, *Donum vitae* II, 8.

¹⁷¹ Cf. Mt 5:27-28.

¹⁷² Cf. Mt 5:32; 19:6; Mk 10:11; 1 Cor 6:9-10.

¹⁷³ Cf. Hos 2:7; Jer 5:7; 13:27.

Divorce

2382 The Lord Jesus insisted on the original intention of the Creator who willed that marriage be indissoluble.¹⁷⁴ He abrogates 1614 the accommodations that had slipped into the old Law.¹⁷⁵

Between the baptized, “a ratified and consummated marriage cannot be dissolved by any human power or for any reason other than death.”¹⁷⁶

2383 The *separation* of spouses while maintaining the marriage 1649 bond can be legitimate in certain cases provided for by canon law.¹⁷⁷

If civil divorce remains the only possible way of ensuring certain legal rights, the care of the children, or the protection of inheritance, it can be tolerated and does not constitute a moral offense.

2384 *Divorce* is a grave offense against the natural law. It claims 1650 to break the contract, to which the spouses freely consented, to live with each other till death. Divorce does injury to the covenant of salvation, of which sacramental marriage is the sign. Contracting a new union, even if it is recognized by civil law, adds to the gravity of the rupture: the remarried spouse is then in a situation of public and permanent adultery:

If a husband, separated from his wife, approaches another woman, he is an adulterer because he makes that woman commit adultery; and the woman who lives with him is an adulteress, because she has drawn another’s husband to herself.¹⁷⁸

2385 Divorce is immoral also because it introduces disorder into the family and into society. This disorder brings grave harm to the deserted spouse, to children traumatized by the separation of their parents and often torn between them, and because of its contagious effect which makes it truly a plague on society.

174 Cf. Mt 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mk 10:9; Lk 16:18; 1 Cor 7:10-11.

175 Cf. Mt 19:7-9.

176 CIC, can. 1141.

177 Cf. CIC, cann. 1151-1155.

178 St. Basil, *Moralia* 73, 1: PG 31, 849-852.

2386 It can happen that one of the spouses is the innocent victim of a divorce decreed by civil law; this spouse therefore has not contravened the moral law. There is a considerable difference between a spouse who has sincerely tried to be faithful to the sacrament of marriage and is unjustly abandoned, and one who
 1640 through his own grave fault destroys a canonically valid marriage.¹⁷⁹

Other offenses against the dignity of marriage

2387 The predicament of a man who, desiring to convert to the Gospel, is obliged to repudiate one or more wives with whom he has shared years of conjugal life, is understandable. However
 1610 *polygamy* is not in accord with the moral law. “[Conjugal] communion is radically contradicted by polygamy; this, in fact, directly negates the plan of God which was revealed from the beginning, because it is contrary to the equal personal dignity of men and women who in matrimony give themselves with a love that is total and therefore unique and exclusive.”¹⁸⁰ The Christian who has previously lived in polygamy has a grave duty in justice to honor the obligations contracted in regard to his former wives and his children.

2356 2388 *Incest* designates intimate relations between relatives or in-laws within a degree that prohibits marriage between them.¹⁸¹ St. Paul stigmatizes this especially grave offense: “It is actually reported that there is immorality among you . . . for a man is living with his father’s wife. . . . In the name of the Lord Jesus . . . you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh. . . .”¹⁸²
 2207 Incest corrupts family relationships and marks a regression toward animality.

2389 Connected to incest is any sexual abuse perpetrated by adults on children or adolescents entrusted to their care. The offense is compounded by the scandalous harm done to the physical
 2285 and moral integrity of the young, who will remain scarred by it all their lives; and the violation of responsibility for their upbringing.

179 Cf. FC 84.

180 FC 19; cf. GS 47 § 2.

181 Cf. *Lev* 18:7-20.

182 *1 Cor* 5:1, 4-5.

2390 In a so-called *free union*, a man and a woman refuse to give juridical and public form to a liaison involving sexual intimacy. 1631

The expression “free union” is fallacious: what can “union” mean when the partners make no commitment to one another, each exhibiting a lack of trust in the other, in himself, or in the future?

The expression covers a number of different situations: concubinage, rejection of marriage as such, or inability to make long-term commitments.¹⁸³ All these situations offend against the dignity of marriage; they destroy the very idea of the family; they weaken the sense of fidelity. They are contrary to the moral law. 2353
The sexual act must take place exclusively within marriage. Outside of marriage it always constitutes a grave sin and excludes one from sacramental communion. 1385

2391 Some today claim a “*right to a trial marriage*” where there is an intention of getting married later. However firm the purpose of those who engage in premature sexual relations may be, “the fact is that such liaisons can scarcely ensure mutual sincerity and fidelity in a relationship between a man and a woman, nor, especially, can they protect it from inconstancy of desires or whim.”¹⁸⁴ Carnal union is morally legitimate only when a definitive community of life between a man and woman has been established. Human love does not tolerate “trial marriages.” It demands a total and definitive gift of persons to one another.¹⁸⁵ 2364

IN BRIEF

2392 “Love is the fundamental and innate vocation of every human being” (FC 11).

2393 By creating the human being man and woman, God gives personal dignity equally to the one and the other. Each of them, man and woman, should acknowledge and accept his sexual identity.

2394 Christ is the model of chastity. Every baptized person is called to lead a chaste life, each according to his particular state of life.

183 Cf. FC 81.

184 CDF, *Persona humana* 7.

185 Cf. FC 80.

- 2395 Chastity means the integration of sexuality within the person. It includes an apprenticeship in self-mastery.
- 2396 Among the sins gravely contrary to chastity are masturbation, fornication, pornography, and homosexual practices.
- 2397 The covenant which spouses have freely entered into entails faithful love. It imposes on them the obligation to keep their marriage indissoluble.
- 2398 Fecundity is a good, a gift and an end of marriage. By giving life, spouses participate in God's fatherhood.
- 2399 The regulation of births represents one of the aspects of responsible fatherhood and motherhood. Legitimate intentions on the part of the spouses do not justify recourse to morally unacceptable means (for example, direct sterilization or contraception).
- 2400 Adultery, divorce, polygamy, and free union are grave offenses against the dignity of marriage.
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ARTICLE 7

THE SEVENTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not steal.¹⁸⁶

2401 The seventh commandment forbids unjustly taking or keeping the goods of one's neighbor and wronging him in any way with respect to his goods. It commands justice and charity in the care of earthly goods and the fruits of men's labor. For the sake of the common good, it requires respect for the universal destination of goods and respect for the right to private property. Christian life strives to order this world's goods to God and to fraternal charity.

1807

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I. THE UNIVERSAL DESTINATION AND THE PRIVATE OWNERSHIP OF GOODS

2402 In the beginning God entrusted the earth and its resources to the common stewardship of mankind to take care of them, master them by labor, and enjoy their fruits.¹⁸⁷ The goods of creation are destined for the whole human race. However, the earth is divided up among men to assure the security of their lives, endangered by poverty and threatened by violence. The appropriation of property is legitimate for guaranteeing the freedom and dignity of persons and for helping each of them to meet his basic needs and the needs of those in his charge. It should allow for a natural solidarity to develop between men.

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1939

2403 The *right to private property*, acquired or received in a just way, does not do away with the original gift of the earth to the whole of mankind. The *universal destination of goods* remains primordial, even if the promotion of the common good requires respect for the right to private property and its exercise.

¹⁸⁶ Ex 20:15; Deut 5:19; Mt 19:18.

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Gen 1:26-29.

2404 “In his use of things man should regard the external goods
he legitimately owns not merely as exclusive to himself but com-
mon to others also, in the sense that they can benefit others as well
as himself.”¹⁸⁸ The ownership of any property makes its holder a
307 steward of Providence, with the task of making it fruitful and
communicating its benefits to others, first of all his family.

2405 Goods of production—material or immaterial—such as land, fac-
tories, practical or artistic skills, oblige their possessors to employ them in
ways that will benefit the greatest number. Those who hold goods for use
and consumption should use them with moderation, reserving the better
part for guests, for the sick and the poor.

