

# First Letter to Corinthians

## 1Corinthians 1

(1Cor 1, 1) Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus

[1] Paul, called to be an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, and Sosthenes our brother,

(CCC 75) "Christ the Lord, in whom the entire Revelation of the most high God is summed up, commanded the apostles to preach the Gospel, which had been promised beforehand by the prophets, and which he fulfilled in his own person and promulgated with his own lips. In preaching the Gospel, they were to communicate the gifts of God to all men. This Gospel was to be the source of all saving truth and moral discipline" (DV 7; cf. Mt 28:19-20; Mk 16:15). (CCC 76) In keeping with the Lord's command, the Gospel was handed on in two ways: - *orally* "by the apostles who handed on, by the spoken word of their preaching, by the example they gave, by the institutions they established, what they themselves had received - whether from the lips of Christ, from his way of life and his works, or whether they had learned it at the prompting of the Holy Spirit" (DV 7); - *in writing* "by those apostles and other men associated with the apostles who, under the inspiration of the same Holy Spirit, committed the message of salvation to writing" (DV 7). (CCC 77) "In order that the full and living Gospel might always be preserved in the Church the apostles left bishops as their successors. They gave them their own position of teaching authority" (DV 7 § 2; St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 3, 3, 1: PG 7, 848). Indeed, "the apostolic preaching, which is expressed in a special way in the inspired books, was to be preserved in a continuous line of succession until the end of time" (DV 8 § 1).

(1Cor 1, 2-3) Grace to you and peace from God our Father

[2] To the church of God that is in Corinth, to you who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be holy, with all those everywhere who call upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, their Lord and ours. [3] Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

(CCC 752) In Christian usage, the word "church" designates the liturgical assembly (Cf. 1 Cor 11:18; 14:19, 28, 34, 35), but also the local community (Cf. 1 Cor 1:2; 16:1) or the whole universal community of believers (Cf. 1 Cor 15:9; Gal 1:13; Phil 3:6). These three meanings are inseparable. "The Church" is the People that God gathers in the whole world. She exists in local communities and is made real as a liturgical, above all a Eucharistic, assembly. She draws her life from the word and the Body of Christ and so herself becomes Christ's Body. (CCC 1695) "Justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God" (2 Cor 6:11), "sanctified... (and) called to be saints" (1 Cor 1:2), Christians have become the temple of the *Holy Spirit* (Cf. 1 Cor 6:19). This "Spirit of the Son" teaches them to pray to the Father (Cf. Gal 4:6) and, having become their life, prompts them to act so as to bear "the fruit of the Spirit" (Gal 5:22, 25) by charity in action. Healing the wounds of sin, the Holy Spirit renews us interiorly through a spiritual transformation (Cf. Eph 4:23). He enlightens and strengthens us to live as "children of light" through "all that is good and right and true" (Eph 5:8, 9).

### **(1Cor 1, 4-9) You are not lacking in any spiritual gift**

[4] I give thanks to my God always on your account for the grace of God bestowed on you in Christ Jesus, [5] that in him you were enriched in every way, with all discourse and all knowledge, [6] as the testimony to Christ was confirmed among you, [7] so that you are not lacking in any spiritual gift as you wait for the revelation of our Lord Jesus Christ. [8] He will keep you firm to the end, irreproachable on the day of our Lord Jesus (Christ). [9] God is faithful, and by him you were called to fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

(CCC 1692) The Symbol of the faith confesses the greatness of God's gifts to man in his work of creation, and even more in redemption and sanctification. What faith confesses, the sacraments communicate: by the sacraments of rebirth, Christians have become "children of God" (Jn 1:12; 1 Jn 3:1). "partakers of the divine nature" (2 Pet 1:4). Coming to see in the faith their new dignity, Christians are called to lead henceforth a life "worthy of the gospel of Christ" (Phil 1:27). They are made capable of doing so by the grace of Christ and the gifts of his Spirit, which they receive through the sacraments and through prayer. (CCC 1129) The Church affirms that for believers the sacraments of the New Covenant are *necessary for salvation* (Cf. Council of Trent (1547): DS 1604). "Sacramental grace" is the grace of the Holy Spirit, given by Christ and proper to each sacrament. The Spirit heals and transforms those who receive him by conforming them to the Son of God. The fruit of the sacramental life is that the Spirit of adoption makes the faithful partakers in the divine nature (Cf. 2 Pet 1:4) by uniting them in a living union with the only Son, the Savior. (CCC 1691) "Christian, recognize your dignity and, now that you share in God's own nature, do not return to your former base condition by sinning. Remember who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Never forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of the Kingdom of God" (St. Leo the Great, *Sermo 21 in nat. Dom.*, 3: PL 54, 192C).

### **(1Cor 1, 10-12) Be united in the same mind and purpose**

[10] I urge you, brothers, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree in what you say, and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be united in the same mind and in the same purpose. [11] For it has been reported to me about you, my brothers, by Chloe's people, that there are rivalries among you. [12] I mean that each of you is saying, "I belong to Paul," or "I belong to Apollos," or "I belong to Kephas," or "I belong to Christ."

