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Home Study Lesson 4

Fifth Commandment

GOAL

The goal of this Edge Night is for the youth to come to an understanding of the fifth commandment and that every single human life deserves dignity and respect from natural birth until natural death.

MAIN IDEAS

- Human life is sacred because it is a gift from God. Every human life is important and that is why God gives us the fifth commandment, thou shall not kill.
- The presence of anger and hatred, while they are feelings, often lead to violence and destruction — that is why in addition to the commandment to not kill, Jesus adds to it that we should not live in anger, hatred, or vengeance. (CCC 2259-2262)
- Our life and our physical health are gifts from God, and we must take care of ourselves. (CCC 2288)

TEACHING

PROTECT LIFE

What is one thing that you are thankful for in your life?

Life is a gift from God. Every human life is precious because every human being is created in the image and likeness of God and is held in existence by His love. Human life is special; it is sacred. God has a specific plan for everyone who has ever existed; God knows the moment that he or she was born and the moment that he or she will die.

No human being has the right to decide when someone's life should end, and it is gravely against the fifth commandment, thou shall not kill, to end another person's life.

Pause and read CCC 2258, 2299-2301.

Every single human has the right to life and should be treated with the utmost dignity and respect.

A FALLEN WORLD

We, however, live in a fallen world where sin and evil are a reality, and there are many widespread instances of intentional killing in ways that are deemed “legal.” For example: abortion (the direct killing of an unborn child), euthanasia (assisting someone who is elderly or terminally ill in ending his or her life), or the death penalty (killing of prisoners which should only be used in the extreme cases where there is no other way to contain the dangerous person. This is a rare occurrence in our day and age).

Pause and read CCC 2268-2269, 2270-2275, 2276-2279.

There are also many cases of war and terrorism in our world. It is honorable for someone to fight and defend his or her country — but the countries who are at war should do everything in their power to create peace and end war. (CCC 2297-2298, 2309-2314, 2316-2317) This commandment also reveals that it is against the love of God and love of self to commit suicide. We trust those who have committed suicide to the mercy and love of God who understands fully all the circumstances that led them to do what they did. (CCC 2280-2283)

Sometimes it can be scary or sad to step back and look at all these horrible things. But we have to remember that God’s love and power are greater than all of these instances and we are not powerless in the face of them.

DEAR HATE

We can help change our world and work toward peace through prayer and through our own attitude toward others.

What are some things in your daily life that you would say you hate? (e.g., I hate doing homework, I hate doing the dishes, I hate when my younger sister wears my clothes, etc.)

While we may use the word hate in a casual way, it is important that we don’t let it become normal to hate. The definition of hate is to feel passionate dislike for something, but we have to be careful because hate can grow the more we focus on things that we dislike or loathe.

God calls us to have peaceful hearts, and He rejects anger and hatred and tells us they are immoral.

Pause and read CCC 2303

The presence of anger and hatred, while they are feelings, often leads to violence and destruction — that is why in addition to the commandment to not kill, Jesus adds to it that we should not live in anger, hatred, or vengeance. (CCC 2259-2262) If someone is filled with so much anger that he or she reaches the point of deliberately wanting to injure or kill someone, it is a grave sin.

Likewise, if someone is so filled with hatred that he or she desires evil or grave harm upon another person, or leads another person to do something wrong, hatred, too, becomes a sin. (CCC 2284-2287, 2302-2303)

God asks us to take good care of ourselves and of those around us. May we always remember His words, asking us to love our neighbor as ourselves so that we can live in a world that is more peaceful and loving.

Read Mark 12:30-31

Close this lesson by saying the following prayers:

Prayer One

Let us pray now for all those who do not have a home, all those who live on the streets, all the refugees, those who are far from their homeland, for all orphaned children, and anyone who will go to bed cold, hungry, or lonely tonight, that they may find help in their times of need and the welcome of strangers. Amen.

Prayer Two

Let us pray now for all the elderly, those who are alone in nursing homes, for all those who are disabled, for any who suffer from life-threatening diseases, for those who have had a loss of mental state, for any who are close to death, that they may be treated with dignity until their last breath and thereafter.

Amen.

Prayer Three

Let us pray now for all those who are imprisoned, all those who are on death row, all those who are trapped in lifestyles of hate or anger, any who are imprisoned by addictions, and all those who are victims of war, violence, and terrorism, that they

will find hope in the midst of so much chaos and will find healing and peace.
Amen.

Prayer Four

Let us pray now for all unborn babies, for all the mothers who will contemplate abortion, for all those who work in the abortion industry, and for all parents who know that their children will be born with disabilities, that in all circumstances they choose life. Amen.

Prayer Five

Let us pray now for all of us, gathered here today. Let us pray for mercy and grace in our lives and that we may be instruments of God's love to all those we encounter. Let us pray for our families, friends, and loved ones and for all the intentions we hold in our hearts. Amen

QUESTIONS

1. What are some examples of people or groups of people that need to be shown God's loving mercy through the people around them? How can we bring mercy to these people?

2. Based on the teaching, are there ever times when it is alright to harm or kill someone? If so, what are these times?

3. Why is it wrong to hate? What are the consequences of hatred in our world? Is it alright to hate “bad people” or people we do not agree with?

4. Complete the sentence: Every human life should be treated with the utmost respect from _____ to _____.

5. What are some ways you can practice a greater respect for yourself or others in your daily life?