1903 2406 *Political authority* has the right and duty to regulate the
legitimate exercise of the right to ownership for the sake of the
common good.¹⁸⁹

II. RESPECT FOR PERSONS AND THEIR GOODS

2407 In economic matters, respect for human dignity requires
the practice of the virtue of *temperance*, so as to moderate attach-
1809 ment to this world’s goods; the practice of the virtue of *justice*, to
1807 preserve our neighbor’s rights and render him what is his due; and
1939 the practice of *solidarity*, in accordance with the golden rule and in
keeping with the generosity of the Lord, who “though he was rich,
yet for your sake . . . became poor so that by his poverty, you might
become rich.”¹⁹⁰

Respect for the goods of others

2408 The seventh commandment forbids *theft*, that is, usurping
another’s property against the reasonable will of the owner. There
is no theft if consent can be presumed or if refusal is contrary to
reason and the universal destination of goods. This is the case in
obvious and urgent necessity when the only way to provide for
immediate, essential needs (food, shelter, clothing . . .) is to put at
one’s disposal and use the property of others.¹⁹¹

188 GS 69 § 1.

189 Cf. GS 71 § 4; SRS 42; CA 40; 48.

190 2 Cor 8:9.

191 Cf. GS 69 § 1.

2409 Even if it does not contradict the provisions of civil law, any form of unjustly taking and keeping the property of others is against the seventh commandment: thus, deliberate retention of goods lent or of objects lost; business fraud; paying unjust wages; forcing up prices by taking advantage of the ignorance or hardship of another.¹⁹² 1867

The following are also morally illicit: speculation in which one contrives to manipulate the price of goods artificially in order to gain an advantage to the detriment of others; corruption in which one influences the judgment of those who must make decisions according to law; appropriation and use for private purposes of the common goods of an enterprise; work poorly done; tax evasion; forgery of checks and invoices; excessive expenses and waste. Willfully damaging private or public property is contrary to the moral law and requires reparation.

2410 *Promises* must be kept and *contracts* strictly observed to the extent that the commitments made in them are morally just. A significant part of economic and social life depends on the honoring of contracts between physical or moral persons—commercial contracts of purchase or sale, rental or labor contracts. All contracts must be agreed to and executed in good faith. 2101

2411 Contracts are subject to *commutative justice* which regulates exchanges between persons and between institutions in accordance with a strict respect for their rights. Commutative justice obliges strictly; it requires safeguarding property rights, paying debts, and fulfilling obligations freely contracted. Without commutative justice, no other form of justice is possible. 1807

One distinguishes *commutative* justice from *legal* justice which concerns what the citizen owes in fairness to the community, and from *distributive* justice which regulates what the community owes its citizens in proportion to their contributions and needs.

2412 In virtue of commutative justice, *reparation for injustice* committed requires the restitution of stolen goods to their owner: 1459

Jesus blesses Zacchaeus for his pledge: "If I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold."¹⁹³ Those who, directly or indirectly, have taken possession of the goods of another, are obliged to make restitution of them, or to return the equivalent in kind or in money, if the goods have disappeared, as well as the profit or advantages their owner would have legitimately obtained from them. Likewise, all who in some manner have taken part in a theft or who have knowingly benefited from it—for example, those who ordered it, assisted in it, or received the stolen goods—are obliged to make restitution in proportion to their responsibility and to their share of what was stolen. 2487

192 Cf. *Deut* 25:13-16. 24:14-15; *Jas* 5:4; *Am* 8:4-6.

193 *Lk* 19:8.

2413 *Games of chance* (card games, etc.) or *wagers* are not in themselves contrary to justice. They become morally unacceptable when they deprive someone of what is necessary to provide for his needs and those of others. The passion for gambling risks becoming an enslavement. Unfair wagers and cheating at games constitute grave matter, unless the damage inflicted is so slight that the one who suffers it cannot reasonably consider it significant.

2297 **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.”¹⁹⁴

Respect for the integrity of creation

226, 358 **2415** The seventh commandment enjoins respect for the integrity of creation. Animals, like plants and inanimate beings, are by nature destined for the common good of past, present, and future humanity.¹⁹⁵ Use of the mineral, vegetable, and animal resources of the universe cannot be divorced from respect for moral imperatives. Man’s dominion over inanimate and other living beings granted by the Creator is not absolute; it is limited by concern for the quality of life of his neighbor, including generations to come; it requires a religious respect for the integrity of creation.¹⁹⁶

2416 *Animals* are God’s creatures. He surrounds them with his providential care. By their mere existence they bless him and give him glory.¹⁹⁷ Thus men owe them kindness. We should recall the gentleness with which saints like St. Francis of Assisi or St. Philip Neri treated animals.

194 *Philem* 16.

195 Cf. *Gen* 1:28-31.

196 Cf. *CA* 37-38.

197 Cf. *Mt* 6:26; *Dan* 3:79-81.

2417 God entrusted animals to the stewardship of those whom he created in his own image.¹⁹⁸ Hence it is legitimate to use animals for food and clothing. They may be domesticated to help man in his work and leisure. Medical and scientific experimentation on animals is a morally acceptable practice if it remains within reasonable limits and contributes to caring for or saving human lives. 2234

2418 It is contrary to human dignity to cause animals to suffer or die needlessly. It is likewise unworthy to spend money on them that should as a priority go to the relief of human misery. One can love animals; one should not direct to them the affection due only to persons. 2446

III. THE SOCIAL DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH

2419 “Christian revelation . . . promotes deeper understanding of the laws of social living.”¹⁹⁹ The Church receives from the Gospel the full revelation of the truth about man. When she fulfills her mission of proclaiming the Gospel, she bears witness to man, in the name of Christ, to his dignity and his vocation to the communion of persons. She teaches him the demands of justice and peace in conformity with divine wisdom. 1960 359

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.”²⁰⁰ 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. 2032 2246

2421 The social doctrine of the Church developed in the nineteenth century when the Gospel encountered modern industrial society with its new structures for the production of consumer goods, its new concept of society, the state and authority, and its new forms of labor and ownership. The development of the doctrine of the Church on economic and social matters attests the permanent value of the Church’s teaching at the same time as it attests the true meaning of her Tradition, always living and active.²⁰¹

198 Cf. *Gen* 2:19-20; 9:1-4.

199 GS 23 § 1.

200 GS 76 § 5.

201 Cf. CA 3.

2422 The Church's social teaching comprises a body of doctrine, which is articulated as the Church interprets events in the course of history, with the assistance of the Holy Spirit, in the light of the whole of what has been revealed by Jesus Christ.²⁰² This teaching can be more easily accepted by men of good will, the more the faithful let themselves be guided by it.

2423 The Church's social teaching proposes principles for reflection; it provides criteria for judgment; it gives guidelines for action:

Any system in which social relationships are determined entirely by economic factors is contrary to the nature of the human person and his acts.²⁰³

2424 A theory that makes profit the exclusive norm and ultimate end of economic activity is morally unacceptable. The disordered desire for money cannot but produce perverse effects. It is one of the causes of the many conflicts which disturb the social order.²⁰⁴

A system that "subordinates the basic rights of individuals and of groups to the collective organization of production" is contrary to human dignity.²⁰⁵ Every practice that reduces persons to nothing more than a means of profit enslaves man, leads to idolizing money, and contributes to the spread of atheism. "You cannot serve God and mammon."²⁰⁶

2425 The Church has rejected the totalitarian and atheistic ideologies associated in modern times with "communism" or "socialism." She has likewise refused to accept, in the practice of "capitalism," individualism and the absolute primacy of the law of the marketplace over human labor.²⁰⁷ Regulating the economy solely by centralized planning perverts the basis of social bonds; regulating it solely by the law of the marketplace fails social justice, for "there are many human needs which cannot be satisfied by the market."²⁰⁸ Reasonable regulation of the marketplace and economic initiatives, in keeping with a just hierarchy of values and a view to the common good, is to be commended.