(CCC 810) "Hence the universal Church is seen to be 'a people brought into unity from the unity of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit'" (LG 4 citing St. Cyprian, *De Dom. orat.* 23: PL 4, 553). (CCC 815) What are these bonds of unity? Above all, charity "binds everything together in perfect harmony" (Col 3:14). But the unity of the pilgrim Church is also assured by visible bonds of communion: - profession of one faith received from the Apostles; - common celebration of divine worship, especially of the sacraments; - apostolic succession through the sacrament of Holy Orders, maintaining the fraternal concord of God's family (Cf. UR 2; LG 14; CIC, can. 205).

### **(1Cor 1, 13-16) Is Christ divided?**

[13] Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul? [14] I give thanks (to God) that I baptized

none of you except Crispus and Gaius, [15] so that no one can say you were baptized in my name. [16] (I baptized the household of Stephanas also; beyond that I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.)

(CCC 817) In fact, "in this one and only Church of God from its very beginnings there arose certain rifts, which the Apostle strongly censures as damnable. But in subsequent centuries much more serious dissensions appeared and large communities became separated from full communion with the Catholic Church - for which, often enough, men of both sides were to blame" (UR 3 § 1). The ruptures that wound the unity of Christ's Body - here we must distinguish heresy, apostasy, and schism (Cf. CIC, can. 751) - do not occur without human sin: Where there are sins, there are also divisions, schisms, heresies, and disputes. Where there is virtue, however, there also are harmony and unity, from which arise the one heart and one soul of all believers (Origen, *Hom. in Ezech.* 9, 1: PG 13, 732).

**(1Cor 1, 17-18) Christ sent me to preach the gospel**

[17] For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with the wisdom of human eloquence, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its meaning. [18] The message of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

(CCC 1151) *Signs taken up by Christ.* In his preaching the Lord Jesus often makes use of the signs of creation to make known the mysteries of the Kingdom of God (Cf. Lk 8:10). He performs healings and illustrates his preaching with physical signs or symbolic gestures (Cf. Jn 9:6; Mk 7:33 ff.; 8:22 ff). He gives new meaning to the deeds and signs of the Old Covenant, above all to the Exodus and the Passover (Cf. Lk 9:31; 22:7-20), for he himself is the meaning of all these signs. (CCC 76) In keeping with the Lord's command, the Gospel was handed on in two ways: - *orally* "by the apostles who handed on, by the spoken word of their preaching, by the example they gave, by the institutions they established, what they themselves had received - whether from the lips of Christ, from his way of life and his works, or whether they had learned it at the prompting of the Holy Spirit" (DV 7); - *in writing* "by those apostles and other men associated with the apostles who, under the inspiration of the same Holy Spirit, committed the message of salvation to writing" (DV 7). (CCC 77) "In order that the full and living Gospel might always be preserved in the Church the apostles left bishops as their successors. They gave them their own position of teaching authority" (DV 7 § 2; St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 3, 3, 1: PG 7/1, 848; Harvey, 2, 9). Indeed, "the apostolic preaching, which is expressed in a special way in the inspired books, was to be preserved in a continuous line of succession until the end of time" (DV 8 § 1).

**(1Cor 1, 19-21) Where is the wise one?**

[19] For it is written: "I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and the learning of the learned I will set aside." [20] Where is the wise one? Where is the scribe? Where is the debater of this age? Has not God made the wisdom of the world foolish? [21] For since in the wisdom of God the world did not come to know God through wisdom, it was the will of God through the foolishness of the proclamation to save those who have faith.

(CCC 78) This living transmission, accomplished in the Holy Spirit, is called Tradition, since it is distinct from Sacred Scripture, though closely

connected to it. Through Tradition, "the Church, in her doctrine, life and worship, perpetuates and transmits to every generation all that she herself is, all that she believes" (DV 8 § 1). "The sayings of the holy Fathers are a witness to the life-giving presence of this Tradition, showing how its riches are poured out in the practice and life of the Church, in her belief and her prayer" (DV 8 § 3). (CCC 79) The Father's self-communication made through his Word in the Holy Spirit, remains present and active in the Church: "God, who spoke in the past, continues to converse with the Spouse of his beloved Son. And the Holy Spirit, through whom the living voice of the Gospel rings out in the Church - and through her in the world - leads believers to the full truth, and makes the Word of Christ dwell in them in all its richness" (DV 8 § 3; cf. Col 3:16).

### (1Cor 1, 22-24) Christ crucified the wisdom of God

[22] For Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom, [23] but we proclaim Christ crucified, a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles, [24] but to those who are called, Jews and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God.

