CHAPTER 17

Road Signs Along the Way

"You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your might."

Deuteronomy 6:5

1. I am the LORD your God: you shall not have strange gods before me.

The One True God

Why do you think that God was displeased when the Israelites worshipped the golden calf and when the wise Solomon was foolish enough to honor his wives' gods? It was because there is only *one* God and he alone is worthy of worship.

Can you imagine what it would be like if you gave someone many things but, instead of thanking you, he thanked someone else for them? It would not be right or true. God has done more than give us things. He created us and he keeps us in existence every second! We depend upon him for everything. It is not right or truthful to worship someone or something else for those things, which God alone has given us.

But God was telling the people of Israel that they should do more than just keep from worshipping false gods. Because God is who he is, we must give proper worship to him as the one true God and Creator of all that exists.

False Gods

Although the Jews lived in a time when people worshipped idols and golden statues, most people in the world today do not worship statues. There is another way of worshipping gods other than the one true God. This is when we treat our possessions like gods or make them more important than God. We want more and more money and possessions to keep for ourselves, and sometimes we may even do wrong things to get them. We may be so stingy with them—not wanting to share them with others that we make them into false gods. Do you refuse to let your brother or sister ride your bicycle or come into your room? Or perhaps we do things that we know are wrong just to be popular or so others won't laugh at us. This is making a god out of our popularity. God has given us so many gifts and he wants us to enjoy them. But we must be careful not to let these things take place over him in our lives.

Believing in God

The First Commandment also tells us to believe the things that God has told us about himself, about ourselves, and about his Church. God

gave you the gift of faith at your Baptism so that you are able to believe all that he tells you.

But how can you believe in someone or in the things that he tells you, if you don't know anything about him or about those things? So in the First Commandment, God tells you to learn about him and what he has to say to you. You learn those things from what the Catholic Church teaches, that is, by paying attention right here to what your religion teacher and books have to say. You are learning some of the things that God wants you to know right now!

Praying to God

If we really follow the First Commandment, we will pray to God every day. What are some of the reasons people do not pray? Some do not think that God really has any control over their lives. Others do not believe in him enough or do not love him enough. Some people do not pray unless they are frightened or want something very badly.

But God thinks that our **prayers** are *very* important so he often waits until we ask him. He wants us to show that we trust him. If we received all that we want without asking, we would probably forget who really gave them to us, and we would start to think that we had gotten them all by ourselves.

Holy God, holy strong One, holy Immortal One, have mercy on us.

Byzantine chant

Prayer means talking with God. You talk with him so that you can get to know him better, to love him, to adore him, to thank him for what he has given you, to tell him you are sorry for what you have done wrong, or to ask him for something. God will answer by giving you his grace and by granting your prayers, perhaps in unexpected ways. You can pray anywhere or anytime because God always listens.

Does praying sound hard? It will help if, before you begin your prayers, you remember that God really is there and really wants to hear what you are going to tell him or ask him. He wants to give good things to you and the people you love. He is just waiting to be asked. Above all, he wants your love.

Sometimes, however, (although certainly not every time!) what we ask for might not be best for us or for someone else. So in his great love for us, God might answer our prayers in a different way than we were expecting.

2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.

Respect for God's Name

Sometimes the way we talk about people tells others just what we think of them. If you are angry with a person, the way you talk about him will let others know how you feel. On the other hand, you talk about someone you like in a nice way.

How much more should we talk with the greatest care about God who is all holy! God wants us always to use his name with the greatest **respect**, and this is what he tells us in the Second Commandment when he says, "Do not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain." "In vain" means for no good purpose or reason. If we start using God's name carelessly, we can forget just who he is.

The Jewish people had such deep **reverence** for the greatness and majesty of the all-holy God that they would not even say the word

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"Yahweh" but said "the Lord" instead. This should give us an idea of the reverence due to God. It makes us all the more thankful that we are allowed to call this great God "Our Father," as Jesus taught us.

Prayer

One special way that God wants us to use his name is in prayer. We often begin our prayers, "in the *name* of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit" and end them by using the *name* of "Christ, our Lord."

