

THE COMMANDMENTS OF THE CHURCH.

3rd. Commandment: To go to confession at least once a year.

4th. Commandment: To receive the Blessed Sacrament at least once a year, and that at Easter or thereabouts.

5th. Commandment: To contribute to the support of our Pastors.

6th. Commandment: Not to marry within certain degrees of kindred nor to solemnize marriage at forbidden times.

1. Not to go to confession at all is always a mortal sin, but a bad confession is still worse for the added sin of sacrilege. If one goes to confession only once in a year, the time for it is necessarily fixed by the next Commandment, but if one is prone to mortal sin or desires constantly to advance in virtue, he must go much more frequently, every seven days if possible.

2. Children are bound to go to confession as soon as they can distinguish right from wrong and are hence capable of mortal sin *i. e.*, *about* the age of seven years.

3. Every child should to make his First Communion as soon as he is able to distinguish right from wrong and the Eucharist bread from common and material bread, *i. e.*, soon after his first confession.

4. It is difficult to live as a good Christian by receiving Our Lord only once a year. Accordingly, the Church recommends us to do so frequently - daily, if we can - the oftener, the better for the life of grace of the soul.

5. One's Easter communion should be made in one's own parish, unless permitted by the parish priest to make it elsewhere.

6. We are bound to support our pastors, since they have to devote themselves exclusively to the promotion of our spiritual welfare and the interests of religion and their churches have no endowments. God also commands us to do so: « So the Lord ordained that they who preach the Gospel should live by the Gospel. » (*I Cor.* IX, 13-14.) And generally we must contribute to the support of religion according to our means, so that God may be duly honoured and worshipped and the empire of the Church extended.

7. Kindred includes *consanguinity* and *affinity*.

8. *Consanguinity* = blood-relationship. - Marriage is forbidden between third cousins or any nearer degree of kindred

9. *Affinity* = relationship by marriage or through the sacraments of Baptism and Confirmation (spiritual affinity). - It is forbidden to marry (1) the third cousin or any nearer blood-relation of one's deceased wife or husband, (2) one's god-children or their parents (3), the sponsors of one's children, (4) a person who in a case of necessity has baptized one's child, and (5) the child one has so baptized.

10. *To solemnise* a marriage is to celebrate it with the Nuptial Mass and Blessing. The *forbidden times* run from the 1st. Sunday of Advent to the Epiphany, and from Ash Wednesday to Low Sunday.

Explanation of the Plate.

11. *From the right-hand top corner* running downwards is a series of small pictures representing the various feasts which the Church specially recommends us to sanctify by the reception of the Sacraments of Penance and the Holy Eucharist.

12. *Immediately above the last of these pictures* the road bifurcates, the left branch leading to heaven through the narrow Lenten Gate. Entering thereby the Christian passes on upwards through prayer and confession to his Easter Communion, and thence to heaven. « He that eateth My flesh and drinketh My blood hath eternal life. » (*John* VI) The Crucifixion

scene shown above the Confessional signifies that the penitents below receive the merits of the death and blood of the crucified Saviour.

13. The other bifurcation is a wide road inviting the pleasure-seeker and taking him to where revels are being held, from which, utterly brutalised, he falls into flames of hell below.

14. *In the right-hand bottom corner* we see an Israelite family assembled to eat the Paschal Lamb. Observe the Angel with a flaming sword on his way to slay « every first-born in the land of Egypt ». (*Exod.* XII, 29.) Just as the Israelites who marked their door-posts with the blood of the paschal lamb and ate of its flesh were spared by the Angel, so all who in the Sacrament of Penance wash their souls in the blood of the Saviour and in the Sacrament of Holy Eucharist nourish them with His flesh, will escape the eternal death of hell.

15. Confession was practised even in the time of the Apostles, for « Many of them that believed, came confessing and declaring their deeds to St. Paul ». (*Acts* XIX, 18.). *See in the left-hand bottom corner.*
