

The Tenth Commandment

YOU SHALL NOT COVET YOUR NEIGHBOR'S GOODS

"The tenth commandment unfolds and completes the ninth, which is concerned with concupiscence of the flesh. It forbids coveting the goods of another, as the root of theft, robbery, and fraud, which the seventh commandment forbids. . . . The tenth commandment concerns the intentions of the heart." —CCC, no. 2534

When Jesus began the Sermon on the Mount, he proclaimed the eight Beatitudes as the ways to authentic happiness. The first of these stated that poverty of spirit would enable us to inherit the Kingdom of God. In other words, the first step on the road to joy begins with a healthy detachment from material goods. Later on in the same sermon, Jesus taught that building up wealth for its own sake is foolishness. We should be more interested in spiritual riches.

"Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moth and decay destroy, and thieves break in and steal. But store up treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor decay destroys, nor thieves break in and steal. For where your treasure is, there also will your heart be." (Mt 6:19-21) . . .

On the positive side, the Tenth Commandment calls us to practice poverty of spirit and generosity of heart. These virtues liberate us from being slaves to money and possessions. . . .

Baptized people should counter envy with humility, thanksgiving to God for his gifts to oneself and to others, goodwill, and surrender to the providence of God (cf. CCC, no. 2554). "Christ's faithful 'have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires' (Gal 5:24); they are

led by the Spirit and follow his desires" (CCC, no. 2555). Poverty of heart is a way to avoid greed and envy. "Abandonment to the providence of the Father in heaven frees us from anxiety about tomorrow. Trust in God is a preparation for the blessedness of the poor. They shall see God" (CCC, no. 2547, citing Mt 6:25-34).

—This article is taken from the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*



Prayer to One's Guardian Angel

Angel of God, my guardian dear,
to whom God's love commits me here,
ever this day be at my side,
to light and guard, to rule and guide.
Amen.