202 Cf. SRS 1; 41.

203 Cf. CA 24.

204 GS 65 § 2.

205 Mt 6:24; Lk 16:13.

206 Cf. CA 10; 13; 44.

207 CA 34.

208 Cf. GS 64.

IV. ECONOMIC ACTIVITY AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

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.²⁰⁹ 1928

2427 *Human work* proceeds directly from persons created in the image of God and called to prolong the work of creation by subduing the earth, both with and for one another.²¹⁰ Hence work is a duty: "If any one will not work, let him not eat."²¹¹ Work honors the Creator's gifts and the talents received from him. It can also be redemptive. By enduring the hardship of work²¹² in union with Jesus, the carpenter of Nazareth and the one crucified on Calvary, man collaborates in a certain fashion with the Son of God in his redemptive work. He shows himself to be a disciple of Christ by carrying the cross, daily, in the work he is called to accomplish.²¹³ Work can be a means of sanctification and a way of animating earthly realities with the Spirit of Christ. 307 378 531

2428 In work, the person exercises and fulfills in part the potential inscribed in his nature. The primordial value of labor stems from man himself, its author and its beneficiary. Work is for man, not man for work.²¹⁴ 2834 2185

Everyone should be able to draw from work the means of providing for his life and that of his family, and of serving the human community.

2429 Everyone has the *right of economic initiative*; everyone should make legitimate use of his talents to contribute to the abundance that will benefit all and to harvest the just fruits of his labor. He should seek to observe regulations issued by legitimate authority for the sake of the common good.²¹⁵

209 Cf. *Gen* 1:28; *GS* 34; *CA* 31.

210 *2 Thess* 3:10; cf. *1 Thess* 4:11.

211 Cf. *Gen* 3:14-19.

212 Cf. *LE* 27.

213 Cf. *LE* 6.

214 Cf. *CA* 32; 34.

215 Cf. *LE* 11.

2430 *Economic life* brings into play different interests, often opposed to one another. This explains why the conflicts that characterize it arise.²¹⁶ Efforts should be made to reduce these conflicts by negotiation that respects the rights and duties of each social partner: those responsible for business enterprises, representatives of wage-earners (for example, trade unions), and public authorities when appropriate.

2431 The *responsibility of the state*. "Economic activity, especially the activity of a market economy, cannot be conducted in an institutional, juridical, or political vacuum. On the contrary, it presupposes sure guarantees of individual freedom and private property, as well as a stable currency and efficient public services.
 1908 Hence the principal task of the state is to guarantee this security, so that those who work and produce can enjoy the fruits of their labors and thus feel encouraged to work efficiently and honestly. . . . Another task of the state is that of overseeing and directing the exercise of human rights in the economic sector. However, primary responsibility
 1883 in this area belongs not to the state but to individuals and to the various groups and associations which make up society."²¹⁷

2432 Those *responsible for business enterprises* are responsible to society for the economic and ecological effects of their operations.
 2415 tions.²¹⁸ They have an obligation to consider the good of persons and not only the increase of *profits*. Profits are necessary, however. They make possible the investments that ensure the future of a business and they guarantee employment.

2433 *Access to employment* and to professions must be open to all without unjust discrimination: men and women, healthy and disabled, natives and immigrants.²¹⁹ For its part society should, according to circumstances, help citizens find work and employment.²²⁰

1867 **2434** A *just wage* is the legitimate fruit of work. To refuse or withhold it can be a grave injustice.²²¹ In determining fair pay both the needs and the contributions of each person must be taken into account. "Remuneration for work should guarantee man the opportunity to provide a dignified livelihood for himself and his family on the material, social, cultural, and spiritual level, taking

216 CA 48.

217 Cf. CA 37.

218 Cf. LE 19; 22-23.

219 Cf. CA 48.

220 Cf. Lev 19:13; Deut 24:14-15; Jas 5:4.

221 GS 67 § 2.

into account the role and the productivity of each, the state of the business, and the common good."²²² Agreement between the parties is not sufficient to justify morally the amount to be received in wages.

2435 Recourse to a *strike* is morally legitimate when it cannot be avoided, or at least when it is necessary to obtain a proportionate benefit. It becomes morally unacceptable when accompanied by violence, or when objectives are included that are not directly linked to working conditions or are contrary to the common good.

2436 It is unjust not to pay the social security *contributions* required by legitimate authority.

Unemployment almost always wounds its victim's dignity and threatens the equilibrium of his life. Besides the harm done to him personally, it entails many risks for his family.²²³

V. JUSTICE AND SOLIDARITY AMONG NATIONS

2437 On the international level, inequality of resources and economic capability is such that it creates a real "gap" between nations.²²⁴ On the one side there are those nations possessing and developing the means of growth and, on the other, those accumulating debts. 1938

2438 Various causes of a religious, political, economic, and financial nature today give "the social question a worldwide dimension."²²⁵ There must be solidarity among nations which are already politically interdependent. It is even more essential when it is a question of dismantling the "perverse mechanisms" that impede the development of the less advanced countries.²²⁶ In place of abusive if not usurious financial systems, iniquitous commercial relations among nations, and the arms race, there must be substituted a common effort to mobilize resources toward objectives of moral, cultural, and economic development, "redefining the priorities and hierarchies of values."²²⁷ 1911 2315

222 Cf. *LE* 18.

223 Cf. *SRS* 14.

224 *SRS* 9.

225 Cf. *SRS* 17; 45.

226 *CA* 28; cf. 35.

227 Cf. *SRS* 16.

2439 *Rich nations* have a grave moral responsibility toward those which are unable to ensure the means of their development by themselves or have been prevented from doing so by tragic historical events. It is a duty in solidarity and charity; it is also an obligation in justice if the prosperity of the rich nations has come from resources that have not been paid for fairly.

2440 *Direct aid* is an appropriate response to immediate, extraordinary needs caused by natural catastrophes, epidemics, and the like. But it does not suffice to repair the grave damage resulting from destitution or to provide a lasting solution to a country's needs. It is also necessary to *reform* international economic and financial *institutions* so that they will better promote equitable relationships with less advanced countries.²²⁸ The efforts of poor countries working for growth and liberation must be supported.²²⁹ This doctrine must be applied especially in the area of agricultural labor. Peasants, especially in the Third World, form the overwhelming majority of the poor.

1908 **2441** An increased sense of God and increased self-awareness are fundamental to any *full development of human society*. This development multiplies material goods and puts them at the service of the person and his freedom. It reduces dire poverty and economic exploitation. It makes for growth in respect for cultural identities and openness to the transcendent.²³⁰

899 **2442** It is not the role of the Pastors of the Church to intervene directly in the political structuring and organization of social life. This task is part of the vocation of the *lay faithful*, acting on their own initiative with their fellow citizens. Social action can assume various concrete forms. It should always have the common good in view and be in conformity with the message of the Gospel and the teaching of the Church. It is the role of the laity "to animate temporal realities with Christian commitment, by which they show that they are witnesses and agents of peace and justice."²³¹

228 Cf. SRS 16.

229 Cf. CA 26.

230 Cf. SRS 32; CA 51.

231 SRS 47 § 6; cf. 42.

VI. LOVE FOR THE POOR

2544-2547

2443 God blesses those who come to the aid of the poor and rebukes those who turn away from them: "Give to him who begs from you, do not refuse him who would borrow from you"; "you received without pay, give without pay."²³² It is by what they have done for the poor that Jesus Christ will recognize his chosen ones.²³³ When "the poor have the good news preached to them," it is the sign of Christ's presence.²³⁴ 786, 525 544, 853

2444 "The Church's love for the poor . . . is a part of her constant tradition." This love is inspired by the Gospel of the Beatitudes, of the poverty of Jesus, and of his concern for the poor.²³⁵ Love for the poor is even one of the motives for the duty of working so as to "be able to give to those in need."²³⁶ It extends not only to material poverty but also to the many forms of cultural and religious poverty.²³⁷ 1716

2445 Love for the poor is incompatible with immoderate love of riches or their selfish use: 2536

Come now, you rich, weep and howl for the miseries that are coming upon you. Your riches have rotted and your garments are moth-eaten. Your gold and silver have rusted, and their rust will be evidence against you and will eat your flesh like fire. You have laid up treasure for the last days. Behold, the wages of the laborers who mowed your fields, which you kept back by fraud, cry out; and the cries of the harvesters have reached the ears of the Lord of hosts. You have lived on the earth in luxury and in pleasure; you have fattened your hearts in a day of slaughter. You have condemned, you have killed the righteous man; he does not resist you.²³⁸ 2547