(CCC 278) If we do not believe that God's love is almighty, how can we believe that the Father could create us, the Son redeem us and the Holy Spirit sanctify us? (CCC 131) "And such is the force and power of the Word of God that it can serve the Church as her support and vigor and the children of the Church as strength for their faith, food for the soul, and a pure and lasting fount of spiritual life" (DV 21). Hence "access to Sacred Scripture ought to be open wide to the Christian faithful" (DV 22). (CCC 133) The Church "forcefully and specifically exhorts all the Christian faithful... to learn the surpassing knowledge of Jesus Christ, by frequent reading of the divine Scriptures. 'Ignorance of the Scriptures is ignorance of Christ' (DV 25; cf. Phil 3:8 and St. Jerome, *Commentariorum in Isaiam libri xviii* prol.: PL 24, 17B).

### (1Cor 1, 25-26) Consider your own calling, brothers

[25] For the foolishness of God is wiser than human wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than human strength. [26] Consider your own calling, brothers. Not many of you were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were of noble birth.

(CCC 134) "All Sacred Scripture is but one book, and that one book is Christ, because all divine Scripture speaks of Christ, and all divine Scripture is fulfilled in Christ" (Hugh of St. Victor, *De arca Noe* 2, 8: cf. *ibid.* PL 176, 642; 2, 9: PL 176, 642-643). (CCC 135) "The Sacred Scriptures contain the Word of God and, because they are inspired, they are truly the Word of God" (DV 24). (CCC 136) God is the author of Sacred Scripture because he inspired its human authors; he acts in them and by means of them. He thus gives assurance that their writings teach without error his saving truth (cf. DV 11). (CCC 137) Interpretation of the inspired Scripture must be attentive above all to what God wants to reveal through the sacred authors for our salvation. What comes from the Spirit is not fully "understood except by the Spirit's action" (cf. Origen, *Hom. in Ex.* 4, 5: PG 12, 320).

### (1Cor 1, 27) God chose the foolish to shame the wise

[27] Rather, God chose the foolish of the world to shame the wise, and God chose the weak of the world to shame the strong,

(CCC 268) Of all the divine attributes, only God's omnipotence is named in the Creed: to confess this power has great bearing on our lives. We believe that his might is *universal*, for God who created everything also rules everything and can do everything. God's power is *loving*, for he is our Father, and *mysterious*, for only faith can discern it when it "is made perfect in weakness" (Cf. Gen 1:1; Jn 1:3; Mt 6:9; 2 Cor 12:9; cf. 1 Cor 1:18). (CCC 273) Only faith can embrace the mysterious ways of God's almighty power. This faith glories in its weaknesses in order to draw to itself Christ's power (cf. 2 Cor 12:9; Phil 4:13). The Virgin Mary is the supreme model of this faith, for she believed that "nothing will be impossible with God", and was able to magnify the Lord: "For he who is mighty has done great things for me, and holy is his name" (Lk 1:37, 49). (CCC 489) Throughout the Old Covenant the mission of many holy women *prepared* for that of Mary. At the very beginning there was Eve; despite her disobedience, she receives the promise of a posterity that will be victorious over the evil one, as well as the promise that she will be the mother of all the living (Cf. Gen 3:15, 20). By virtue of this promise, Sarah conceives a son in spite of her old age (Cf. Gen 18:10-14; 21:1-2). Against all human expectation God chooses those who were considered powerless and weak to show forth his faithfulness to his promises: Hannah, the mother of Samuel; Deborah; Ruth; Judith and Esther; and many other women (Cf. 1 Cor 1:17; 1 Sam 1). Mary "stands out among the poor and humble of the Lord, who confidently hope for and receive salvation from him. After a long period of waiting the times are fulfilled in her, the exalted Daughter of Sion, and the new plan of salvation is established"(LG 55).

#### (1Cor 1, 28-29) God chose the lowly and despised

[28] and God chose the lowly and despised of the world, those who count for nothing, to reduce to nothing those who are something, [29] so that no human being might boast before God.

(CCC 494) At the announcement that she would give birth to "the Son of the Most High" without knowing man, by the power of the Holy Spirit, Mary responded with the obedience of faith, certain that "with God nothing will be impossible": "Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be [done] to me according to your word" (Lk 1:28-38; cf. Rom 1:5). Thus, giving her consent to God's word, Mary becomes the mother of Jesus. Espousing the divine will for salvation wholeheartedly, without a single sin to restrain her, she gave herself entirely to the person and to the work of her Son; she did so in order to serve the mystery of redemption with him and dependent on him, by God's grace (Cf. LG 56): As St. Irenaeus says, "Being obedient she became the cause of salvation for herself and for the whole human race" (St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 3, 22, 4: PG 7/1, 959A). Hence not a few of the early Fathers gladly assert. . .: "The knot of Eve's disobedience was untied by Mary's obedience: what the virgin Eve bound through her disbelief, Mary loosened by her faith" (St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 3, 22, 4: PG 7/1, 959A). Comparing her with Eve, they call Mary "the Mother of the living" and frequently claim: "Death through Eve, life through Mary" (LG 56; St. Epiphanius, *Haer.* 78, 18: PG 42, 728CD-729AB; St. Jerome, *Ep.* 22, 21: PL 22, 408).

