



What do the rest of the commandments have to do with me?

GOSPEL



ANSWERS

Blessed are they who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be satisfied. Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. Blessed are the clean of heart, for they will see God. Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God. — **Matthew 5:1-12**

Saints & inspirational stories

Stephen Kaszap

Stephen Kaszap is a great example of how you can live according to the commandments at any stage or age in life. When he was healthy and popular he was a good example and when he was weak and ill, he still lived a life of faith pleasing to God. He shows us how short life can be and how important it is to live to the fullest.



Bernard Lehner

Bernard had no fear of living his faith and was known by all to love God and to be a joyful person. Bernard was compassionate and always took an interest in all suffering of those he encountered. This is what living by the commandments means.



Team discussion

After reading over the YOUCAT numbers on the following pages, how do you think the Youth Catechism answers the question of the week? Were there any words or ideas that you did not fully understand that you would like to understand better?

Answer in your own words:



YouCat numbers for this week



4th commandment:
Honor your father and your mother.

#367 To whom does the Fourth Commandment refer, and what does it require of us?

The Fourth Commandment refers in the first place to one's physical parents, but also to the people to whom we owe our life, our well-being, our security, and our faith. What we owe in the first place to our parents—namely love, gratitude, and respect—should also govern our relations to people who guide us and are there for us. There are many people who represent for us a God-given, natural, and good authority: foster or step-parents, older relatives and ancestors, educators, teachers, employers, superiors. In the spirit of the Fourth Commandment we should do them justice. In the broadest sense, this commandment applies even to our duties as citizens to the State.

#370 Why should the State protect and promote families?

The welfare and future of a State depend on the ability of the smallest unit within it, the family, to live and develop. No State has the right to intrude on the basic cell of society, the family, by its regulations or to question its right to exist. No State has the right to define the family differently, for the family's commission comes from the Creator. No State has the right to deprive the family of its fundamental functions, especially in the area of education. On the contrary, every State has the duty to support families with its assistance and to ensure that its material needs are met.

#369 Why are families irreplaceable? Every child is descended from one father and one mother and longs for the warmth and safety of a family so that he may grow up secure and happy. The family is the basic cell of human society. The values and principles that are lived out in the small circle of the family are what make solidarity in the life of larger society possible in the first place.

#368 What place does the family have in God's plan of creation? A man and a woman who are married to each other form, together with their children, a family. God wills that the love of the spouses, if possible, should produce children. These children, who are entrusted to the protection and care of their parents, have the same dignity as their parents. God himself, in the depths of the Trinity, is communion. In the human sphere, the family is the primordial image of communion. The family is the unique school of living in relationships. Nowhere do children grow up as well as in an intact family, in which they experience heartfelt affection, mutual respect, and responsibility for one another. Finally, faith grows in the family, too; the family is, the Church tells us, a miniature church, a "domestic church", the radiance of which should invite others into this fellowship of faith, charity, and hope.



5th commandment: You shall not kill

#379 What sorts of attacks on human life are forbidden by the Fifth Commandment? Murder and acting as an accomplice to murder are forbidden. Killing unarmed civilians during a war is forbidden. The abortion of a human being, from the moment of conception on, is forbidden. Suicide, self-mutilation, and self-destructive behavior are forbidden. Euthanasia—killing the handicapped, the sick, and the dying—is also forbidden. Today people often try to get around the Fifth Commandment with seemingly humane arguments. But neither euthanasia nor abortion is a humane solution. That is why the Church is perfectly clear on these questions. Whoever participates in an abortion, forces a woman to undergo an abortion, or merely advises her to do so is automatically excommunicated—just as with other crimes against human life. If a psychologically ill person commits suicide, responsibility for the act of killing is often diminished and in many cases completely annulled.

#380 Why is it permissible to tolerate the killing of another human being in the case of legitimate self-defense? Someone who is actually attacking the lives of others may and must be stopped, if necessary by killing the attacker himself. Legitimate defense against aggression is not only a right; for someone who bears the responsibility for the lives of others it can even become a duty. Nevertheless, legitimate defense must not employ wrong, inappropriately harsh methods.