2446 St. John Chrysostom vigorously recalls this: "Not to enable the poor to share in our goods is to steal from them and deprive them of life. The goods we possess are not ours, but theirs."²³⁹ "The demands of justice must be satisfied first of all; that which is already due in justice is not to be offered as a gift of charity".²⁴⁰ 2402

232 Mt 5:42; 10:8.

233 Cf. Mt 25:31-36.

234 Mt 11:5; cf. Lk 4:18.

235 CA 57; cf. Lk 6:20-22, Mt 8:20; Mk 12:41-44.

236 Eph 4:28.

237 Cf. CA 57.

238 Jas 5:1-6.

239 St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Lazaro* 2, 5: PG 48, 992.

240 AA 8 § 5.

When we attend to the needs of those in want, we give them what is theirs, not ours. More than performing works of mercy, we are paying a debt of justice.²⁴¹

1460 **2447** *The works of mercy* are charitable actions by which we come to the aid of our neighbor in his spiritual and bodily necessities.²⁴² Instructing, advising, consoling, comforting are spiritual works of mercy, as are forgiving and bearing wrongs patiently. The corporal works of mercy consist especially in feeding the hungry, 1038 sheltering the homeless, clothing the naked, visiting the sick and 1969 imprisoned, and burying the dead.²⁴³ Among all these, giving alms to the poor is one of the chief witnesses to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God.²⁴⁴

He who has two coats, let him share with him who has none; and he who has food must do likewise.²⁴⁵ But give for alms those things which are within; and behold, everything is clean for you.²⁴⁶ If a brother or sister is ill-clad and in lack of daily food, and one of you says to them, "Go in peace, be 1004 warmed and filled," without giving them the things needed for the body, what does it profit?²⁴⁷

2448 "In its various forms—material deprivation, unjust oppression, physical and psychological illness and death—*human misery* is the obvious sign of the inherited condition of frailty and need for salvation in which man finds himself as a consequence of original sin. This misery elicited the compassion of Christ the Savior, who willingly took it upon himself and identified himself with the least of his brethren. Hence, those who are oppressed by poverty are the 1586 object of a *preferential love* on the part of the Church which, since her origin and in spite of the failings of many of her members, has not ceased to work for their relief, defense, and liberation through numerous works of charity which remain indispensable always and everywhere."²⁴⁸

241 St. Gregory the Great, *Regula Pastoralis*. 3, 21: PL 77, 87.

242 Cf. *Isa* 58:6-7; *Heb* 13:3.

243 Cf. *Mt* 25:31-46.

244 Cf. *Tob* 4:5-11; *Sir* 17:22; *Mt* 6:2-4.

245 *Lk* 3:11.

246 *Lk* 11:41.

247 *Jas* 2:15-16; cf. *1 Jn* 3:17.

248 CDF, instruction, *Libertatis conscientia*, 68.

2449 Beginning with the Old Testament, all kinds of juridical measures (the jubilee year of forgiveness of debts, prohibition of loans at interest and the keeping of collateral, the obligation to tithe, the daily payment of the day-laborer, the right to glean vines and fields) answer the exhortation of *Deuteronomy*: "For the poor will never cease out of the land; therefore I command you, 'You shall open wide your hand to your brother, to the needy and to the poor in the land.'"²⁴⁹ Jesus makes these words his own: "The poor you always have with you, but you do not always have me."²⁵⁰ In so doing he does not soften the vehemence of former oracles against "buying the poor for silver and the needy for a pair of sandals . . . ," but invites us to recognize his own presence in the poor who are his brethren.²⁵¹

1397

When her mother reproached her for caring for the poor and the sick at home, St. Rose of Lima said to her: "When we serve the poor and the sick, we serve Jesus. We must not fail to help our neighbors, because in them we serve Jesus."²⁵²

786

IN BRIEF

- 2450** "You shall not steal" (*Ex* 20:15; *Deut* 5:19). "Neither thieves, nor the greedy . . . , nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God" (*1 Cor* 6:10).
- 2451** The seventh commandment enjoins the practice of justice and charity in the administration of earthly goods and the fruits of men's labor.
- 2452** The goods of creation are destined for the entire human race. The right to private property does not abolish the universal destination of goods.
- 2453** The seventh commandment forbids theft. Theft is the usurpation of another's goods against the reasonable will of the owner.
- 2454** Every manner of taking and using another's property unjustly is contrary to the seventh commandment. The injustice committed requires reparation. Commutative justice requires the restitution of stolen goods.

249 *Deut* 15:11.

250 *Jn* 12:8.

251 *Am* 8:6; cf. *Mt* 25:40.

252 P. Hansen, *Vita mirabilis* (Louvain, 1668).

- 2455 The moral law forbids acts which, for commercial or totalitarian purposes, lead to the enslavement of human beings, or to their being bought, sold or exchanged like merchandise.
- 2456 The dominion granted by the Creator over the mineral, vegetable, and animal resources of the universe cannot be separated from respect for moral obligations, including those toward generations to come.
- 2457 Animals are entrusted to man's stewardship; he must show them kindness. They may be used to serve the just satisfaction of man's needs.
- 2458 The Church makes a judgment about economic and social matters when the fundamental rights of the person or the salvation of souls requires it. She is concerned with the temporal common good of men because they are ordered to the sovereign Good, their ultimate end.
- 2459 Man is himself the author, center, and goal of all economic and social life. The decisive point of the social question is that goods created by God for everyone should in fact reach everyone in accordance with justice and with the help of charity.
- 2460 The primordial value of labor stems from man himself, its author and beneficiary. By means of his labor man participates in the work of creation. Work united to Christ can be redemptive.
- 2461 True development concerns the whole man. It is concerned with increasing each person's ability to respond to his vocation and hence to God's call (cf. CA 29).
- 2462 Giving alms to the poor is a witness to fraternal charity: it is also a work of justice pleasing to God.
- 2463 How can we not recognize Lazarus, the hungry beggar in the parable (cf. *Lk* 17:19-31), in the multitude of human beings without bread, a roof or a place to stay? How can we fail to hear Jesus: "As you did it not to one of the least of these, you did it not to me" (*Mt* 25:45)?
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ARTICLE 8

THE EIGHTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.²⁵³

It was said to the men of old, "You shall not swear falsely, but shall perform to the Lord what you have sworn."²⁵⁴

2464 The eighth commandment forbids misrepresenting the truth in our relations with others. This moral prescription flows from the vocation of the holy people to bear witness to their God who is the truth and wills the truth. Offenses against the truth express by word or deed a refusal to commit oneself to moral uprightness: they are fundamental infidelities to God and, in this sense, they undermine the foundations of the covenant.

I. LIVING IN THE TRUTH

2465 The Old Testament attests that *God is the source of all truth*. 215 His Word is truth. His Law is truth. His "faithfulness endures to all generations."²⁵⁵ Since God is "true," the members of his people are called to live in the truth.²⁵⁶

2466 In Jesus Christ, the whole of God's truth has been made manifest. "Full of grace and truth," he came as the "light of the world," he *is the Truth*.²⁵⁷ "Whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness."²⁵⁸ The disciple of Jesus continues in his word so as to know "the truth [that] will make you free" and that sanctifies.²⁵⁹ To follow Jesus is to live in "the Spirit of truth," whom the Father sends in his name and who leads "into all the truth."²⁶⁰ To his dis- 2153
ciples Jesus teaches the unconditional love of truth: "Let what you say be simply 'Yes or No.'"²⁶¹

253 Ex 20:16; cf. Deut 5:20.

254 Mt 5:33.

255 Ps 119:90; cf. Prov 8:7; 2 Sam 7:28; Ps 119:142; Lk 1:50.

256 Rom 3:4; cf. Ps 119:30.

257 Jn 1:14; 8:12; cf. 14:6.

258 Jn 12:46.

259 Jn 8:32; cf. 17:17.

260 Jn 16:13.

261 Mt 5:37.

2467 Man tends by nature toward the truth. He is obliged to honor and bear witness to it: "It is in accordance with their dignity that
2104 all men, because they are persons . . . are both impelled by their nature and bound by a moral obligation to seek the truth, especially religious truth. They are also bound to adhere to the truth once they come to know it and direct their whole lives in accordance with the demands of truth."²⁶²

2468 Truth as uprightness in human action and speech is called *truthfulness*, sincerity, or candor. Truth or truthfulness is the virtue
1458 which consists in showing oneself true in deeds and truthful in words, and in guarding against duplicity, dissimulation, and hypocrisy.