#### (1Cor 1, 30-31) Christ Jesus became for us wisdom

[30] It is due to him that you are in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, as well as righteousness, sanctification, and

redemption, [31] so that, as it is written, "Whoever boasts, should boast in the Lord."

(CCC 2813) In the waters of Baptism, we have been "washed ... sanctified ... justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God" (2 Cor 6:11). Our Father calls us to holiness in the whole of our life, and since "he is the source of [our] life in Christ Jesus, who became for us wisdom from God, and ... sanctification" (1 Cor 1:30; cf. 1 Thess 4:7) both his glory and our life depend on the hallowing of his name in us and by us. Such is the urgency of our first petition. By whom is God hallowed, since he is the one who hallows? But since he said, "You shall be holy to me; for I the LORD am holy," we seek and ask that we who were sanctified in Baptism may persevere in what we have begun to be. And we ask this daily, for we need sanctification daily, so that we who fail daily may cleanse away our sins by being sanctified continually.... We pray that this sanctification may remain in us (St. Cyprian, *De Dom. orat.* 12: PL 4, 527A; Lev 20:26).

## 1Corinthians 2

(1Cor 2, 1-2) To know Jesus Christ, and him crucified

[1] When I came to you, brothers, proclaiming the mystery of God, I did not come with sublimity of words or of wisdom. [2] For I resolved to know nothing while I was with you except Jesus Christ, and him crucified.

(CCC 618) The cross is the unique sacrifice of Christ, the "one mediator between God and men" (1 Tim 2:5). But because in his incarnate divine person he has in some way united himself to every man, "the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, in the paschal mystery" is offered to all men (GS 22 § 5; cf. § 2). He calls his disciples to "take up [their] cross and follow [him]" (Mt 16:24), for "Christ also suffered for [us], leaving [us] an example so that [we] should follow in his steps" (1 Pt 2:21). In fact Jesus desires to associate with his redeeming sacrifice those who were to be its first beneficiaries (Cf. Mk 10:39; Jn 21:18-19; Col 1:24). This is achieved supremely in the case of his mother, who was associated more intimately than any other person in the mystery of his redemptive suffering (Cf. Lk 2:35). Apart from the cross there is no other ladder by which we may get to heaven (St. Rose of Lima: cf. P. Hansen, *Vita mirabilis* (Louvain, 1668)). (CCC 619) "Christ died for our sins in accordance with the scriptures" (1 Cor 15:3). (CCC 620) Our salvation flows from God's initiative of love for us, because "he loved us and sent his Son to be the expiation for our sins" (1 Jn 4:10). "God was in Christ reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor 5:19).

(1Cor 2, 3-5) Your faith might rest on the power of God

[3] I came to you in weakness and fear and much trembling, [4] and my message and my proclamation were not with persuasive (words of) wisdom, but with a demonstration of spirit and power, [5] so that your faith might rest not on human wisdom but on the power of God.

(CCC 621) Jesus freely offered himself for our salvation. Beforehand, during the Last Supper, he both symbolized this offering and made it really present: "This is my body which is given for you" (Lk 22:19). (CCC 622) The redemption won by Christ consists in this, that he came "to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mt 20:28), that is, he "loved [his own] to the end" (Jn 13:1),

so that they might be "ransomed from the futile ways inherited from [their] fathers" (1 Pt 1:18). (CCC 623) By his loving obedience to the Father, "unto death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:8), Jesus fulfils the atoning mission (cf. Isa 53:10) of the suffering Servant, who will "make many righteous; and he shall bear their iniquities" (Isa 53:11; cf. Rom 5:19). (CCC 624) "By the grace of God" Jesus tasted death "for every one" (Heb 2:9). In his plan of salvation, God ordained that his Son should not only "die for our sins" (1 Cor 15:3) but should also "taste death", experience the condition of death, the separation of his soul from his body, between the time he expired on the cross and the time he was raised from the dead. The state of the dead Christ is the mystery of the tomb and the descent into hell. It is the mystery of Holy Saturday, when Christ, lying in the tomb (Cf. Jn 19:42), reveals God's great sabbath rest (Cf. Heb 4:7-9) after the fulfillment (Cf. Jn 19:30) of man's salvation, which brings peace to the whole universe (Cf. Col 1: 18-20).

