

The Decalogue.

The last article of the Creed bids us to believe in an everlasting and happy life. But remember the condition on which we shall be admitted therein: If thou wilt enter into life, says Jesus Christ, keep the Commandments.

The Ten Commandments of God, also called the Decalogue, are the abridgment of all that we must practise to be saved.

The Decalogue, the summary of the natural law, is as ancient as man. It was imprinted on the heart of man on the day of his creation; afterwards given by God to Moses, engraved on two tables of stone; finally ratified and perfected by Jesus Christ, who has given it to His Church and to all the faithful as a fundamental law, saying, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the Commandments (St. Matt. xix. 17).

All men without any exception are held to obey the Commandments of the Decalogue; and all men can observe them when assisted by grace, which God has promised to those who humbly ask it. With the aid of grace the observance of the Commandments is not only not impossible, but it is not even difficult, particularly when we learn to make them the rule of our life in early youth, and are actuated in so doing by a spirit of love.

The motives which ought to urge us to observe the Commandments are on the one hand the will of God, and on the other our own happiness; for the observance of the law of God is the sole source of man's true happiness in this life and in the future, according to these words of the Holy Ghost: Justice exalteth a nation; but sin maketh nations miserable (Prov. xiv. 34).

The Ten Commandments as formulated in our Catechism are:

I. I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt not have strange gods before me.

II. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain.

III. Remember that thou keep holy the Sabbath day.

IV. Honor thy father and thy mother, that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

V. Thou shalt not kill.

VI. Thou shalt not commit adultery.

VII. Thou shalt not steal.

VIII. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

IX. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's wife.

X. Thou shalt not covet thy neighbour's goods.

It is the duty of all the faithful to commit to memory these Commandments.

Parents should consider it a sacred duty to teach them to their children, and to have them daily recite them.

Let us studiously endeavor, my brethren, to know and comprehend their meaning: the better we know them, the more particular we will be to observe them.