

UNDERSTANDING THE PRECEPTS OF THE CHURCH

Jesus, through His Church, gives us 6 PRECEPTS.

When Israel came forth from Egypt, Moses led the people to Mt. Sinai where he was summoned up the mountain. The Lord gave Moses the TEN COMMANDMENTS written on two stone tablets. The first tablet contains the first three commandments that refer to GOD and how we should live in a way that returns love, reverence and respect to Him. The second tablet contains the next seven commandments that refer to NEIGHBOR – starting with love, reverence and respect for our parents.

Eventually the Jewish laws multiplied into 613 precepts. When Jesus was asked, “Which is the greatest commandment in the Law?” He answered that the greatest commandment is: “YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, WITH ALL YOUR MIND, AND WITH ALL YOUR STRENGTH” (from the Book of Deuteronomy). Joined to that is the second part of that commandment: “YOU SHALL LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF” (from the Book of Leviticus).

However, we need to remember that Jesus added something else in His teaching. He said: “If you wish to be perfect, sell what you have and give it to the poor, and then come follow me.” Observing the Ten Commandments is part of our obligation.

Jesus established His Church upon St. Peter and empowered the Apostles and their Successors to guide the Church under the power and inspiration of the Holy Spirit, who leads the Church into all Truth. Christ gave to the Church’s Magisterium (The Pope and Bishops united with him) the power to “BIND AND LOOSE.” That power was especially given to Peter and his Successors (the Pope) who is the center of the unity of the Church and holds the “Keys of the Kingdom of Heaven.”

The Church’s Precepts are built upon the Law of God, and help to guide us in keeping it.

They do not add or take away from the Law of God.

TO ATTEND MASS ON SUNDAYS AND HOLY DAYS OF OBLIGATION

(based in the 3rd Commandment)

In the Old Covenant the Sabbath Rest was on Saturday - the 7th day. In the New Covenant, the Sabbath Rest is on Sunday, the Day of Resurrection – The Eternal Day – The New Day – The 8th Day, as the early Christians called it. The important thing is to offer a day to THANK AND PRAISE THE LORD, rest from your labor, and enjoy loved ones.

TO FAST AND ABSTAIN ON THE DAYS APPOINTED.

These are observed in the Holy Season of Lent (time to do Penance and strive to turn away from sin). Ash Wednesday and Good Friday are days of Fast and Abstinence. Fast means eating one major meal and two minor meals and nothing in between. Abstinence means not eating meat. The other Fridays of Lent are days of Abstinence. The money you may save by eating meager meals should be given, if possible, to the POOR...perhaps through the “Rice Bowl.”

TO CONFESS YOUR SINS AT LEAST ONCE A YEAR.

The Sacrament of Reconciliation is given so that we can be forgiven of our sins and restored to right relationship with God, as well as be restored to our place within the People of God (the Church). We should confess as often as we need to, especially when fighting against the spiritual leprosy of mortal sins. Jesus told a Leper He healed “Go and show yourself to the priest, and offer what Moses prescribed.” Jesus did not ignore this Precept of the Law of Moses because it was important that the person be restored to his place among the People of God. The Sacrament of Reconciliation, and the necessity to be forgiven by a priest, is for the person to hear they are forgiven and welcomed back into right relationship with God and the Church.

OUR PASTOR’S MESSAGE

FR. CARMEN PERRY



TO RECEIVE HOLY COMMUNION AT LEAST ONCE DURING EASTER TIME.

(based in the 3rd Commandment.)

The Church celebrates Mass each day. The Mass is “the Church’s solemn offering” by which our life and sacrifices are united to the Life and Sacrifice of Christ and raised up to the Father. How often we avail ourselves to this most wonderful gift of the Lord’s Body and Blood is up to each of us.... But it must be at least once a year.

TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE SUPPORT OF THE CHURCH.

This offering does not only care for the parish buildings, but cares for the needs of the Parish community, the wider community in which we live, the Diocese, the Missions, the Universal Church, and the World. What we give is up to us, but the Lord requires an honest contribution. Throughout Salvation History, the traditional offering was called a “TITHE” (10% time talent and treasure) meant as a “thank offering to God,” and to benefit and care for others.

TO OBSERVE THE MARRIAGE LAWS OF THE CHURCH.

(based in the 6th Commandment.)

This means that Catholics are bound to be married before a priest and two witnesses. In the case of Mixed Religion between a Catholic and a Non-Catholic Christian, the Catholic person is bound to seek permission of the Church to be married in another Christian Denomination, if that is the couple’s desire. If a Catholic seeks to marry an Unbaptized person, the Catholic is still bound to be married in the Catholic Church before a priest and two witnesses. Seek out guidance from a priest if you need other information.