

Catechism of the Catholic Church: The Truths of Our Faith

(Numbers 1987 through 2301 – Eighth Class: September 27, 2021 (*Deacon Tom Kempf*))

Part Three: Life in Christ (cont.)

Section One: Man's Vocation – Life in the Spirit (cont.)

Chapter Three – God's Salvation: Law and Grace (cont.)

Article 2 – Grace and Justification

- Justification
 - **1989** - The first work of the grace of the Holy Spirit is conversion, effecting justification in accordance with Jesus' proclamation at the beginning of the Gospel: "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." 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 sanctification and renewal of the interior man.
 - **1990** - Justification detaches man from sin which contradicts the love of God, and purifies his heart of sin.
 - **1991** - Justification is at the same time the acceptance of God's righteousness through faith in Jesus Christ. . . . With justification, faith, hope, and charity are poured into our hearts, and obedience to the divine will is granted us.
 - **1992** - Justification is conferred in 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 purpose is the glory of God and of Christ, and the gift of eternal life.
 - **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.
 - **1994** - Justification is the most excellent work of God's love made manifest in Christ Jesus and granted by the Holy Spirit.
- 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.
 - **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 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.
 - **1999** - 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.
 - **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.

- **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.
- **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.
- **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.
- **Merit**
 - **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 of his grace. the fatherly action of God is first on his own initiative, and then follows man's free acting through his collaboration, so 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.
 - **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.
 - **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.
- **Christian Holiness**
 - **2013** - "All Christians in any state or walk of life are called to the fullness of Christian life and to the perfection of charity."⁶⁵ All are called to holiness: "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect."
 - **2014** - Spiritual progress tends toward ever more intimate union with Christ.
 - **2015** - The way of perfection passes by way of the Cross. There is no holiness without renunciation and spiritual battle.
 - **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."

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." From the Church he receives the grace of the sacraments that sustains him on the "way." From the Church he learns the example 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 who have gone before him and whom the liturgy celebrates in the rhythms of the sanctoral cycle.

- **Moral Life and the Magisterium of the Church**
 - **2032** - The Church, [is] the "pillar and bulwark of the truth,"
 - **2033** - The Magisterium of the Pastors of the Church in moral matters is ordinarily exercised in catechesis and preaching, . . . 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.
 - **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.
 - **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.
 - **2038** - The Holy Spirit can use the humblest to enlighten the learned and those in the highest positions.

- **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 indispensable 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 holy days of obligation.") requires the faithful to participate in the Eucharistic celebration when the Christian community gathers together on the day commemorating the Resurrection of the Lord. 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. The third precept ("You shall humbly receive your Creator in Holy Communion 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.
 - **2043** - The fourth precept ("You shall keep holy the holy days of obligation.") completes the Sunday observance by participation in the principal liturgical feasts which honor the mysteries of the Lord, the Virgin Mary, and the saints. The fifth precept ("You shall observe the prescribed days of fasting and abstinence.") ensures the times of asceticism and penance which prepare us for the liturgical feasts; they help us acquire mastery over our instincts and freedom of heart.

- **Moral Law and Missionary Witness**
 - **2044** - 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.

- **2045** - The Church increases, grows, and develops through the holiness of her faithful.
- **2046** - By living with the mind of Christ, Christians hasten the coming of the Reign of God, "a kingdom of justice, love, and peace."
- **2047** - The moral life is a spiritual worship. Christian activity finds its nourishment in the liturgy and the celebration of the sacraments.

Section Two: The Ten Commandments

- **2052** - "If you would enter life, keep the commandments."
- **2053** - "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." This reply does not do away with the first: following Jesus Christ involves keeping the Commandments.
- **2055** - When someone asks him, "Which commandment in the Law is the greatest?" 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." The Decalogue must be interpreted in light of this twofold yet single commandment of love, the fullness of the Law.
- **2056** - The word "Decalogue" means literally "ten words." . . . They are pre-eminently the words of God.
- **2057** - The "ten words" point out the conditions of a life freed from the slavery of sin. The Decalogue is a path of life: 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.
- **2059** - The gift of the Commandments is the gift of God himself and his holy will. In making his will known, God reveals himself to his people.
- **2063** - 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.
- **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.
- **2067** - The Ten Commandments state what is required in the love of God and love of neighbor. the first three concern love of God, and the other seven love of neighbor.
- **2068** - The Council of Trent teaches that the Ten Commandments are obligatory for Christians and that the justified man is still bound to keep them; 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 creature, so that all men may attain salvation through faith, Baptism and the observance of the Commandments."
- **2072** - 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.

