

The First 3 Commandments

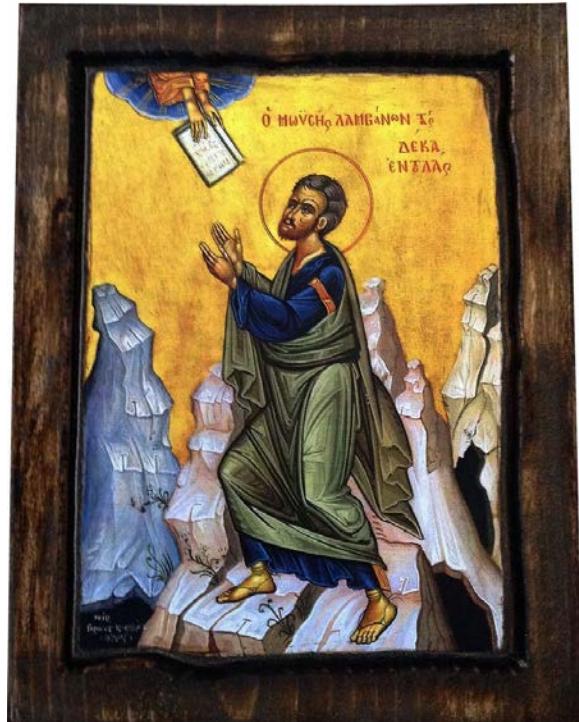
Sunday, February 28, 2021

Opening Prayer:

I myself also call upon you, Lord God of Abraham, and God of Isaac, and God of Jacob and Israel, you who are the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the God who, through the abundance of your mercy, is well pleased with us, that we might know you, who have made heaven and earth, who rules over all things, who are the sole and true God, besides whom there is no other God; also grant, through our Lord Jesus Christ, the gift of the Holy Spirit; and give to every reader of this book to know you, that you are God alone, and to be strengthened in you, and to shun every heretical, godless, and impious opinion. (Prayer of St. Irenaeus for Heretics,

Against Heresies 3.6.4)

- The Purpose of the 10 Commandments and all Divine law is human happiness.
Therefore, the Lord commanded us to observe all these statutes in fear of the Lord, our God, that we may always have as prosperous and happy a life as we have today...
(Deuteronomy 6:24)
- By observing the 10 Commandments we learn about God.
 - The first three commandments teach us how to treat God.
 - The last seven teach us how to treat each other.



- Our prayer life changes our life in the world.
 - We learn discipline from our parents, family, and society.
 - Without discipline prayer is impossible.
 - In life we learn how to pray, in prayer we learn how to live.
 - The active life and prayer life are interrelated.

To experience him as he (God) is, is the same as to experience yourself, for he is as you are. You do not love yourself except as you love God, so love as you do yourself all those who love him likewise... Give me a man who above all loves God with all his heart, himself and his neighbor in that they love God; but his

enemy as one who will one day love perhaps; his parents who begot him with a warm natural love, but his spiritual teachers the more because of grace. (St. Bernard, Sermon 50, III.7-III.8)

1ST COMMANDMENT: NO FALSE GODS

I, the Lord, am your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, that place of slavery. You shall not have other gods besides me. You shall not carve idols for yourselves in the shape of anything in the sky above or on the earth; you shall not bow down before them or worship them. For I, the Lord, your God, am a jealous God, inflicting punishment for their fathers, wickedness on the children of those who hate me, down to the third and fourth generation; but bestowing mercy down to the thousandth generation, on the children of those who love me and keep my commandments. (Exodus 20:1-6)

- Through the 10 Commandments we learn the virtues of faith, hope and charity.
- In the 1st Commandment we reject superstition, idolatry, magic, and atheism.
- God demands that we accept him for who he truly is.

STORY OF THE GOLDEN CALF



When the people became aware of Moses' delay in coming down from the mountain, they gathered around Aaron and said to him, "Come, make us a god who will be our leader; as for the man Moses who brought us out of the land of Egypt, we do not know what has happened to him." Aaron replied, "Have your wives and sons and daughters take off the golden earrings they are wearing and bring them to me." So all the people took off their earrings and brought them to Aaron, who accepted their offering, and fashioning this gold with a graving tool,

made a molten calf. Then they cried out, “This is your God, O Israel who brought you out of the land of Egypt.” On seeing this, Aaron built an altar before the calf and proclaimed, “Tomorrow is a feast of the Lord.” Early the next day the people offered holocausts and brought peace offerings. Then they sat down to eat and drink and rose up to revel.

