

The Decalogue – duties toward our neighbor

The last six commandments include the **duties that we have toward our neighbor**. These are summed up by Our Savior Jesus Christ when He teaches us: ” **You shall love your neighbor as yourself!**”

5. Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

We have an obligation to **honor our parents** who have received from God the gift and responsibility to give birth, raise and care for us. To honor one’s parents means to **respect** their authority, to **love** them, to **be helpful** in their time of need. God blesses those who honor their parents and promises them long life on Earth. If a parent teaches his child things contrary to the Law of God, the child is allowed not to listen, but needs to continue to give him parental respect.

6. You shall not kill.

Through this commandment, God tells us that we have the **duty to respect the life given by Him to every living creature**, especially the life of other people and our own life. Killing animals is only allowed for the needs of our existence (food, clothing, dwelling), but it is a sin to torture and kill animals for other reasons.

Killing other people is **the greatest sin against fellow humans**, and God forbids it altogether. We are not allowed to kill anyone, no matter what bad action that person committed. To kill that person means to take him every chance of repentance for his evil deeds, so to make ourselves that person’s judge instead of God. He who kills the person who killed someone, seven times greater sin will have, says God to Cain. Only God should decide the hour of the death of every one, when He knows that person has been given all the possible chances for salvation. **Suicide** is the gravest sin possible, for man himself thus breaks any connection with God, forfeits any chance of salvation, and rebels against God, the Giver of life, who wanted him to exist. Suicide is not forgiven; priests cannot offer the funeral service for suicide victims, and they cannot be buried in the cemetery with other Christians.

7. You shall not commit adultery.

This commandment instructs each and every person, male and female, to keep themselves clean and pure. God's established tradition is the legitimate marriage towards the formation of the family, the propagation and preservation of mankind. The first family was made by God Himself acting as Priest: after creating man and woman and placing them in Heaven, He blessed them, saying “*Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it*” (Genesis 1, 28), thus setting the marriage established in Heaven as foundation of human society. The love between husband and wife must be pure, like the love between Our Savior Jesus Christ and the Church (Ephesians 5, 21-33). Any deviation from this pure love, even if it’s just a thought, is a transgression of the seventh commandment and it is a great sin because it steals the purity of man's body and soul, wounds his health, darkens the mind, hardens the heart, and separates the faithful from God.

This commandment also refers to the **lack of moderation**, lack of measure in all: e.g. gluttony (excess eating/drinking), avarice (greed for wealth or material gain); lust of power, excessive work, or laziness (oversleeping). God urges us to moderation, right measure, fasting.

8. You shall not steal.

God forbids us to appropriate things belonging to another person, under any circumstances. If we want to use something belonging to another person, we can do it only with that person's knowledge and consent. The one who steals is tempted to believe that no one sees him, but even if no person notices it, God always sees and the theft will not remain undiscovered. God expects us to have a **clear, reconciled, and peaceful conscience** (living according to God's law) and to **be thankful and grateful for everything we have**.

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

God forbids us to lie, thus causing any harm to our neighbor. And especially we should not submit false testimony against anyone on trial in court; we should not accuse anyone by coming up with false evidence; we should not gossip or slander. It is not a sin to conceal a good deed or a personal merit out of humility, or to lie in order to save someone from a major crisis.

10. You shall not covet anything that is your neighbor's.

This commandment is against **uncontrolled greed and envy** that, once accepted by man, can lead to greater sins. God commands us to **be satisfied with the results of our own work**, or to work better or more if we want to have things like our neighbor has, and to not be envious if he has more and we fail to have the same. God tells us that **He takes care so everyone gets what they need**.

The Decalogue or The Ten Commandments

1. I am the Lord, your God. You shall have no other gods before Me.
2. You shall not make for yourself a carved image, or any likeness of anything; you shall not bow down to them nor serve them.
3. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
4. Remember the Sabbath day, to keep it holy.

5. Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God is giving you.

6. You shall not kill.

7. You shall not commit adultery.

8. You shall not steal.

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

10. You shall not covet anything that is your neighbor's.

(Exodus 20, 1-17)