- **2074** - 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.

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: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind."

Article 1 – The First Commandment

- “You Shall Worship the Lord Your God and Him Only Shall You Serve”
 - **2084** - God's first call and just demand is that man accept him and worship him.
 - **2087** - St. Paul speaks of the "obedience of faith"⁹ as our 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** - There are various ways of sinning against faith: 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 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."
 - **2090** - 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.
 - **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.
 - **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).
 - **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 prevenient 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.
 - acedia or spiritual sloth goes so far as to refuse the joy that comes from God and to be repelled by divine goodness.
 - 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.

- “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 to God what we as creatures owe him in all justice. the virtue of religion disposes us to have this attitude.
 - **2096** - Adoration is the first act of the virtue of religion.
 - **2097** - 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.
 - **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.
 - **2100** - Outward sacrifice, to be genuine, must be the expression of spiritual sacrifice. . . . 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. By uniting ourselves with his sacrifice we can make our lives a sacrifice to God.
 - **2101** - In many circumstances, the Christian is called to make promises to God. . . . 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 . . . A vow is an act of devotion in which the Christian dedicates himself to God or promises him some good work.
 - **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."
 - **2105** - The social duty of 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.
 - **2108** - The right to religious liberty is neither a moral license to adhere to error, nor a supposed right to error, but rather a natural right of the human person to civil liberty, i.e., immunity, within just limits, from external constraint in religious matters by political authorities.
- “You Shall Have No Other Gods before Me”
 - **2111** - Superstition is the deviation of religious feeling and of the practices this feeling imposes. 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.
 - **2113** - Idolatry consists in divinizing what is not God.
 - **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.
 - **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. 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** - Wearing charms is also reprehensible. Spiritism often implies divination or magical practices; the Church for her part warns the faithful against it.
 - **2119** - Tempting God consists in putting his goodness and almighty power to the test by word or deed.

- **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.
- **2121** - Simony is defined as the buying or selling of spiritual things.
- **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 serious problems of our time."
- **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." 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."
- **2125** - "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."
- **2126** - Atheism is often based on a false conception of human autonomy, exaggerated to the point of refusing any dependence on God.
- **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 agnostic makes no judgment about God's existence, declaring it impossible to prove, or even to affirm or deny.
- "You Shall Not Make for Yourself a Graven Image"
 - **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.

Article 2 – The Second Commandment

- You shall not take the name of the Lord in vain.
- The Name of the Lord is Holy
 - **2142** - The second commandment prescribes respect for the Lord's name. . . . it governs our use of speech in sacred matters.
 - **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.
 - **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. To be unfaithful to them is to misuse God's name and in some way to make God out to be a liar.
 - **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. . . . The

prohibition of blasphemy extends to language against Christ's Church, the saints, and sacred things.

- **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.
- **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.
 - **2152** - A person commits perjury when he makes a promise under oath with no intention of keeping it.
 - **2153** - Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from the evil one."
 - **2155** - When an oath is required by illegitimate civil authorities, it may be refused.
- **The Christian Name**
 - **2156** - The patron saint provides a model of charity; we are assured of his intercession. . . . "Parents, sponsors, and the pastor are to see that a name is not given which is foreign to Christian sentiment."
 - **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."
 - **2158** - God calls each one by name.
 - **2159** - The name one receives is a name for eternity.

Article 3 – The Third Commandment

- Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy. Six days . . .
- **The Sabbath Day**
 - **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."
 - **2171** - 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** - 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.
 - **2173** - "The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath."
- **The Lord's day**
 - **2174** - Jesus rose from the dead "on the first day of the week."
 - **2175** - Sunday is expressly distinguished from the sabbath which it follows chronologically every week; for Christians its ceremonial observance replaces that of the sabbath.
 - **2176** - 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.
 - **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."
 - **2179** - 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.

- **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."
- **2181** - The Sunday Eucharist is the foundation and confirmation of all Christian practice. 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.
- **2184** - The institution of the Lord's Day helps everyone enjoy adequate rest and leisure to cultivate their familial, cultural, social, and religious lives.
- **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. 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.
- **2186** - 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 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.