#381 Why is the Church opposed to capital punishment? The Church is committed to opposing the death penalty because it is “both cruel and unnecessary” (Pope John Paul II, St. Louis, January 27, 1999). Every legitimate State has in principle the right to punish crime appropriately. In *Evangelium vitae* (1995), the Pope does not say that the use of the death penalty is in every respect an unacceptable and illegitimate punishment. To take the life of a criminal is an extreme measure to which the State should resort only “in cases of absolute necessity”. This necessity arises when the only way to protect human society is by killing the convicted criminal. But such cases, says Pope John Paul II, “are very rare, if not practically non-existent”. A punishment imposed by the State must satisfy four criteria in order to be appropriate and just: 1. It should make amends for the crime. 2. The State intends thereby to restore public order and to provide for the security of its citizens. 3. The punishment should improve the guilty party. 4. The punishment corresponds to the seriousness of the crime.

#378 Why is it not permissible to take one’s own life or the lives of others? God alone is Lord over life and death. Except in the case of legitimate self-defense of oneself or another, no one may kill another human being. An attack on life is a sacrilege committed against God. Human life is sacred; this means that it belongs to God; it is his property. Even our own life is only entrusted to us. God himself has given us the gift of life; only he may take it back from us. The Book of Exodus, translated literally, says “You shall not murder”.

#384 Can handicapped child be aborted?
No. Aborting a handicapped child is always a serious crime, even if it is done with the intention of sparing that person suffering later on.



#382 Is it permissible to offer assistance in dying?

To bring about death directly is always against the commandment "You shall not kill" (Ex 20:13). In contrast, to stand by and assist a dying person is humane and even obligatory. The terms active euthanasia and passive euthanasia often confuse the debate. What really matters is whether a dying person is killed or allowed to die. In so-called active euthanasia, someone by direct action "helps" a person to die and thereby breaks the Fifth Commandment; in so-called passive euthanasia, someone helps another person in the dying process and thereby obeys the commandment "Love your neighbor." Passive euthanasia means that, in view of the certain impending death of a patient, one withholds extraordinary or expensive medical procedures that are not proportionate to the expected outcome. The patient himself must make the decision to forgo "extraordinary" measures or must have stated this intention in an advance directive. If he is no longer capable of doing so, those who are legally entitled must represent the express or probable wishes of the dying person. Ordinary care of a dying person should never be discontinued; this is commanded by love of neighbor and mercy. Meanwhile it can be legitimate and in keeping with human dignity to use painkillers, even at the risk of shortening the patient's life. The crucial thing is that the use of such medications must not aim at bringing about death, either as an end in itself or as a means of ending pain.

#387 How should we treat our body? The Fifth Commandment forbids also the use of violence against one's own body. Jesus expressly demands that we accept and love ourselves: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22:39). Self-destructive acts against one's own body ("body piercings", cutting and so on) are in most cases psychological reactions to experiences of abandonment and a lack of love; hence they call first and foremost for our sincere and loving response. Within the context of organ donation, it must be made clear, however, that there is no human right to destroy one's own God-given body.

#383 Why is abortion unacceptable at any phase in the development of an embryo?

God-given human life is God's own property; it is sacred from the first moment of its existence and not under the control of any human being. "Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you" (Jer 1:5). God alone is Lord over life and death. Not even "my" life belongs to me. Every child, from the moment of conception on, has a right to life. From his earliest beginnings an unborn human being is a separate person, and no one can infringe upon his rights, not the State, not the doctor, and not even the mother. The Church's clarity about this is not a lack of compassion; she means, rather, to point out the irreparable harm that is inflicted on the child who is killed in abortion and on his parents and on society as a whole. Protecting innocent human life is one of the noblest tasks of the State. If a State evades this responsibility, it undermines the foundations of a rule of law

#388 How important is health? Health is an important value, but not an absolute one. We should treat our God-given body gratefully and carefully, but not be obsessed with it. Appropriate care for the health of its citizens is one of the fundamental obligations of the State, which must create living conditions in which sufficient food, sanitary housing, and basic medical care are available to all.

#385 Can experiments be performed on living embryos and embryonic stem cells?

No. Embryos are human beings. Regarding embryos as biological material, "producing" them and then "using" their stem cells for purposes of research is absolutely immoral and falls under the commandment "You shall not kill." Research on adult stem cells is a different matter, since they cannot develop into human beings. Medical interventions on an embryo are justifiable only if they are made with the intention of healing, if the life and unimpaired development of the child are assured, and if the risks involved are not disproportionately great.