Vows

There are other ways in which we can and should use God's name. Sometimes we use it to make a promise to God, which is called a vow. To break such a promise would be to use God's name in vain because we should not make promises to God and then treat them so lightly that we break them. Examples of a vow would be the vow married people make to each other and to God that they will be faithful to each other for the rest of their lives or that religious sisters, brothers, and priests make when they vow to live a life of special service to God and to others.

Using God as Your Witness

Sometimes we call on God to witness that what we say is true. We call this swearing an oath. Swearing is necessary in courtrooms and under other special circumstances, but it would be wrong to call God to witness the truth of our statements without a good reason or if what we are saying is not true. If you find yourself using God's name to convince your friends that you are telling them the truth or saying things like "I swear to God," you should stop doing it. Your honest word should be enough.

Other Sins

Often when someone uses God's name because he is angry or excited, people say that he is "swearing" or "cursing." Cursing means to call down evil on someone. **Blasphemy** is speaking about God disrespectfully, carelessly, or even hatefully. These are sins against the Second Commandment.

Holy Persons, Places, and Things

Not only must we treat God's name with great respect, but we should also respect those holy persons, places, and things that are connected with him. For example, we must be careful to talk about Mary, the Mother of God, and all of God's saints with respect.

Do you remember how God told Moses to take off his shoes when he came near the burning bush? This was a sign of respect because he was walking on holy ground—God was there in a special way. We must respect our holy places too. When you are in church, as a sign of reverence for Jesus, who is in the tabernacle, you should genuflect. If it is necessary to speak, you should do so in a low voice, and you should also walk quietly, because you do not want to disturb others who are praying.

3. Remember to keep holy the LORD's Day.

Which day is the Lord's Day? For the children of Israel, it was Saturday. This was their **Sabbath**, which means "rest" day. From sundown on Friday to sundown on Saturday all work would stop and people would spend time with God by praying to him and learning about him. It was also a time for recreation with family and friends.

"Ask, and it will be given you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you."

Matthew 7:7

But there came one special Sabbath, when Jesus was lying dead in a tomb for the whole day. He rose the next day, Sunday. Because of that, his followers changed the Lord's Day from Saturday to Sunday.

Since we are followers of Jesus, Sunday is our day of rest. The Third Commandment teaches us to keep Sunday holy. Above all, we must participate in the Mass on the Lord's Day. At Mass we come together with others who believe in Christ and follow him to honor and praise God and to unite ourselves to the Holy Sacrifice offered by the priest.

After Mass, there are many things that you can do to make Sunday a holy and special day. Some people have a special Sunday breakfast or dinner for the whole family.

No matter how you celebrate Sunday, the point to remember is that any work that does not

need to be done should be put off until another day. Sunday is a day of rest and prayer and should be dedicated to God.

Along with Sundays, there are other days in the year called **Holy Days of Obligation** which we treat like Sundays. On these days we participate at Mass and we avoid any unnecessary work. Even if you have to go to school on one of these days, you should do your best to make it holy. Ask your teacher to tell you which days these are.

Have you learned more about how to love God than you knew before? If you have, you have learned that from now on you should try to be someone who: 1) puts God first by praying to him every day and learning about him and the things he has told us through his Church; 2) always uses God's name with respect; and 3) makes Sunday and other holy days special days of worship of God, especially by assisting at Mass.

Words to Know:

idol prayer respect reverence blasphemy Sabbath Holy Day of Obligation

Holy Days of Obligation in the United States

In addition to Sunday, the days to be observed as Holy Days of Obligation in the Latin Rite dioceses of the United States of America, in conformity with canon 1246, are as follows:

January 1, the solemnity of Mary, Mother of God;

Thursday of the Sixth Week of Easter, the solemnity of the Ascension;

August 15, the solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary;

November 1, the solemnity of All Saints;

December 8, the solemnity of the Immaculate Conception;

December 25, the solemnity of the Nativity of Our Lord Jesus Christ.

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Prayer

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1. What is prayer?
- 2. How often should we pray?
- 3. If we pray, what Commandment do we follow?
- 4. What are some reasons that people have for not praying?
- 5. Does God think our prayers are important?
- 6. Why does God want us to pray?
- 7. Does God always hear your prayers?
- 8. Does God always answer your prayers?
- 9. Does God always answer your prayers the way you expect him to?

