

Sources of Moral Truth

Lesson 25 Summary

Lesson Learning Objectives

- The participants will recognize natural law as part of human nature.
- The participants will explore the relationship between the Old Law (Ten Commandments) and the New Law (the Law of the Gospel).
- The participants will discover ways to integrate the laws, or precepts, of the Church with the formation of conscience.

Content Summary

1. Each of us has a natural ability to tell right from wrong. The moral law we are born with is called natural law, because it is part of our human nature.
2. The natural moral law enables us to participate in God's wisdom and goodness. But because of outside influences, this natural ability can often be mistaken or in error, which is why God has also provided us Scripture and Tradition.
3. The Law of Moses, also called the Old Law, was the first stage of God's Revelation to us about how we are to live as people made in God's image. This Old Law is summarized in the Ten Commandments (see Exodus 20:1–17).
4. The Ten Commandments are a special expression of natural law, making perfectly clear through God's Revelation what he had already placed in the human heart.
5. The Old Law is the first stage on the way to the Kingdom of God, preparing us for conversion and faith in Jesus. In this way the Old Law is a preparation for the Gospel.
6. The New Law, or the Law of the Gospel, is the perfection of God's moral law, both natural and revealed. Jesus modeled the New Law and taught the core of it in his Sermon on the Mount.
7. Christ has given the Church the responsibility of being a light to the world and a model of his New Law of love. The Church does this through her moral teaching and the witness of her members.
8. The most basic of Church laws are called the Precepts of the Church. The Precepts of the Church direct us to participate in the sacramental life of the Church so that we might be nourished for living moral lives.
9. Many voices in the world give advice that is contrary to the Law of Christ. That is why in forming our conscience, it is essential to stay connected to the Church and the opportunities it provides for dialogue, reading, and reflection.

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