Chapter Two – “You Shall Love Your Neighbor as Yourself”

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.
- **2197** - 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.
- **2200** - Observing the fourth commandment brings its reward: 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.
- **The Family in God’s Plan**
 - **2201** - Marriage and the family are ordered to the good of the spouses and to the procreation and education of children.
 - **2203** - In creating man and woman, God instituted the human family and endowed it with its fundamental constitution.
 - **2204** - "The Christian family constitutes a specific revelation and realization of ecclesial communion, and for this reason it can and should be called a domestic church." It is a community of faith, hope, and charity; it assumes singular importance in the Church, as is evident in the New Testament.

- **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.
- **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.
 - **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.
 - **2209** - Following the principle of subsidiarity, larger communities should take care not to usurp the family's prerogatives or interfere in its life.
 - **2210** - 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."
 - **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;
 - 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.
- **The Duties of Family Members**
 - **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." "A wise son hears his father's instruction, but a scoffer does not listen to rebuke."
 - **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.
 - **2219** - Respect toward parents fills the home with light and warmth.
 - **2221** - "The role of parents in education is of such importance that it is almost impossible to provide an adequate substitute." The right and the duty of parents to educate their children are primordial and inalienable
 - **2223** - Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. . . . The home is well suited for education in the virtues. Parents should teach their children to subordinate the "material and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones."
 - **2225** - Through the grace of the sacrament of marriage, parents receive the responsibility and privilege of evangelizing their children.

- **2226** - Education in the faith by the parents should begin in the child's earliest years. . . . Family catechesis precedes, accompanies, and enriches other forms of instruction in the faith.
- **2229** - Public authorities have the duty of guaranteeing this parental right and of ensuring the concrete conditions for its exercise.
- **The Family and the Kingdom**
 - **2232** - The first vocation of the Christian is to follow Jesus
- **The Authorities in Civil Society**
 - **2235** - Those who exercise authority should do so as a service. . . . No one can command or establish what is contrary to the dignity of persons and the natural law.
 - **2237** - Political authorities are obliged to respect the fundamental rights of the human person.
 - **2238** - Live as free men, yet without using your freedom as a pretext for evil; but live as servants of God." 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.
 - **2240** - Submission to authority and co-responsibility for the common good make it morally obligatory to pay taxes, to exercise the right to vote, and to defend one's country.
 - **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.
 - **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. . . . "We must obey God rather than men".
 - **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.
 - **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.

Article 5 – The Fifth Commandment

- You shall not kill.
- **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."
- **Respect for Human Life**
 - **2261** - 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.
 - **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."

- **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.
- **2265** - Legitimate defense can be not only a right but a grave duty for someone responsible for another's life. Preserving the common good requires rendering the unjust aggressor unable to inflict harm. To this end, those holding legitimate authority have the right to repel by armed force aggressors against the civil community entrusted to their charge.
- **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. 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”, [Francis, [Address to Participants in the Meeting organized by the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelization](#), 11 October 2017] and she works with determination for its abolition worldwide.
- **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. Infanticide, 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.
- **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.
- **2271** - Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable.
- **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,"⁷⁶
 "by the very commission of the offense,"⁷⁷ and subject to the conditions provided by Canon Law.⁷⁸
 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.
- **2273** - The inalienable right to life of every innocent human individual is a constitutive element of a civil society and its legislation.
- **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.
- **2275** - "It is immoral to produce human embryos intended for exploitation as disposable biological material."
- **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.

- **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.
- **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.
- **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** - 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.
- **Respect for the Dignity of Persons**
 - **2284** - Scandal is an attitude or behavior which leads another to do evil. . . . Scandal is a grave offense if by deed or omission another is deliberately led into a grave offense.
 - **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. . . . Scandal is grave when given by those who by nature or office are obliged to teach and educate others.
 - **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." This is also true of business leaders who make rules encouraging fraud, teachers who provoke their children to anger, or manipulators of public opinion who turn it away from moral values.
 - **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!"
 - **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. 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.
 - **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 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.

- **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.
- **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.
- **2296** - Organ transplants are in conformity with the moral law if the physical and psychological dangers and risks incurred by the donor are proportionate to the good sought for the recipient. Donation of organs after death is a noble and meritorious act and is to be encouraged as a manifestation of generous solidarity.
- **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.
- **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 receive at the proper time the sacraments that prepare them to meet the living God.
- **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; 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.