### (1Cor 2, 6-7) We speak God's wisdom mysterious hidden

[6] Yet we do speak a wisdom to those who are mature, but not a wisdom of this age, nor of the rulers of this age who are passing away. [7] Rather, we speak God's wisdom, mysterious, hidden, which God predetermined before the ages for our glory,

(CCC 1026) By his death and Resurrection, Jesus Christ has "opened" heaven to us. The life of the blessed consists in the full and perfect possession of the fruits of the redemption accomplished by Christ. He makes partners in his heavenly glorification those who have believed in him and remained faithful to his will. Heaven is the blessed community of all who are perfectly incorporated into Christ. (CCC 1027) This mystery of blessed communion with God and all who are in Christ is beyond all understanding and description. Scripture speaks of it in images: life, light, peace, wedding feast, wine of the kingdom, the Father's house, the heavenly Jerusalem, paradise: "no eye has seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor 2:9). (CCC 272) Faith in God the Father Almighty can be put to the test by the experience of evil and suffering. God can sometimes seem to be absent and incapable of stopping evil. But in the most mysterious way God the Father has revealed his almighty power in the voluntary humiliation and Resurrection of his Son, by which he conquered evil. Christ crucified is thus "the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor 1:24-25). It is in Christ's Resurrection and exaltation that the Father has shown forth "the immeasurable greatness of his power in us who believe" (Eph 1:19-22).

### (1Cor 2, 8-9) What eye has not seen, God has prepared

[8] and which none of the rulers of this age knew; for if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. [9] But as it is written: "What eye has not seen, and ear has not heard, and what has not entered the human heart, what God has prepared for those who love him,"

(CCC 648) Christ's Resurrection is an object of faith in that it is a transcendent intervention of God himself in creation and history. In it the three divine persons act together as one, and manifest their own proper characteristics. The Father's power "raised up" Christ his Son and by doing so perfectly introduced his Son's humanity, including his body, into the Trinity. Jesus is conclusively revealed as "Son of God in power according to the Spirit of holiness

by his Resurrection from the dead" (Rom 1 3-4; cf. Acts 2:24). St. Paul insists on the manifestation of God's power (Cf. Rom 6:4; 2 Cor 13:4; Phil 3:10; Eph 1:19-22; Heb 7:16). through the working of the Spirit who gave life to Jesus' dead humanity and called it to the glorious state of Lordship. (CCC 649) As for the Son, he effects his own Resurrection by virtue of his divine power. Jesus announces that the Son of man will have to suffer much, die, and then rise (Cf. Mk 8:31; 9:9-31; 10:34). Elsewhere he affirms explicitly: "I lay down my life, that I may take it again.... I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again" (Jn 10:17-18). "We believe that Jesus died and rose again" (1 Thess 4:14).

### (1Cor 2, 10-11) The Spirit scrutinizes everything

[10] this God has revealed to us through the Spirit. For the Spirit scrutinizes everything, even the depths of God. [11] Among human beings, who knows what pertains to a person except the spirit of the person that is within? Similarly, no one knows what pertains to God except the Spirit of God.

(CCC 152) One cannot believe in Jesus Christ without sharing in his Spirit. It is the Holy Spirit who reveals to men who Jesus is. For "no one can say "Jesus is Lord", except by the Holy Spirit" (1 Cor 12:3), who "searches everything, even the depths of God.... No one comprehends the thoughts of God, except the Spirit of God" (1 Cor 2:10-11). Only God knows God completely: we believe in the Holy Spirit because he is God. *The Church never ceases to proclaim her faith in one only God: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.* (CCC 153) When St. Peter confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God, Jesus declared to him that this revelation did not come "from flesh and blood", but from "my Father who is in heaven" (Mt 16:17; cf. Gal 1:15; Mt 11:25). *Faith is a gift of God, a supernatural virtue infused by him.* "Before this faith can be exercised, man must have the grace of God to move and assist him; he must have the interior helps of the Holy Spirit, who moves the heart and converts it to God, who opens the eyes of the mind and 'makes it easy for all to accept and believe the truth'" (DV 5; cf. DS 377; 3010).

### (1Cor 2, 12-13) We have received the Spirit from God

[12] We have not received the spirit of the world but the Spirit that is from God, so that we may understand the things freely given us by God. [13] And we speak about them not with words taught by human wisdom, but with words taught by the Spirit, describing spiritual realities in spiritual terms.

(CCC 687) "No one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God" (Cor 2:11). Now God's Spirit, who reveals God, makes known to us Christ, his Word, his living Utterance, but the Spirit does not speak of himself. The Spirit who "has spoken through the prophets" makes us hear the Father's Word, but we do not hear the Spirit himself. We know him only in the movement by which he reveals the Word to us and disposes us to welcome him in faith. The Spirit of truth who "unveils" Christ to us "will not speak on his own" (Jn 16:13). Such properly divine self-effacement explains why "the world cannot receive [him], because it neither sees him nor knows him," while those who believe in Christ know the Spirit because he dwells with them (Jn 14:17). (CCC 688) The Church, a communion living in the faith of the apostles which she transmits, is the place where we know the Holy Spirit: - in the Scriptures he inspired; - in the Tradition, to which the Church Fathers are always timely witnesses; - in the Church's

Magisterium, which he assists; - in the sacramental liturgy, through its words and symbols, in which the Holy Spirit puts us into communion with Christ; - in prayer, wherein he intercedes for us; - in the charisms and ministries by which the Church is built up; - in the signs of apostolic and missionary life; - in the witness of saints through whom he manifests his holiness and continues the work of salvation.