With that, the Lord said to Moses, “Go down at once to your people, whom you brought out of the land of Egypt, for they have become depraved. They have soon turned aside from the way I pointed out to them, making for themselves a molten calf and worshiping it, sacrificing to it and crying out, “This is your God, O Israel, who brought you out of the land of Egypt!” (Exodus 32:1-8)

- By observing the 1st Commandment, we learn about God. What does this commandment tell us about God?

2ND COMMANDMENT: DO NOT TAKE THE LORD’S NAME IN VAIN

- We must reject blasphemy and false oaths.
- You can belittle a person by calling them a name that is nasty.

You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain. For the Lord will not leave unpunished him who takes his name in vain. (Exodus 20:7)

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. (CCC 2144)

- Names are important, names define our identity.
- St. Paul changed his name from Saul when he accepted Christ.



- Candidates can choose a name for themselves as part the Sacrament of Confirmation.

One of the two who had followed him after hearing John was Simon Peter's brother Andrew. The first thing he did was seek out his brother Simon and tell him, "We have found the Messiah!" (This term means the Anointed)." He brought him to Jesus, who looked at him and said, "You are Simon, son of John; your name shall be Cephas (which is rendered Peter)." (John 1: 40-42)

- The name "God" is to be said with reverence.
- The habit of using God's name in vain destroys a person's faith.
- Calling on God or blaming God for every little thing is the same behavior as ancient pagans.
- What does the 2nd Commandment tell us about God?

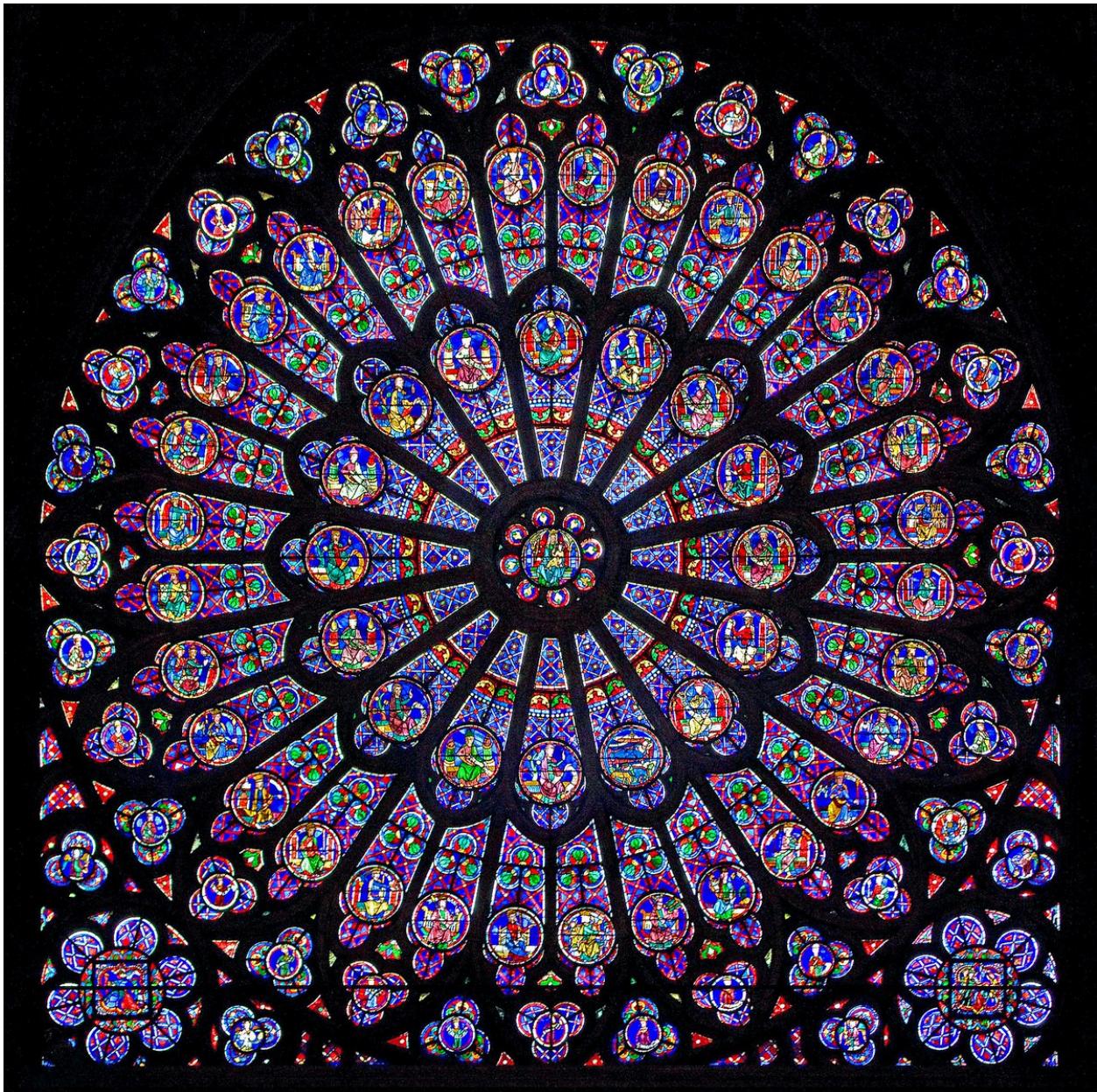
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3RD COMMANDMENT: KEEP HOLY THE SABBATH

Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day. Six days you may labor and do all your work, but the seventh day is the Sabbath of the Lord, your God. No work may be done then either by you, or your son or daughter, or your male or female slave, or your beast, or by the alien who lives with you. In six days the Lord made the heavens and the earth, the sea and all that is in them, but the seventh day he rested. That is why the Lord has blessed the Sabbath day and made it holy. (Exodus 20: 8-11)

Since we are made up of a body and a soul, Moses gave to the body the activities proper to it... when the body was working, the soul could rest, and when the body in turn rested, then the soul worked: Thus the best ways of life, the contemplative and the practical, follow each other alternately, the practical life having six days as its own for corporal needs, the contemplative life having the seventh day to be free for study and for the perfect life of the spirit. (Philo of Alexandria, De Spectaculis, 64)

- On the Sabbath we pause to remember that heaven is the fulfilment of all our desires. We long to be with those we love and to be loved in a setting of harmony and unity. But how can we all fit into this vision of unity when our individual goals and ambitions often conflict with others? We strive to attain this harmony on earth through being united by a life in Christ; this life gives us a foretaste of the happiness and beauty of heaven.



- Upon seeing rose windows at Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, one is struck by the beauty of the whole window. The concentric circles of the window unify the many pieces into one. No piece of the window fits clashes with any other. If even one piece of this window were missing, the pattern would be broken by a gap and the beauty of the whole would be damaged.
- Each individual medallion contains an image of a holy person living his life in Christ on earth; every piece of the window is in harmony with the whole. At the center is Christ, the focal point of this unity. The radial lattices between the windowpanes create lines which converge on the center medallion of Christ. Not only are all people drawn to Christ, but Christ's love radiates outward and touches everyone. The dominate colors throughout the window are blue and

red. These colors unify the medallions and create a unity throughout the window.

Sunday is the cosmic day of creation, the biblical day of circumcision, the evangelical day of the Resurrection, the Church's day of the Eucharistic celebration and the eschatological day of the age to come. (Jean Danielou, S.J., The Bible and the Liturgy, Pg. 266)

Let us hold unswervingly to our profession which gives us hope, for he who made the promise deserves our trust. We must consider how to rouse each other to love and good deeds. We should not absent ourselves from the assembly, as some do, but encourage one another; and this all the more because you see that the Day draws near. (Hebrews 10:23-25)

- What does the 3rd Commandment tell us about God?

Next Week:

4th and 5th Commandments: Family & Culture of Life, Chapters 28 & 29