2469 "Men could not live with one another if there were not mutual confidence that they were being truthful to one another."²⁶³
1807 The virtue of truth gives another his just due. Truthfulness keeps to the just mean between what ought to be expressed and what ought to be kept secret: it entails honesty and discretion. In justice, "as a matter of honor, one man owes it to another to manifest the truth."²⁶⁴

2470 The disciple of Christ consents to "live in the truth," that is, in the simplicity of a life in conformity with the Lord's example, abiding in his truth. "If we say we have fellowship with him while we walk in darkness, we lie and do not live according to the truth."²⁶⁵

II. TO BEAR WITNESS TO THE TRUTH

2471 Before Pilate, Christ proclaims that he "has come into the world, to bear witness to the truth."²⁶⁶ The Christian is not to "be
1816 ashamed then of testifying to our Lord."²⁶⁷ In situations that require witness to the faith, the Christian must profess it without equivocation, after the example of St. Paul before his judges. We must keep "a clear conscience toward God and toward men."²⁶⁸

262 *DH* 2 § 2.

263 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* II-II, 109, 3 *ad* 1.

264 St. Thomas Aquinas, *STh* II-II, 109, 3, corp. art.

265 *1 Jn* 1:6.

266 *Jn* 18:37.

267 *2 Tim* 1:8.

268 *Acts* 24:16.

2472 The duty of Christians to take part in the life of the Church impels them to act as *witnesses of the Gospel* and of the obligations that flow from it. This witness is a transmission of the faith in words and deeds. Witness is an act of justice that establishes the truth or makes it known.²⁶⁹ 863, 905 1807

All Christians by the example of their lives and the witness of their word, wherever they live, have an obligation to manifest the new man which they have put on in Baptism and to reveal the power of the Holy Spirit by whom they were strengthened at Confirmation.²⁷⁰

2473 *Martyrdom* is the supreme witness given to the truth of the faith: it means bearing witness even unto death. The martyr bears witness to Christ who died and rose, to whom he is united by charity. He bears witness to the truth of the faith and of Christian doctrine. He endures death through an act of fortitude. "Let me become the food of the beasts, through whom it will be given me to reach God."²⁷¹ 852 1808 1258

2474 The Church has painstakingly collected the records of those who persevered to the end in witnessing to their faith. These are the acts of the Martyrs. They form the archives of truth written in letters of blood:

Neither the pleasures of the world nor the kingdoms of this age will be of any use to me. It is better for me to die [in order to unite myself] to Christ Jesus than to reign over the ends of the earth. I seek him who died for us; I desire him who rose for us. My birth is approaching. . . .²⁷² 1011

I bless you for having judged me worthy from this day and this hour to be counted among your martyrs. . . . You have kept your promise, God of faithfulness and truth. For this reason and for everything, I praise you, I bless you, I glorify you through the eternal and heavenly High Priest, Jesus Christ, your beloved Son. Through him, who is with you and the Holy Spirit, may glory be given to you, now and in the ages to come. Amen.²⁷³

269 Cf. Mt 18:16.

270 AG 11.

271 St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Rom.* 4, 1: SCh 10, 110.

272 St. Ignatius of Antioch, *Ad Rom.* 6, 1-2: SCh 10, 114.

273 *Martyrium Polycarpi* 14, 2-3: PG 5, 1040; SCh 10, 228.

III. OFFENSES AGAINST TRUTH

2475 Christ's disciples have "put on the new man, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness."²⁷⁴ By "putting away falsehood," they are to "put away all malice and all guile and insincerity and envy and all slander."²⁷⁵

2152 **2476** *False witness and perjury.* When it is made publicly, a statement contrary to the truth takes on a particular gravity. In court it becomes false witness.²⁷⁶ When it is under oath, it is perjury. Acts such as these contribute to condemnation of the innocent, exoneration of the guilty, or the increased punishment of the accused.²⁷⁷ They gravely compromise the exercise of justice and the fairness of judicial decisions.

2477 *Respect for the reputation* of persons forbids every attitude and word likely to cause them unjust injury.²⁷⁸ 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;²⁷⁹

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

2478 To avoid rash judgment, everyone should be careful to interpret insofar as possible his neighbor's thoughts, words, and deeds in a favorable way:

Every good Christian ought to be more ready to give a favorable interpretation to another's statement than to condemn it. But if he cannot do so, let him ask how the other understands it. And if the latter understands it badly, let the former correct him with love. If that does not suffice, let the Christian try all suitable ways to bring the other to a correct interpretation so that he may be saved.²⁸⁰

274 Eph 4:24.

275 Eph 4:25; 1 Pet 2:1.

276 Cf. Prov 19:9.

277 Cf. Prov 18:5.

278 Cf. CIC, can. 220.

279 Cf. Sir 21:28.

280 St. Ignatius of Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*, 22.

2479 Detraction and calumny destroy the *reputation and honor of one's neighbor*. Honor is the social witness given to human dignity, and everyone enjoys a natural right to the honor of his name and reputation and to respect. Thus, detraction and calumny offend 1753 against the virtues of justice and charity.

2480 Every word or attitude is forbidden which by *flattery, adulation, or complaisance* encourages and confirms another in malicious acts and perverse conduct. Adulation is a grave fault if it makes one an accomplice in another's vices or grave sins. Neither the desire to be of service nor friendship justifies duplicitous speech. Adulation is a venial sin when it only seeks to be agreeable, to avoid evil, to meet a need, or to obtain legitimate advantages.

2481 *Boasting* or bragging is an offense against truth. So is *irony* aimed at disparaging someone by maliciously caricaturing some aspect of his behavior.

2482 "A *lie* consists in speaking a falsehood with the intention of deceiving."²⁸¹ The Lord denounces lying as the work of the devil: "You are of your father the devil, . . . there is no truth in him. When he lies, he speaks according to his own nature, for he is a liar and the father of lies."²⁸² 392

2483 Lying is the most direct offense against the truth. To lie is to speak or act against the truth in order to lead someone into error. By injuring man's relation to truth and to his neighbor, a lie offends against the fundamental relation of man and of his word to the Lord.

2484 The *gravity of a lie* is measured against the nature of the truth it deforms, the circumstances, the intentions of the one who lies, and the harm suffered by its victims. If a lie in itself only constitutes a 1750 venial sin, it becomes mortal when it does grave injury to the virtues of justice and charity.

2485 By its very nature, lying is to be condemned. It is a profa- 1756 nation of speech, whereas the purpose of speech is to communicate known truth to others. The deliberate intention of leading a neighbor into error by saying things contrary to the truth constitutes a failure in justice and charity. The culpability is greater when the intention of deceiving entails the risk of deadly consequences for those who are led astray.

281 St. Augustine, *De mendacio* 4, 5: PL 40, 491.

282 *Jn* 8:44.

2486 Since it violates the virtue of truthfulness, a lie does real violence to another. It affects his ability to know, which is a condition of every judgment and decision. It contains the seed of discord and all consequent evils. Lying is destructive of society; it undermines trust among men and tears apart the fabric of social relationships.

1459 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.

IV. RESPECT FOR THE TRUTH

1740 2488 The *right to the communication* of the truth is not unconditional. Everyone must conform his life to the Gospel precept of fraternal love. This requires us in concrete situations to judge whether or not it is appropriate to reveal the truth to someone who asks for it.