**(1Cor 2, 14) The natural person does not accept the Spirit**

**[14] Now the natural person does not accept what pertains to the Spirit of God, for to him it is foolishness, and he cannot understand it, because it is judged spiritually.**

(CCC 2038) In the work of teaching and applying Christian morality, the Church needs the dedication of pastors, the knowledge of theologians, and the contribution of all Christians and men of good will. Faith and the practice of the Gospel provide each person with an experience of life "in Christ," who enlightens him and makes him able to evaluate the divine and human realities according to the Spirit of God (Cf. 1 Cor 2:10-15). Thus the Holy Spirit can use the humblest to enlighten the learned and those in the highest positions. (CCC 308) The truth that God is at work in all the actions of his creatures is inseparable from faith in God the Creator. God is the first cause who operates in and through secondary causes: "For God is at work in you, both to will and to work for his good pleasure" (Phil 2:13; cf. 1 Cor 12:6). Far from diminishing the creature's dignity, this truth enhances it. Drawn from nothingness by God's power, wisdom and goodness, it can do nothing if it is cut off from its origin, for "without a Creator the creature vanishes" (GS 36 § 3). Still less can a creature attain its ultimate end without the help of God's grace (Cf. Mt 19:26; Jn 15:5; 14:13).

**(1Cor 2, 15) The spiritual person can judge everything**

**[15] The spiritual person, however, can judge everything but is not subject to judgment by anyone.**

(CCC 1697) *Catechesis* has to reveal in all clarity the joy and the demands of the way of Christ (Cf. John Paul II, CT 29). Catechesis for the "newness of life" (Rom 6:4) in him should be: -*a catechesis of the Holy Spirit*, the interior Master of life according to Christ, a gentle guest and friend who inspires, guides, corrects, and strengthens this life; -*a catechesis of grace*, for it is by grace that we are saved and again it is by grace that our works can bear fruit for eternal life; -*a catechesis of the beatitudes*, for the way of Christ is summed up in the beatitudes, the only path that leads to the eternal beatitude for which the human heart longs; -*a catechesis of sin and forgiveness*, for unless man acknowledges that he is a sinner he cannot know the truth about himself, which is a condition for acting justly; and without the offer of forgiveness he would not be able to bear this truth; -*a catechesis of the human virtues* which causes one to grasp the beauty and attraction of right dispositions towards goodness; -*a catechesis of the Christian virtues* of faith, hope, and charity, generously inspired by the example of the saints; -*a catechesis of the twofold commandment of charity* set forth in the Decalogue; -*an ecclesial catechesis*, for it is through the manifold exchanges of "spiritual goods" in the "communion of saints" that Christian life can grow, develop, and be communicated.

**(1Cor 2, 16) We have the mind of Christ**

**[16] For "who has known the mind of the Lord, so as to counsel him?" But we have the mind of Christ.**

(CCC 1698) The first and last point of reference of this catechesis will always be Jesus Christ himself, who is "the way, and the truth, and the life" (Jn 14:6). It is by looking to him in faith that Christ's faithful can hope that he himself fulfills his promises in them, and that, by loving him with the same love with which he has loved them, they may perform works in keeping with their dignity: I ask you to consider that our Lord Jesus Christ is your true head, and that you are one of his members. He belongs to you as the head belongs to its members; all that is his is yours: his spirit, his heart, his body and soul, and all his faculties. You must make use of all these as of your own, to serve, praise, love, and glorify God. You belong to him, as members belong to their head. And so he longs for you to use all that is in you, as if it were his own, for the service and glory of the Father (St. John Eudes, *Tract. De admirabili corde Jesu*, 1, 5). For to me, to live is Christ (Phil 1:21).

## **1Corinthians 3**

**(1Cor 3, 1) I could not talk to you as spiritual people**

**[1] Brothers, I could not talk to you as spiritual people, but as fleshly people, as infants in Christ.**

(CCC 2539) Envy is a capital sin. It refers to the sadness at the sight of another's goods and the immoderate desire to acquire them for oneself, even unjustly. When it wishes grave harm to a neighbor it is a mortal sin: St. Augustine saw envy as "*the diabolical sin*" (Cf. St. Augustine, *De catechizandis rudibus* 4, 8 PL 40, 315-316). "From envy are born hatred, detraction, calumny, joy caused by the misfortune of a neighbor, and displeasure caused by his prosperity" (St. Gregory the *Great Moralia in Job* 31, 45: PL 76, 621). (CCC 2540) Envy represents a form of sadness and therefore a refusal of charity; the baptized person should struggle against it by exercising good will. Envy often comes from pride; the baptized person should train himself to live in humility: Would you like to see God glorified by you? Then rejoice in your brother's progress and you will immediately give glory to God. Because his servant could conquer envy by rejoicing in the merits of others, God will be praised (St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Rom.* 71, 5: PG 60, 448).

