

Why I Am Catholic

God's Commandments, Not Ours

Every so often I hear someone say, "That is the worst sin" or "that is the most important commandment." These usually do not involve the first commandment.

Yes, all the commandments are connected and at the end of the day, "a sin is a sin," but God ordered the commandments and we need to respect and understand His order. Many people would say Murder is the worst sin or Adultery the worst sin. The first goes against the fifth commandment and the second against the sixth commandment. What makes them and all sins "the worst sin" is that they go against the First Commandment as well.

"You shall have no other gods before me," is the heart of the first commandment. In murder, a person is playing God. Adultery is making that other person more important than God. For both people in adultery, the relationship with that person is more important than their relationship with God. Both are willing to ignore and reject God's commandments and rules for relationships. They choose the adultery over God and thus also commit idolatry.

Sadly, many people consider violating commandments four through ten (the sins against other people) as far worse than violating the first three commandments. That also is putting others before God. Our Lord would say if we truly follow the first three, it is virtually impossible to break four through ten. That is why Christ sees His Commandment of Love—Loving God and Loving Neighbor—as one commandment. How can we say we love God if we don't also at the same time love our neighbor? We can't. For Jesus it is impossible.

The First Commandment is the commandment that today is broken the most. All we have to do is look around and see all the false gods—money, sex, power, control, possessions, addictions, etc. People put a lot of things before God. It is one of the reasons why Church attendance is down (third commandment by the way). People basically say by their actions and attitudes: "I'm too busy for God" or "I don't need God." They risk forfeiting Heaven.

When we follow the commandments God's way, then we will be true disciples. Let us return to following the commandments as He commanded—His order, not ours.