2489 Charity and respect for the truth should dictate the response to every *request for information or communication*. The good and safety of others, respect for privacy, and the common good are sufficient reasons for being silent about what ought not be known or for making use of a discreet language. The duty to avoid scandal often commands strict discretion. No one is bound to reveal the truth to someone who does not have the right to know it.²⁸³

1467 2490 The *secret of the sacrament of reconciliation* is sacred, and cannot be violated under any pretext. "The sacramental seal is inviolable; therefore, it is a crime for a confessor in any way to betray a penitent by word or in any other manner or for any reason."²⁸⁴

283 Cf. *Sir* 27:16; *Prov* 25:9-10.

284 CIC, can. 983 § 1.

2491 *Professional secrets*—for example, those of political office holders, soldiers, physicians, and lawyers—or confidential information given under the seal of secrecy must be kept, save in exceptional cases where keeping the secret is bound to cause very grave harm to the one who confided it, to the one who received it or to a third party, and where the very grave harm can be avoided only by divulging the truth. Even if not confided under the seal of secrecy, private information prejudicial to another is not to be divulged without a grave and proportionate reason.

2492 Everyone should observe an appropriate reserve concerning persons' private lives. Those in charge of communications should maintain a fair balance between the requirements of the common good and respect for individual rights. Interference by the media in the private lives of persons engaged in political or public activity is to be condemned to the extent that it infringes upon their privacy and freedom. 2522

V. THE USE OF THE SOCIAL COMMUNICATIONS MEDIA

2493 Within modern society the communications media play a major role in information, cultural promotion, and formation. This role is increasing, as a result of technological progress, the extent and diversity of the news transmitted, and the influence exercised on public opinion.

2494 The information provided by the media is at the service of the common good.²⁸⁵ Society has a right to information based on truth, freedom, justice, and solidarity: 1906

The proper exercise of this right demands that the content of the communication be true and—within the limits set by justice and charity—complete. Further, it should be communicated honestly and properly. This means that in the gathering and in the publication of news, the moral law and the legitimate rights and dignity of man should be upheld.²⁸⁶

²⁸⁵ Cf. *IM* 11.

²⁸⁶ *IM* 5 § 2.

- 906 **2495** "It is necessary that all members of society meet the demands of justice and charity in this domain. They should help, through the means of social communication, in the formation and diffusion of sound public opinion."²⁸⁷ Solidarity is a consequence of genuine and right communication and the free circulation of ideas that further knowledge and respect for others.
- 2496** The means of social communication (especially the mass media) can give rise to a certain passivity among users, making them less than
2525 vigilant consumers of what is said or shown. Users should practice moderation and discipline in their approach to the mass media. They will want to form enlightened and correct consciences the more easily to resist unwholesome influences.
- 2497** By the very nature of their profession, journalists have an obligation to serve the truth and not offend against charity in disseminating information. They should strive to respect, with equal care, the nature of the facts and the limits of critical judgment concerning individuals. They should not stoop to defamation.
- 2237 **2498** "*Civil authorities* have particular responsibilities in this field because of the common good. . . . It is for the civil authority . . . to defend and safeguard a true and just freedom of information."²⁸⁸ By promulgating
2286 laws and overseeing their application, public authorities should ensure that "public morality and social progress are not gravely endangered" through misuse of the media.²⁸⁹ Civil authorities should punish any violation of the rights of individuals to their reputation and privacy. They should give timely and reliable reports concerning the general good or respond to the well-founded concerns of the people. Nothing can justify recourse to disinformation for manipulating public opinion through the media. Interventions by public authority should avoid injuring the freedom of individuals or groups.
- 2499** Moral judgment must condemn the plague of totalitarian states which systematically falsify the truth, exercise political control of opinion through the media, manipulate defendants and witnesses at public trials,
1903 and imagine that they secure their tyranny by strangling and repressing everything they consider "thought crimes."

287 IM 8.

288 IM 12.

289 IM 12 § 2.

VI. TRUTH, BEAUTY, AND SACRED ART

2500 The practice of goodness is accompanied by spontaneous spiritual joy and moral beauty. Likewise, truth carries with it the joy and splendor of spiritual beauty. Truth is beautiful in itself. Truth in words, the rational expression of the knowledge of created and uncreated reality, is necessary to man, who is endowed with intellect. But truth can also find other complementary forms of human expression, above all when it is a matter of evoking what is beyond words: the depths of the human heart, the exaltations of the soul, the mystery of God. Even before revealing himself to man in words of truth, God reveals himself to him through the universal language of creation, the work of his Word, of his wisdom: the order and harmony of the cosmos—which both the child and the scientist discover—“from the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator,” “for the author of beauty created them.”²⁹⁰

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[Wisdom] is a breath of the power of God, and a pure emanation of the glory of the Almighty; therefore nothing defiled gains entrance into her. For she is a reflection of eternal light, a spotless mirror of the working of God, and an image of his goodness.²⁹¹ For [wisdom] is more beautiful than the sun, and excels every constellation of the stars. Compared with the light she is found to be superior, for it is succeeded by the night, but against wisdom evil does not prevail.²⁹² I became enamored of her beauty.²⁹³

2501 Created “in the image of God,”²⁹⁴ man also expresses the truth of his relationship with God the Creator by the beauty of his artistic works. Indeed, *art* is a distinctively human form of expression; beyond the search for the necessities of life which is common to all living creatures, art is a freely given superabundance of the human being’s inner riches. Arising from talent given by the Creator and from man’s own effort, art is a form of practical wisdom, uniting knowledge and skill,²⁹⁵ to give form to the truth of reality in a language accessible to sight or hearing. To the extent that it is inspired by truth and love of beings, art bears a certain likeness to God’s activity in what he has created. Like any other human

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290 Wis 13:3, 5.

291 Wis 7:25-26.

292 Wis 7:29-30.

293 Wis 8:2.

294 Gen 1:26.

295 Cf. Wis 7:16-17.

activity, art is not an absolute end in itself, but is ordered to and ennobled by the ultimate end of man.²⁹⁶

1156-1162 **2502** *Sacred art* is true and beautiful when its form corresponds to its particular vocation: evoking and glorifying, in faith and adoration, the transcendent mystery of God—the surpassing invisible beauty of truth and love visible in Christ, who “reflects the glory of God and bears the very stamp of his nature,” in whom “the whole fullness of deity dwells bodily.”²⁹⁷ This spiritual beauty of God is reflected in the most holy Virgin Mother of God, the angels, and saints. Genuine sacred art draws man to adoration, to prayer, and to the love of God, Creator and Savior, the Holy One and Sanctifier.

2503 For this reason bishops, personally or through delegates, should see to the promotion of sacred art, old and new, in all its forms and, with the same religious care, remove from the liturgy and from places of worship everything which is not in conformity with the truth of faith and the authentic beauty of *sacred art*.²⁹⁸

IN BRIEF

2504 “You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor” (*Ex* 20:16). Christ’s disciples have “put on the new man, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness” (*Eph* 4:24).

2505 Truth or truthfulness is the virtue which consists in showing oneself true in deeds and truthful in words, and guarding against duplicity, dissimulation, and hypocrisy.

2506 The Christian is not to “be ashamed of testifying to our Lord” (*2 Tim* 1:8) in deed and word. Martyrdom is the supreme witness given to the truth of the faith.

2507 Respect for the reputation and honor of persons forbids all detraction and calumny in word or attitude.

2508 Lying consists in saying what is false with the intention of deceiving one’s neighbor.

296 Cf. Pius XII, *Musicae sacrae disciplina*; Discourses of September 3 and December 25, 1950.

297 *Heb* 1:3; *Col* 2:9.

298 Cf. SC 122-127.

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- 2509 An offense committed against the truth requires reparation.
- 2510 The golden rule helps one discern, in concrete situations, whether or not it would be appropriate to reveal the truth to someone who asks for it.
- 2511 "The sacramental seal is inviolable" (CIC, can. 983 § 1). Professional secrets must be kept. Confidences prejudicial to another are not to be divulged.
- 2512 Society has a right to information based on truth, freedom, and justice. One should practice moderation and discipline in the use of the social communications media.
- 2513 The fine arts, but above all sacred art, "of their nature are directed toward expressing in some way the infinite beauty of God in works made by human hands. Their dedication to the increase of God's praise and of his glory is more complete, the more exclusively they are devoted to turning men's minds devoutly toward God" (SC 122).
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ARTICLE 9

THE NINTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not covet your neighbor's house; you shall not covet your neighbor's wife, or his manservant, or his maid-servant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbor's.²⁹⁹

Every one who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart.³⁰⁰

299 Ex 20:17.

300 Mt 5:28.

377, 400 **2514** St. John distinguishes three kinds of covetousness or concupiscence: lust of the flesh, lust of the eyes, and pride of life.³⁰¹ In the Catholic catechetical tradition, the ninth commandment forbids carnal concupiscence; the tenth forbids coveting another's goods.