**(1Cor 3, 2-3) There is jealousy and rivalry among you**

**[2] I fed you milk, not solid food, because you were unable to take it. Indeed, you are still not able, even now, [3] for you are still of the flesh. While there is jealousy and rivalry among you, are you not of the flesh, and behaving in an ordinary human way?**

(CCC 2538) The tenth commandment requires that *envy* be banished from the human heart. When the prophet Nathan wanted to spur King David to repentance, he told him the story about the poor man who had only one ewe lamb that he treated like his own daughter and the rich man who, despite the great number of his flocks, envied the poor man and ended by stealing his lamb (Cf. 2 Sam 12:14). Envy can lead to the worst crimes (Cf. Gen 4:3-7; 1 Kings 21:1-29). "Through the devil's envy death entered the world" (Wis 2:24): We fight one another, and envy arms us against one another.... If everyone strives to unsettle

the Body of Christ, where shall we end up? We are engaged in making Christ's Body a corpse.... We declare ourselves members of one and the same organism, yet we devour one another like beasts (St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in 2 Cor.* 27, 3-4: PG 61, 588). (CCC 2541) The economy of law and grace turns men's hearts away from avarice and envy. It initiates them into desire for the Sovereign Good; it instructs them in the desires of the Holy Spirit who satisfies man's heart. The God of the promises always warned man against seduction by what from the beginning has seemed "good for food... a delight to the eyes... to be desired to make one wise" (Gen 3:6).

### (1Cor 3, 4-8) Only God, who causes the growth

[4] Whenever someone says, "I belong to Paul," and another, "I belong to Apollos," are you not merely human? [5] What is Apollos, after all, and what is Paul? Ministers through whom you became believers, just as the Lord assigned each one. [6] I planted, Apollos watered, but God caused the growth. [7] Therefore, neither the one who plants nor the one who waters is anything, but only God, who causes the growth. [8] The one who plants and the one who waters are equal, and each will receive wages in proportion to his labor.

(CCC 874) Christ is himself the source of ministry in the Church. He instituted the Church. He gave her authority and mission, orientation and goal: In order to shepherd the People of God and to increase its numbers without cease, Christ the Lord set up in his Church a variety of offices which aim at the good of the whole body. The holders of office, who are invested with a sacred power, are, in fact, dedicated to promoting the interests of their brethren, so that all who belong to the People of God... may attain to salvation (LG 18). (CC 876) Intrinsically linked to the sacramental nature of ecclesial ministry is *its character as service*. Entirely dependent on Christ who gives mission and authority, ministers are truly "slaves of Christ" (Cf. Rom 1:1) in the image of him who freely took "the form of a slave" for us (Phil 2:7). Because the word and grace of which they are ministers are not their own, but are given to them by Christ for the sake of others, they must freely become the slaves of all (Cf. 1 Cor 9:19). (CCC 879) Sacramental ministry in the Church, then, is a service exercised in the name of Christ. It has a personal character and a collegial form. This is evidenced by the bonds between the episcopal college and its head, the successor of St. Peter, and in the relationship between the bishop's pastoral responsibility for his particular church and the common solicitude of the episcopal college for the universal Church.

### (1Cor 3, 9-11) No one foundation other than Jesus Christ

[9] For we are God's co-workers; you are God's field, God's building. [10] According to the grace of God given to me, like a wise master builder I laid a foundation, and another is building upon it. But each one must be careful how he builds upon it, [11] for no one can lay a foundation other than the one that is there, namely, Jesus Christ.

(CCC 756) "Often, too, the Church is called the *building* of God. The Lord compared himself to the stone which the builders rejected, but which was made into the comer-stone. On this foundation the Church is built by the apostles and from it the Church receives solidity and unity. This edifice has many names to describe it: the house of God in which his *family* dwells; the household of God in the Spirit; the dwelling-place of God among men; and, especially, the holy

*temple*. This temple, symbolized in places of worship built out of stone, is praised by the Fathers and, not without reason, is compared in the liturgy to the Holy City, the New Jerusalem. As living stones we here on earth are built into it. It is this holy city that is seen by John as it comes down out of heaven from God when the world is made anew, prepared like a bride adorned for her husband (LG 6; cf. 1 Cor 3:9; Mt 21:42 and parallels; Acts 4:11; 1 Pet 2:7; Ps 118:22; 1 Cor 3:11; 1 Tim 3:15; Eph 2:19-22; Rev 21:3; 1 Pet 2:5; Rev 21:1-2). (CCC 306) God is the sovereign master of his plan. But to carry it out he also makes use of his creatures' co-operation. This use is not a sign of weakness, but rather a token of almighty God's greatness and goodness. For God grants his creatures not only their existence, but also the dignity of acting on their own, of being causes and principles for each other, and thus of co-operating in the accomplishment of his plan.