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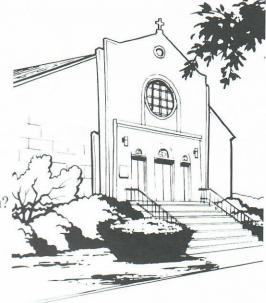
Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1. Do you remember what God said his name was? He told Moses his name from the burning bush.
- 2. What does the way we talk about people tell others?
- 3. Why should we take care in talking about God?
- 4. What is the Second Commandment?
- 5. What does "in vain" mean?
- 6. How did the Jewish people respect God's name?
- 7. What did Jesus teach us to call God?
- 8. What is a special way that we can use God's name?
- 9. What prayers do you know that use God's name?
- 10. What other sins misuse God's name?

The Lord's Day

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1. What is the Third Commandment?
- 2. When do Israelites honor the Lord's Day?
- 3. When do Christians honor the Lord's Day?
- 4. Why do we honor Sunday as the Lord's Day?
- 5. What must we participate in on Sunday?
- 6. What can you do to make Sunday a holy and special day?
- 7. What can be left until the next day?
- 8. What are the Holy Days of Obligation?



CHAPTER 18

Loving Others

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

Matthew 22:39

Now we will talk about the Commandments which help us to love others as we love ourselves.

Loving Yourself

Before we begin you must not get the idea that when we say you should love others *as* yourself that you should love others *instead* of yourself. God wants you to love yourself. He made your body and your soul, and he loves you much more than you can imagine. He even loved you enough to die for you!

But in a way, you do not need to be told to love yourself because, as a result of Adam's sin, we all tend to love ourselves at the price of loving others too little. That is why we need to be told to love others as ourselves, and that is what the next seven Commandments help us to do.

4. Honor your father and your mother.

You and your family are pilgrims to heaven together in a special way because it is your parents who must guide you to heaven. For this reason, the Fourth Commandment is a very important one for you. Also, the more you **honor** your parents, the happier your family will be. What this Commandment means by honor is to *love*, to *respect*, and to *obey* your parents.

Loving Your Parents

Because your parents loved each other, they cooperated with God's grace to give you life. And they continue to love you by trying to do what is best for you. Think of some of the things that your parents have done for you—whether big or little—things like taking care of you when you were sick, feeding you every day, providing your clothes, helping you with your homework, or celebrating your birthday.

No one really has to tell you to love your parents in return—you already do—but your love needs to grow and to be shown in the right ways. Most of all, loving your parents means caring about them, being thankful to them, and wanting good things for them, especially for them to go to heaven. If you love your parents, you will pray for them. You will also try to be of help to them and never hurt or disappoint them. And you will always tell them the truth. Can you think of some little ways to let them know that you love them—such as by telling them so, by



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planning a surprise for them, by doing things for them? When they are old or sick you can then return what they have given you by taking care of them.

Respecting Your Parents

How do you treat people you respect? First of all, you are careful about their feelings and wishes because you think so highly of them. Also, you are polite to them; you are never rude. You say "please" and "thank you" when you ask for things. In order to please God you must treat your mother and father in this way.

Obeying Your Parents

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Does your mother have to ask you again and again to clean your room or to do the dishes? Often it is hard to obey at once because you are asked to do something just when you are going out to play or are watching a show. It will help

if you think of how much it will please your mother if you obey her cheerfully and quickly.

You must obey your parents even when they tell you that you cannot do something that you want very much to do. Being good is not always easy, but one thing that might make it easier to obey is to remember that your parents love you and want what is best for you. When they forbid you to do something, it is because they care about you.

Time Away from Home

Your life at home with your family is not the only part of your life. You should also honor priests, especially your parish priests. You call them "Father." You should respect and obey those in authority in the Church.

Your parents have given your teachers permission to guide you while you are at school. Because of this, you should respect and obey your teachers.

Anyone else who takes the place of your parents for a while should be honored. Baby-sitters and your friends' parents are some examples of these.

5. You shall not kill.

Maybe you are thinking, "I don't have to be concerned about the Fifth Commandment because I will never kill anyone." But through this Commandment, God is letting us know that there are other ways of hurting someone's life besides killing him.

