

## **THE COMMANDMENTS.**

*The Fourth Commandment (cont.):*

**Honour thy father and thy mother.**

### **Duty of parents towards their children.**

**1.** Parents are bound (1) to provide for the needs of their children, (2) to give them a Christian upbringing, (3) to correct them when necessary, and (4) to set them a good example.

**2.** First and foremost, parents should love all their children equally, with a Christian tenderness and without weakness as regards their faults and defects.

**3.** Parents should look upon their children as precious treasure confided to their keeping by God, for which they will have to render a strict account to Him.

**4.** By saying that parents must *provide for the needs* of their children we mean that they must feed and clothe them, bring them up according to their means and social position and give them a proper start in life.

**5.** By a *Christian upbringing* we mean that the children should (1) be taught their prayers and the principal articles of their faith, (2) be sent to catechism and, as far as may be possible, to a school where they will receive religious instruction, (3) be brought up to love God and avoid sin, (4) be sent to confession and to make their first communion as soon as they attain the age of reason (see p. 51, 3rd and 4th. Commandments of the Church, and (5) not be interfered with if they receive the religious call.

**6.** Before giving their children a trade or profession parents must seek by prayer the will of God, give them good advice and leave them at perfect liberty to obey the Divine call, should they receive it, for the religious life.

7. Parents cannot do better than to desire for their children obedience to the voice of God, as we learn from Christ's reply to the mother of the apostles James and John:

« Then came to Him the mother of the sons of Zebedee with her sons, adoring and asking something of Him. Who said to her: « What wilt thou? » She saith to Him: « Say that these my two sons may sit, the one on Thy right hand and the other on Thy left in Thy Kingdom. » And Jesus answering, said: « You know not what you ask. Can you drink the chalice that I shall drink » They say to Him, « We can. » He saith to them: « My chalice indeed you shall drink, but to sit on My right or left hand, is not Mine to give to you, but to them for whom it is prepared by My Father. » «And the ten hearing it, were moved to indignation against the two brethren. But Jesus called to Him and said: « You know that the princes of the Gentiles lord it over them, and they that are the greater exercise power upon them. It shall not be so among you, but whosoever shall be the greater among you, let him be your minister, and he that will be first among you, shall be your servant; even as the Son of Man is not come to be ministered unto, for many but to minister and to give His life a redemption for many. » (*Matt. XX, 20-28.*)

8. By *correction* of their children we mean that parents should keep a close watch over the conduct of their children, reprovng and punishing them when they do wrong, but this without any show of temper and with no other object than that of making them better.

9. As regards *giving good example* we mean that the parents themselves should practice their religion - say their prayers, go to mass and the sacraments, and refrain from everything that might lead their children into sin, such as blaspheming, scandal mongering, using improper language and scoffing at religion.

## **Explanation of the Plate.**

10. *The central picture* shows St. Ann teaching Our Blessed Lady to read. Behind Mary stands her father, St. Joachim, her father, who is regarding her with a tender interest.

**11.** *At the top on the right* we see Blanche of Castille teaching St. Louis to pray, as she says to him: « My son, I would rather see you dead than find you committing a mortal sin. »

**12.** *To the left of the above* is shown a nobleman making his young son beg pardon of a poor man, to whom he had failed to give due respect.

**13.** *The two small pictures at the bottom* are given to warn parents, through the example of the high priest Heli, how terribly they may be punished if they fail in their duty to correct their children. Heli had two sons, Ophni and Phinees, who were leading away Israel from the worship of God. This was the result of Heli having spoilt them by too much indulgence. Thus the divine wrath fell upon him as well as on his sons. Hearing the news that the Ark of the Covenant had fallen into the hands of the Philistines and that the two sons had perished with thirty thousand Israelites, the old man suddenly fell back and broke his neck (*I Kings, IV.*)

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