6th & 9th commandment:

You shall not commit adultery
Or covet your neighbor's wife.

#402 What is love? Love is the free self-giving of the heart. To have a heart full of love means to be so pleased with something that one emerges from oneself and devotes oneself to it. A musician can devote himself to a masterpiece. A kindergarten teacher can be there wholeheartedly for her charges. In every friendship there is love. The most beautiful form of love on earth, however, is the love between man and woman, in which two people give themselves to each other forever. All human love is an image of divine love, in which all love is at home. Love is the inmost being of the Triune God. In God there is continual exchange and perpetual self-giving. Through the overflowing of divine love, we participate in the eternal love of God. The more a person loves, the more he resembles God.

#416 What are the essential elements of Christian marriage? (1) Unity: Marriage is a covenant that by its very nature brings about bodily, intellectual, and spiritual union between a man and a woman; (2) Indissolubility: Marriage lasts "until death do us part"; (3) Openness to offspring: Every marriage must be open to children; (4) Commitment to the spouse's welfare. If one of the two spouses deliberately excludes one of the four points listed above at the time of their wedding, the Sacrament of Matrimony does not take place.

#405 How can anyone live a chaste life? What can help? Someone lives chastely when he is free to be loving and is not the slave of his drives and emotions. Anything, therefore, that helps one to become a more mature, freer, and more loving person and to form better relationships helps that person to love chastely, also.

#463 How does one achieve "purity of heart"? The purity of heart required for love is achieved in the first place through union with God in prayer. When God's grace touches us, this also produces a path to pure, undivided human love.

7th commandment: You shall not Steal.

#426 What is regulated by the Seventh Commandment: "You shall not steal" (Ex 20:15)? The Seventh Commandment not only forbids taking something away from another person, it also requires the just management and distribution of the earth's goods; it regulates the question of private property and the distribution of the proceeds from human work. The unjust distribution of raw materials is also indicted in this commandment. In the first place, the Seventh Commandment actually forbids only taking someone else's property unlawfully. However, it also addresses the human endeavor to make just social arrangements in the world and to plan for its beneficial development. The Seventh Commandment says that we are obliged in faith to advocate the protection of the environment as part of creation & to conserve the earth's natural resources.



8th commandment:

You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.

#452 What does the Eighth Commandment require of us? The Eighth Commandment teaches us not to lie. Lying means consciously and intentionally speaking or acting against the truth. Someone who lies deceives himself and misleads others who have a right to know the full truth of a matter. Every lie is an offense against justice and charity. Lying is a form of violence; it introduces the seed of division into a community and undermines the trust on which every human community is based.

#453 What does our relationship to the truth have to do with God? Living in respect for the truth means not only being true to oneself. More precisely it means being truthful, being true to God, for he is the source of all truth. We find the truth about God and about all of reality quite directly in Jesus, who is "the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6). Someone who really follows Jesus brings greater and greater truthfulness into his life. He eliminates all lies, falsehood, pretense, and ambiguity from his accomplishments in life and becomes transparent toward the truth. To believe means to become a witness to the truth

#465 What attitude should a Christian take toward other people's property?

A Christian must learn to distinguish reasonable desires from those that are unreasonable and unjust and to acquire an interior attitude of respect for other people's property. Covetousness leads to greed, avarice, theft, robbery and fraud, violence and injustice, envy and immoderate desires to own what belongs to others.

#466 What is envy, and how can you fight against it? Envy is sadness and annoyance at the sight of another's well-being and the desire to acquire unjustly what others have. Anyone who wishes other people ill commits a serious sin. Envy decreases when we try to rejoice more and more in the accomplishments and gifts of others, when we believe in God's benevolent providence for ourselves as well, and when we set our hearts on true wealth, which consists of the fact that we already participate in God's life through the Holy Spirit.

10th commandment:

You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

#467 Why does Jesus demand that we practice "poverty in spirit"? "Though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that by his poverty you might become rich" (2 Cor 8:9). Young people, too, experience inner emptiness. But experiencing this sort of poverty is not just something bad. I simply have to seek with my whole heart the one who can fill my emptiness and make wealth out of my poverty. That is why Jesus says: "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 5:3).