We must care for the soul as well as the body. In the Fifth Commandment, God tells us to respect our own bodies and souls as well as those of others.

Taking Care of Your Body . . .

Think of what a wonderful thing your body is! It has eyes that see and ears that hear sounds. It has a brain with which you think. God made your body, and he will raise it from the dead and bring it to heaven at the end of the world. He expects you to take care of it by giving it the right amount of exercise, food, and sleep.

Above all, make up your mind right now to stay away from all illegal drugs and other dangers because they can kill you. Since our bodies and souls are so closely connected, when something is wrong with our bodies, it can often have a bad effect on our souls.

... And the Bodies of Others

Do you ever get so angry with your brother, sister, or friend that finally you hit the person? Or have you ever teased someone who was weaker than you or shoved him? If so, these

things are signs that you are not respecting other people's bodies as you do your own.

Taking Care Of Your Soul . . .

The Fifth Commandment also tells you to take care of the life of grace in your soul. As wonderful and important as your body is, your soul is even more wonderful and important. You take care of your soul by praying, receiving the Sacraments, and doing good deeds.

... And the Souls of Others

Do you remember what Cain said when God asked him where Abel was: "Am I my brother's keeper?" The answer to that question is yes; we are our brothers' and sisters' keepers! That means that we are not going to heaven alone but we are here to help other people love God and each other. Because of this, you must be careful not to harm the precious souls of your family, friends, and acquaintances.

How can you avoid harming someone else's soul? First of all, you must try not to set a bad example which would lead him to sin. For if he sees you do bad things, he might think that it is all right for him to do them too. This is called giving **scandal** to someone.

We should also not be unkind to others because that is a way of hurting their souls, and it might even lead them to sin. Is there someone you won't play with because he is unattractive or different? Or is there someone you make fun of because he is not good at baseball or basketball? Do you talk about others and harm their reputations?

Wishing Others Harm

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hurt oththey were hurt. Have you ever been so angry at someone that you wished that he would get into trouble? Have you ever been happy that someone was hurt or punished? This is also against the Fifth Commandment.

Loving Your Enemies

How many times have you said of someone at school or your brother or sister, "I hate him," or "I hate her?" Well, of course you didn't really mean that you hate the person because hate is a very terrible thing. It makes people's souls wither and die. What you meant was that the person made you very angry or very afraid or that he hurt you.

But Jesus wants you to make a special effort to forgive those who have hurt you, to love those who seem disagreeable, or who are not easy to get along with. You should ask Jesus for help in doing this. You should never stop speaking to someone or refuse to be friends again because you are mad at him. If someone refuses to be your friend, you can pray for him and hope that some day you will be friends again.

Now that you know the Fourth and the Fifth Commandments, you should try to be someone who loves, respects, and obeys his parents and those in authority (Fourth); and respects his own body and soul as well as those of others (Fifth).

Words to Know:

honor scandal

"Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord."

Colossians 3:20

Q. 69 What does the Fourth Commandment tell us to do?

The Fourth Commandment orders us to love, respect, and obey our parents and whoever holds authority over us (CCC 2199).

Q. 70 What are we told to do by the Fifth Commandment?

The Fifth Commandment orders us to be of good will to all, including our enemies, and to respect our bodies and souls as well as those of our neighbors. We must do all we can to protect life from its very beginning to natural death (CCC 2258, 2319).

Q. 71 What does the Fifth Commandment forbid?

The Fifth Commandment forbids us to harm the lives of our neighbors or ourselves. It forbids murder, suicide, fighting (out of anger), curses, and scandal (CCC 2261, 2262, 2270, 2284).

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Honoring

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.



1. What is the Fourth Commandment?

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- 2. What does this mean?
- 3. How do your parents love you?
- 4. What are some ways that you can love your parents?
- 5. How can you respect your parents?
- 6. How can you obey your parents?
- 7. Whom else should you honor?

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Love Life!

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1. What is the Fifth Commandment?
- 2. How can you care for your body?
- 3. What kind of things can hurt your body?
- 4. How can you respect the bodies of other people?
- 5. What kinds of things hurt the bodies of other people?
- 6. How can you care for your soul?

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Loving Others

Using a separate sheet of paper, describe what you would do in each of these situations and tell which Commandment helped you make your decision.

