



In his catechesis at the General Audience, **Pope Francis says the Ten Commandments help us open our hearts to receive the mercy of God** and to show compassion to others.

Pope Francis turned his attention to the Ninth and Tenth Commandments at the Wednesday General Audience.

The Holy Father said the injunctions – “You shall not covet your neighbour’s wife... You shall not covet your neighbour’s goods” – are more than the last Commandments. “They are the fulfillment of the journey through the Decalogue, and arrive at the heart of everything which is delivered to us therein.”

Noting that they are already contained in the Commandments on adultery and stealing, Pope Francis said the Ninth and Tenth indicate “the confines of life, the limit over which a person destroys themselves and their neighbor, spoiling their relationship with God.”

Evil desires

The Pope said the last two Commandments are united by the common root of “evil desires” that lurk in the human heart.

Jesus, he said, teaches that all sin is ultimately born of covetousness (cf. Mk 7:23). He said the Decalogue similarly points out that the heart must be free. “God’s precepts can be reduced to the beautiful façade of a life that remains a slave’s existence and not one of sons and daughters.”

Pope Francis said the Ten Commandments teach us how to live rightly with one another and with God, and show us our need for a change of heart. “We must let our mask be taken off by these commandments about desire, because they show us our poverty so as to bring us to a life of holy humility.”

He said we need Holy Spirit to help us.

“It is futile to think of purifying our heart through a titanic effort of the will. We must open ourselves to a relationship with God, in freedom and in truth.”

Law opens heart to God

The purpose of the Biblical Law, the Pope said, is “to bring one to their truth, that is, to their poverty, which becomes an authentic and personal openness to the mercy of God that transforms and renews us.”

Pope Francis said the Commandments enable us to live righteously in the sight of the Father, redeemed by the Son, and taught by the Holy Spirit.

“The last words of the Decalogue teach us to recognize ourselves as beggars, and help us to face the disorder of our hearts, so as to stop living selfishly and to become poor in spirit.”

Finally, Pope Francis said those who live the Commandments with humble, open hearts will be blessed.

“It is they who know how to show compassion and mercy to others, because they have felt it within themselves.”