405 **2515** Etymologically, "concupiscence" can refer to any intense form of human desire. Christian theology has given it a particular meaning: the movement of the sensitive appetite contrary to the operation of the human reason. The apostle St. Paul identifies it with the rebellion of the "flesh" against the "spirit."³⁰² Concupiscence stems from the disobedience of the first sin. It unsettles man's moral faculties and, without being in itself an offense, inclines man to commit sins.³⁰³

362 **2516** Because man is a *composite being, spirit and body*, there already exists a certain tension in him; a certain struggle of tendencies between "spirit" and "flesh" develops. But in fact this struggle belongs to the heritage of sin. It is a consequence of sin and at the same time a confirmation of it. It is part of the daily experience of
407 the spiritual battle:

For the Apostle it is not a matter of despising and condemning the body which with the spiritual soul constitutes man's nature and personal subjectivity. Rather, he is concerned with the morally *good* or *bad* works, or better, the permanent dispositions—virtues and vices—which are the fruit of submission (in the first case) or of *resistance* (in the second case) to the *saving action of the Holy Spirit*. For this reason the Apostle writes: "If we live by the Spirit, let us also walk by the Spirit."³⁰⁴

I. PURIFICATION OF THE HEART

368 **2517** The heart is the seat of moral personality: "Out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, fornication. . . ."³⁰⁵ The struggle against carnal covetousness entails purifying the heart
1809 and practicing temperance:

301 Cf. 1 Jn 2:16.

302 Cf. Gal 5:16, 17, 24; Eph 2:3.

303 Cf. Gen 3:11; Council of Trent: DS 1515.

304 John Paul II, *DeV* 55; cf. Gal 5:25.

305 Mt 15:19.

Remain simple and innocent, and you will be like little children who do not know the evil that destroys man's life.³⁰⁶

2518 The sixth beatitude proclaims, "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God."³⁰⁷ "Pure in heart" refers to those who have attuned their intellects and wills to the demands of God's holiness, chiefly in three areas: charity;³⁰⁸ chastity or sexual rectitude;³⁰⁹ love of truth and orthodoxy of faith.³¹⁰ There is a connection between purity of heart, of body, and of faith: 94

The faithful must believe the articles of the Creed "so that by believing they may obey God, by obeying may live well, by living well may purify their hearts, and with pure hearts may understand what they believe."³¹¹ 158

2519 The "pure in heart" are promised that they will see God face to face and be like him.³¹² Purity of heart is the precondition of the vision of God. Even now it enables us to see *according to* God, to accept others as "neighbors"; it lets us perceive the human body—ours and our neighbor's—as a temple of the Holy Spirit, a manifestation of divine beauty. 2548 2819 2501

II. THE BATTLE FOR PURITY

2520 Baptism confers on its recipient the grace of purification from all sins. But the baptized must continue to struggle against concupiscence of the flesh and disordered desires. With God's grace he will prevail 1264

— by the *virtue and gift of chastity*, for chastity lets us love with upright and undivided heart; 2337

— by *purity of intention* which consists in seeking the true end of man: with simplicity of vision, the baptized person seeks to find and to fulfill God's will in everything;³¹³ 1752

306 *Pastor Hermae*, Mandate 2, 1: PG 2, 916.

307 *Mt* 5:8.

308 Cf. *1 Tim* 4:3-9; *2 Tim* 2:22.

309 Cf. *1 Thess* 4:7; *Col* 3:5; *Eph* 4:19.

310 Cf. *Titus* 1:15; *1 Tim* 1:3-4; *2 Tim* 2:23-26.

311 St. Augustine, *De fide et symbolo* 10, 25: PL 40, 196.

312 Cf. *1 Cor* 13:12; *1 Jn* 3:2.

313 Cf. *Rom* 12:2; *Col* 1:10.

1762 — by *purity of vision*, external and internal; by discipline of feelings and imagination; by refusing all complicity in impure thoughts that incline us to turn aside from the path of God's commandments: "Appearance arouses yearning in fools";³¹⁴

2846 — by *prayer*:

I thought that continence arose from one's own powers, which I did not recognize in myself. I was foolish enough not to know . . . that no one can be continent unless you grant it. For you would surely have granted it if my inner groaning had reached your ears and I with firm faith had cast my cares on you.³¹⁵

2521 Purity requires *modesty*, an integral part of temperance. Modesty protects the intimate center of the person. It means refusing to unveil what should remain hidden. It is ordered to chastity to whose sensitivity it bears witness. It guides how one looks at others and behaves toward them in conformity with the dignity of persons and their solidarity.

2492 **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.

2354 **2523** There is a modesty of the feelings as well as of the body. It protests, for example, against the voyeuristic explorations of the human body in certain advertisements, or against the solicitations of certain media that go too far in the exhibition of intimate things. Modesty inspires a way of life which makes it possible to resist the allurements of fashion and the pressures of prevailing ideologies.

2524 The forms taken by modesty vary from one culture to another. Everywhere, however, modesty exists as an intuition of the spiritual dignity proper to man. It is born with the awakening consciousness of being a subject. Teaching modesty to children and adolescents means awakening in them respect for the human person.

314 Wis 15:5.

315 St. Augustine, *Conf.* 6, 11, 20: PL 32, 729-730.

2525 Christian purity requires a *purification of the social climate*. 2344
It requires of the communications media that their presentations show concern for respect and restraint. Purity of heart brings freedom from widespread eroticism and avoids entertainment inclined to voyeurism and illusion.

2526 So-called *moral permissiveness* rests on an erroneous conception of human freedom; the necessary precondition for the development of true freedom is to let oneself be educated in the moral law. Those in charge of education can reasonably be expected to give young people instruction respectful of the truth, the qualities of the heart, and the moral and spiritual dignity of man. 1740

2527 "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. It takes the spiritual qualities and endowments of every age and nation, and with supernatural riches it causes them to blossom, as it were, from within; it fortifies, completes, and restores them in Christ."³¹⁶ 1204

IN BRIEF

- 2528** "Everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart" (Mt 5:28).
- 2529** The ninth commandment warns against lust or carnal concupiscence.
- 2530** The struggle against carnal lust involves purifying the heart and practicing temperance.
- 2531** Purity of heart will enable us to see God: it enables us even now to see things according to God.
- 2532** Purification of the heart demands prayer, the practice of chastity, purity of intention and of vision.
- 2533** Purity of heart requires the modesty which is patience, decency, and discretion. Modesty protects the intimate center of the person.
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ARTICLE 10

THE TENTH COMMANDMENT

You shall not covet . . . anything that is your neighbor's. . . .
 You shall not desire your neighbor's house, his field, or his
 manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or any-
 thing that is your neighbor's.³¹⁷

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.³¹⁸

2534 The tenth commandment unfolds and completes the ninth,
 which is concerned with concupiscence of the flesh. It forbids
 coveting the goods of another, as the root of theft, robbery, and
 fraud, which the seventh commandment forbids. "Lust of the eyes"
 leads to the violence and injustice forbidden by the fifth command-
 ment.³¹⁹ Avarice, like fornication, originates in the idolatry prohib-
 ited by the first three prescriptions of the Law.³²⁰ The tenth
 2112 commandment concerns the intentions of the heart; with the ninth,
 2069 it summarizes all the precepts of the Law.

I. THE DISORDER OF COVETOUS DESIRES

2535 The sensitive appetite leads us to desire pleasant things we
 do not have, e.g., the desire to eat when we are hungry or to warm
 ourselves when we are cold. These desires are good in themselves;
 1767 but often they exceed the limits of reason and drive us to covet
 unjustly what is not ours and belongs to another or is owed to him.