- 1. Your mother has told you to come home right after school, but since she will not be there, she would not know if you stopped at a friend's house first.
- 2. In your class there is a person that everyone makes fun of.
- 3. Sometimes your brother makes you so angry that you feel like hitting him.
- 4. Your mother asks you to help with the dishes even though it is not your turn to help.
- 5. Your babysitter tells you to go to bed, but you feel like staying up for a while longer.
- 6. Your friend is angry at you and does not want to be friends anymore.
- 7. Someone who has made you angry comes up to talk to you at school. You feel like ignoring him and walking away.
- 8. You are having your favorite dessert. You want to have a second helping, but you know you will feel sick if you have it.

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CHAPTER 19

Growing in Love

"A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another."

John 13:34

- 6. You shall not commit adultery.
- 9. You shall not covet your neighbor's wife.

Loving Good Things

The Sixth and Ninth Commandments are laws that protect marriages and families. They help to make children's homes happy and secure places in which to grow up. These laws forbid unfaithfulness in marriage. But they have a message for you too. God tells you through these Commandments to enjoy only good books, magazines, movies, TV shows, and jokes and to stay away from impure things that would stop you from having the beautiful soul that God wants you to have. Here is a good way to tell if a joke, a book, a movie, or a TV show is not pleasing to God: would you be embarrassed to tell your parents or your teacher about it? Is it something that has to be whispered about? If it is, then you probably should stay away from it. Fill your mind with everything that is good and pure. Remember your body is called to be a temple of the Holy Spirit, so guard your thoughts and actions and keep them pure and pleasing to God.

- 7. You shall not steal.
- 10. You shall not covet your neighbor's goods.

Stealing

Although everything, including ourselves, really belongs to God, he lets us own things for the time that we are on earth. To take what belongs to someone else is against the Seventh Commandment. It is wrong to go into a store and steal something. Although most of us would not do this, there are other ways of stealing that we must avoid. Taking things in school or at home that belong to others is stealing. Cheating on a test is a way of stealing someone else's knowledge. Also, borrowing something and not returning it is the same as stealing it.

Damaging Private Property

Even if you do not take what belongs to others, you must be careful not to damage it. If you borrow something, it should be returned in the same condition as when you received it. If you are playing near a neighbor's property, you should be careful not to damage it.

Being Content

The Tenth Commandment is like the Seventh because they both are about things that don't belong to us. But whereas the Seventh tells us not to take what is not ours, the Tenth tells us not even to **covet** it, which means to want it more than we should. There is nothing wrong with wanting things, but often we want them too much or for the wrong reasons. For example, sometimes we want whatever someone else has. Sometimes we feel **envy**, which means that when someone else gets something nice or receives a compliment, instead of being happy for him, we are sad because we feel that such good things should come to us.

The Tenth Commandment also tells us to be patient, which means that we must wait calmly for the things we want and that we should not get upset if we don't get them. We should also try to be patient when things don't go our own way, because we know that God permits suffering in every life to make us better than we are.

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

Loving the Truth

Once Jesus called the devil "the father of lies." This was because the very first lie came from the devil. As you remember, he told Eve

that the fruit from the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil would not cause her to die. The Eighth Commandment, "You shall not bear **false witness** against your neighbor," tells us not to follow the devil's example by lying, and it also tells us to love the **truth**.

Do you know what truth is? When something is true, it really *is*. When we love the truth, we see and talk about things as they really are. This means that we will always try to look for and tell the truth even when it is hard to do so.

Sometimes we might lie because we are afraid of getting into trouble. This happens when we have already done something wrong, and we are afraid of being punished. There is a cure for this. The more we follow the other Commandments and avoid doing wrong, the less we will feel the need to lie. Then we will be much happier and more peaceful.

At other times we might lie because we want to feel important. Then we tell our friends stories about ourselves or our parents that are not true. Any time we need to feel important, we should remember that we *are* important, because Jesus loves us.

Even if we don't quite lie when we talk to our friends, we must be careful not even to exaggerate. When we exaggerate, we start out with something true but we build it up so much with things that are not true that it ends up being a lie.

And then there are the lies of **flattery**. Flattery is saying something nice (but maybe even untrue) about someone just because we hope he will like us or do something for us.

