

Chapter 2

Answer Key for Double-Check Questions

1. *Why is every person obliged to follow moral law?*

We all are obliged to follow moral law because it comes from God, prevents us from falling prey to evil, and urges us to do what is good. It is a rational expression of Eternal Law, the order in creation that reflects God's will and purpose. Listening to our conscience and following the moral law enables us to live in loving communion with God.

2. *Name five different types or expressions of moral law.*

Five types of moral law are as follows: natural moral law, moral law revealed in the Old Testament (Old Law), moral law revealed by Christ in the New Testament (New Law), the Precepts of the Church, and Canon Law.

3. *Describe natural law.*

Natural law is the moral law that can be understood through the use of reason. It is our God-given ability to understand what it means to be in right relationship with God, other people, the world, and ourselves. Natural law is grounded in our participation in God's wisdom and goodness because we are created in the divine likeness. This ability to use our reason to do good and avoid evil is universal—it does not depend on a particular religious belief, nor does it change over time. However, our ability to know and understand natural law is clouded by Original Sin.

4. *Why is natural moral law important?*

Natural moral law gives each of us a natural orientation to live a moral life that is pleasing to God. Natural moral law is also important because it forms the basis of civil laws that we all can agree are necessary, regardless of our religion or culture.

5. *What law do the Ten Commandments summarize? What is another name for the Ten Commandments?*

The Ten Commandments summarize the Old Law, the Divine Law (or Law of Moses) revealed in the Old Testament. The Old Law was the first stage of God's Revelation about how we are to live as people made in his image. Another name for the Ten Commandments is the Decalogue.

6. *Why is the New Law called "New"?*

The New Law is called "New" because it fulfills and completes the Old Law.

7. *Give an overview of the content of the Sermon on the Mount.*

In the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus teaches the New Law as part of the New Covenant. He begins by introducing the Beatitudes: the values we need to live a moral life, to satisfy the desire for happiness instilled in each of us by God, and to become citizens of his Kingdom. Next, Jesus teaches us that the purpose of living the New Law is both to bring ourselves into communion with God and to show others the way to that communion. Finally, he teaches on a variety of topics by quoting a law from the Old Testament and then teaching the true meaning of that law, showing how the New Law fulfills, or realizes the full potential of, the Old Law.



8. *Describe the two types of Church law.*

- Two types of Church law are the Precepts of the Church and Canon Law. The Precepts of the Church (sometimes called the commandments of the Church) are the basic obligations that the laws of the Church dictate for all Catholics. In general, they require us to participate in the Church's sacramental life and in her mission in the world. These precepts are the minimum we must do to grow in love of God and neighbor.
- Canon Law is the official body of laws that provide good order in the visible body of the Church. It governs the relationships among members of the Church and matters that affect her mission. Canon Law is based on Eternal Law and applies its truths to matters in the Church community.

9. *What is infallibility?*

Infallibility is the gift of the Holy Spirit to the whole Church by which the leaders of the Church—the Pope and the bishops in union with him—are protected from fundamental error when formulating a specific teaching on a matter of faith and morals. Infallibility allows us to rely on Church teachings as being true; it also requires Catholics to accept the doctrine of the Church. The Magisterium speaks infallibly when teaching doctrine of faith and morals as clearly revealed in Scripture and Tradition.