2536 The tenth commandment forbids *greed* and the desire to
 amass earthly goods without limit. It forbids *avarice* arising from a
 2445 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."³²¹

317 Ex 20:17; Deut 5:21.

318 Mt 6:21.

319 Cf. 1 Jn 2:16; Mic 2:2.

320 Cf. Wis 14:12.

321 Roman Catechism, III, 37; cf. Sir 5:8.

2537 It is not a violation of this commandment to desire to obtain things that belong to one's neighbor, provided this is done by just means. Traditional catechesis realistically mentions "those who have a harder struggle against their criminal desires" and so who "must be urged the more to keep this commandment":

. . . merchants who desire scarcity and rising prices, who cannot bear not to be the only ones buying and selling so that they themselves can sell more dearly and buy more cheaply; those who hope that their peers will be impoverished, in order to realize a profit either by selling to them or buying from them . . . physicians who wish disease to spread; lawyers who are eager for many important cases and trials.³²²

2538 The tenth commandment requires that *envy* be banished 2317 from the human heart. When the prophet Nathan wanted to spur King David to repentance, he told him the story about the poor man who had only one ewe lamb that he treated like his own daughter and the rich man who, despite the great number of his flocks, envied the poor man and ended by stealing his lamb.³²³ Envy can lead to the worst crimes.³²⁴ "Through the devil's envy death entered the world":³²⁵ 391

We fight one another, and envy arms us against one another. . . . If everyone strives to unsettle the Body of Christ, where shall we end up? We are engaged in making Christ's Body a corpse. . . . We declare ourselves members of one and the same organism, yet we devour one another like beasts.³²⁶

2539 Envy is a capital sin. It refers to the sadness at the sight of 1866 another's goods and the immoderate desire to acquire them for oneself, even unjustly. When it wishes grave harm to a neighbor it is a mortal sin:

St. Augustine saw envy as "*the* diabolical sin."³²⁷ "From envy are born hatred, detraction, calumny, joy caused by the misfortune of a neighbor, and displeasure caused by his prosperity."³²⁸

322 *Roman Catechism*, III, 37.

323 Cf. 2 Sam 12:1-4.

324 Cf. Gen 4:3-7; 1 Kings 21:1-29.

325 Wis 2:24.

326 St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in 2 Cor.* 27, 3-4: PG 61, 588.

327 Cf. St. Augustine, *De catechizandis rudibus* 4, 8: PL 40, 315-316.

328 St. Gregory the Great, *Moralia in Job* 31, 45: PL 76, 621.

1829 **2540** Envy represents a form of sadness and therefore a refusal of charity; the baptized person should struggle against it by exercising good will. Envy often comes from pride; the baptized person should train himself to live in humility:

Would you like to see God glorified by you? Then rejoice in your brother's progress and you will immediately give glory to God. Because his servant could conquer envy by rejoicing in the merits of others, God will be praised.³²⁹

II. THE DESIRES OF THE SPIRIT

2541 The economy of law and grace turns men's hearts away from avarice and envy. It initiates them into desire for the Sovereign Good; it instructs them in the desires of the Holy Spirit who satisfies man's heart.

397 The God of the promises always warned man against seduction by what from the beginning has seemed "good for food . . . a delight to the eyes . . . to be desired to make one wise."³³⁰

1963 **2542** The Law entrusted to Israel never sufficed to justify those subject to it; it even became the instrument of "lust."³³¹ The gap between wanting and doing points to the conflict between God's Law which is the "law of my mind," and another law "making me captive to the law of sin which dwells in my members."³³²

1992 **2543** "But now the righteousness of God has been manifested apart from law, although the law and the prophets bear witness to it, the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all who believe."³³³ Henceforth, Christ's faithful "have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires"; they are led by the Spirit and follow the desires of the Spirit.³³⁴

329 St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Rom.* 71, 5: PG 60, 448.

330 *Gen* 3:6.

331 Cf. *Rom* 7:7.

332 *Rom* 7:23; cf. 7:10.

333 *Rom* 3:21-22.

334 *Gal* 5:24; cf. *Rom* 8:14, 27.

III. POVERTY OF HEART

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2544 Jesus enjoins his disciples to prefer him to everything and everyone, and bids them “renounce all that [they have]” for his sake and that of the Gospel.³³⁵ Shortly before his passion he gave them the example of the poor widow of Jerusalem who, out of her poverty, gave all that she had to live on.³³⁶ The precept of detachment from riches is obligatory for entrance into the Kingdom of heaven.

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2545 All Christ’s faithful are to “direct their affections rightly, lest they be hindered in their pursuit of perfect charity by the use of worldly things and by an adherence to riches which is contrary to the spirit of evangelical poverty.”³³⁷

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2546 “Blessed are the poor in spirit.”³³⁸ The Beatitudes reveal an order of happiness and grace, of beauty and peace. Jesus celebrates the joy of the poor, to whom the Kingdom already belongs.³³⁹

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The Word speaks of voluntary humility as “poverty in spirit”; the Apostle gives an example of God’s poverty when he says: “For your sakes he became poor.”³⁴⁰

2547 The Lord grieves over the rich, because they find their consolation in the abundance of goods.³⁴¹ “Let the proud seek and love earthly kingdoms, but blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the Kingdom of heaven.”³⁴² Abandonment to the providence of the Father in heaven frees us from anxiety about tomorrow.³⁴³ Trust in God is a preparation for the blessedness of the poor. They shall see God.

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³³⁵ Lk 14:33; cf. Mk 8:35.

³³⁶ Cf. Lk 21:4.

³³⁷ LG 42 § 3.

³³⁸ Mt 5:3.

³³⁹ Cf. Lk 6:20.

³⁴⁰ St. Gregory of Nyssa, *De beatitudinibus* 1: PG 44, 1200D; cf. 2 Cor 8:9.

³⁴¹ Lk 6:24.

³⁴² St. Augustine, *De serm. Dom. in monte* 1, 1, 3: PL 34, 1232.

³⁴³ Cf. Mt 6:25-34.

IV. "I WANT TO SEE GOD"

2548 Desire for true happiness frees man from his immoderate
 2519 attachment to the goods of this world so that he can find his
 fulfillment in the vision and beatitude of God. "The promise [of
 seeing God] surpasses all beatitude. . . . In Scripture, to see is to
 possess. . . . Whoever sees God has obtained all the goods of which
 he can conceive."³⁴⁴

2549 It remains for the holy people to struggle, with grace from
 on high, to obtain the good things God promises. In order to
 possess and contemplate God, Christ's faithful mortify their crav-
 2015 ings and, with the grace of God, prevail over the seductions of
 pleasure and power.

2550 On this way of perfection, the Spirit and the Bride call
 whoever hears them³⁴⁵ to perfect communion with God:

314 There will true glory be, where no one will be praised by
 mistake or flattery; true honor will not be refused to the
 worthy, nor granted to the unworthy; likewise, no one un-
 worthy will pretend to be worthy, where only those who are
 worthy will be admitted. There true peace will reign, where
 no one will experience opposition either from self or others.
 God himself will be virtue's reward; he gives virtue and has
 promised to give himself as the best and greatest reward that
 could exist. . . . "I shall be their God and they will be my
 people. . . ." This is also the meaning of the Apostle's words:
 "So that God may be all in all." God himself will be the goal
 of our desires; we shall contemplate him without end, love
 him without surfeit, praise him without weariness. This gift, this
 state, this act, like eternal life itself, will assuredly be common
 to all.³⁴⁶

344 St. Gregory of Nyssa, *De beatitudinibus* 6: PG 44, 1265A.

345 Cf. *Rev* 22:17.

346 St. Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 22, 30: PL 41, 801-802; cf. *Lev* 26:12; cf. *1 Cor* 15:28.

IN BRIEF

- 2551 "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also" (*Mt* 6:21).
- 2552 The tenth commandment forbids avarice arising from a passion for riches and their attendant power.
- 2553 Envy is sadness at the sight of another's goods and the immoderate desire to have them for oneself. It is a capital sin.
- 2554 The baptized person combats envy through good-will, humility, and abandonment to the providence of God.
- 2555 Christ's faithful "have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (*Gal* 5:24); they are led by the Spirit and follow his desires.
- 2556 Detachment from riches is necessary for entering the Kingdom of heaven. "Blessed are the poor in spirit."
- 2557 "I want to see God" expresses the true desire of man. Thirst for God is quenched by the water of eternal life (cf. *Jn* 4:14).
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