The worst kind of lie to tell is a lie to get someone in trouble. This kind of lie is not only untrue but also very unkind and mean.

If we love the truth, we will also try not to jump to conclusions before we know what really happened. Sometimes we are quick to blame others for something only to discover later that they were not at fault.

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"... whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is gracious, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things."

Philippians 4:8

But even when we love the truth, we need not always tell *all* that is true. Sometimes something is true but it would hurt another person's feelings, so it is better not to say it. Or sometimes a friend might tell you something private that he does not want anyone else to know. This information you must not tell others unless you have a very serious reason for doing so. We must avoid **gossip**, which is useless or damaging talk about other people.

Repairing the Damage Done

There is a story about a man who stole one hundred dollars from his neighbor. After he had spent the money, God touched his heart, and he was very sorry. He then confessed his crime to his neighbor.

"I'm glad you're sorry," replied the neighbor, "and I forgive you with all my heart. But what shall we do about the money you stole? I need it to buy food for my family."

"I'll work until I earn it and then I will pay you back," said the repentant thief.

In much the same way, if we have injured someone, whether by stealing from him, damaging his property, hurting his body or his soul, or lying about him, God is pleased that we are sorry, but we must still repair the damage we have done as much as we can. If we make an honest effort to do this, God will be pleased. If you have hurt someone, you should apologize, and if you have lied about some-

one, you should confess your lie to the person you told it to.

From what you have learned from the Sixth and Ninth, Seventh and Tenth, and Eighth Commandments, you should try to be someone who stays away from bad books, jokes, movies, and TV shows (Sixth and Ninth), respects private property and does not even covet it (Seventh and Tenth), and loves the truth (Eighth).

Joyful Goodness

If you feel as if you have just read so many "do's" and "don'ts" about the Commandments and you are beginning to think that there is no joy in being a Christian, that is the exact opposite of the truth!

The truth is that obeying the Commandments is the only way you will be really happy in this life and in the next. Disobeying them (besides being wrong) leads to unhappiness, as we saw with Adam and Eve. Tricked by the devil they thought they would be happy. But they became as unhappy as anyone could be.

Being really and truly good makes you joyful and the kind of person others want for a friend. And the better you become, the more God's love will shine out from you so that your family and friends can see it.

Imagine a person who would keep the Commandments just the way they should be kept. That person would love God and others very much. He would always tell the truth, which means that people would believe and trust him. He would never make fun of you or be mean. He would never want to hurt you. You would want such a person to be your best friend. He would be the most wonderful person you could know.

Words to Know:

covet envy truth false witness flattery gossip

Commandments 6 & 9

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. What is the Sixth Commandment?





- 3. What do these Commandments protect?
- 4. How do these Commandments have a message for you?
- 5. Families should model the Holy Family. What can you learn from the Holy Family? $\ensuremath{\mathbb{C}}$

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Commandments 7 & 10

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1. What is the Seventh Commandment?
- 2. What is the Tenth Commandment?
- 3. What are some examples of stealing?
- 4. Why is this wrong if everything belongs to God?
- 5. Why is damaging other people's property wrong?
- 6. What does "covet" mean?
- 7. In order to be forgiven, must one try to make "restitution" (repair the damage)?

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Commandment 8

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

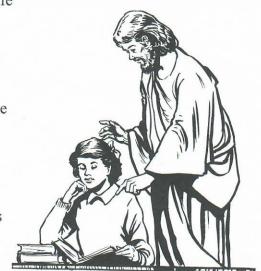
- 1. What is the Eighth Commandment?
- 2. Who is the "Father of Lies?" Why?
- 3. What is truth?
- 4. What must we do to keep the Eighth Commandment?
- 5. What might be some reasons why some people choose to lie?
- 6. What is exaggeration and flattery?
- 7. Why is gossiping bad?

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Do's and Don'ts

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

- 1. How can you be really happy in this life and in the next?
- 2. By keeping the Commandments, whose love do you reveal?
- 3. How does keeping the Commandments fulfill the laws of loving God and neighbor?



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- 4. If you kept these Commandments, would you be a better person?
- 5. Why did God give us these Commandments?
- 6. How can you thank God for the Commandments?