### **(1Cor 3, 12) Anyone builds on this foundation**

**[12] If anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, or straw,**

(CCC 307) To human beings God even gives the power of freely sharing in his providence by entrusting them with the responsibility of "subduing" the earth and having dominion over it (Cf. Gen 1:26-28). God thus enables men to be intelligent and free causes in order to complete the work of creation, to perfect its harmony for their own good and that of their neighbors. Though often unconscious collaborators with God's will, they can also enter deliberately into the divine plan by their actions, their prayers and their sufferings (Cf. Col 1:24). They then fully become "God's fellow workers" and co-workers for his kingdom (1 Cor 3:9; 1 Thess 3:2; Col 4:11).

### **(1Cor 3, 13) The work of each will come to light**

**[13] the work of each will come to light, for the Day will disclose it. It will be revealed with fire, and the fire (itself) will test the quality of each one's work.**

(CCC 1030) All who die in God's grace and friendship, but still imperfectly purified, are indeed assured of their eternal salvation; but after death they undergo purification, so as to achieve the holiness necessary to enter the joy of heaven. (CCC 1031) The Church gives the name *Purgatory* to this final purification of the elect, which is entirely different from the punishment of the damned (Cf. Council of Florence (1439): DS 1304; Council of Trent (1563): DS 1820; (1547): 1580; see also Benedict XII, *Benedictus Deus* (1336): DS 1000). The Church formulated her doctrine of faith on Purgatory especially at the Councils of Florence and Trent. The tradition of the Church, by reference to certain texts of Scripture, speaks of a cleansing fire (Cf. 1 Cor 3:15; 1 Pet 1:7): As for certain lesser faults, we must believe that, before the Final Judgment, there is a purifying fire. He who is truth says that whoever utters blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will be pardoned neither in this age nor in the age to come. From this sentence we understand that certain offenses can be forgiven in this age, but certain others in the age to come (St. Gregory the Great, *Dial.* 4, 39: PL 77, 396; cf. Mt 12:31).

### **(1Cor 3, 14-15) Be saved, but only as through fire**

**[14] If the work stands that someone built upon the foundation, that person will receive a wage. [15] But if someone's work is burned up, that one will suffer loss; the person will be saved, but only as through fire.**

(CCC 696) *Fire*. While water signifies birth and the fruitfulness of life given in the Holy Spirit, fire symbolizes the transforming energy of the Holy Spirit's actions. The prayer of the prophet Elijah, who "arose like fire" and whose "word burned like a torch," brought down fire from heaven on the sacrifice on Mount Carmel (Sir 48:1; cf. 1 Kings 18:38-39). This event was a "figure" of the fire of the Holy Spirit, who transforms what he touches. John the Baptist, who goes "before [the Lord] in the spirit and power of Elijah," proclaims Christ as the one who "will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Lk 1:17; 3:16). Jesus will say of the Spirit: "I came to cast fire upon the earth; and would that it were already kindled!" (Lk 12:49). In the form of tongues "as of fire," the Holy Spirit rests on the disciples on the morning of Pentecost and fills them with himself (Acts 2:3-4). The spiritual tradition has retained this symbolism of fire as one of the most expressive images of the Holy Spirit's actions (Cf. St. John of the Cross, *The Living Flame of Love*, in *The Collected Works of St. John of the Cross*, tr. K. Kavanaugh, OCD, and O. Rodriguez, OCD (Washington DC: Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1979), 577 ff.). "Do not quench the Spirit" (1 Thess 5:19).

### (1Cor 3, 16) The Spirit of God dwells in you

[16] Do you not know that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwells in you?

(CCC 689) The One whom the Father has sent into our hearts, the Spirit of his Son, is truly God (Cf. Gal 4:6). Consubstantial with the Father and the Son, the Spirit is inseparable from them, in both the inner life of the Trinity and his gift of love for the world. In adoring the Holy Trinity, life-giving, consubstantial, and indivisible, the Church's faith also professes the distinction of persons. When the Father sends his Word, he always sends his Breath. In their joint mission, the Son and the Holy Spirit are distinct but inseparable. To be sure, it is Christ who is seen, the visible image of the invisible God, but it is the Spirit who reveals him.

### (1Cor 3, 17-20) The temple of God, which you are, is holy

[17] If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy that person; for the temple of God, which you are, is holy. [18] Let no one deceive himself. If any one among you considers himself wise in this age, let him become a fool so as to become wise. [19] For the wisdom of this world is foolishness in the eyes of God, for it is written: "He catches the wise in their own ruses," [20] and again: "The Lord knows the thoughts of the wise, that they are vain."

(CCC 797) "What the soul is to the human body, the Holy Spirit is to the Body of Christ, which is the Church" (St. Augustine, *Sermo* 267, 4: PL 38, 1231D). "To this Spirit of Christ, as an invisible principle, is to be ascribed the fact that all the parts of the body are joined one with the other and with their exalted head; for the whole Spirit of Christ is in the head, the whole Spirit is in the body, and the whole Spirit is in each of the members" (Pius XII, encyclical, *Mystici Corporis*: DS 3808). The Holy Spirit makes the Church "the temple of the living God" (2 Cor 6:16; cf. 1 Cor 3:16-17; Eph 2:21): Indeed, it is to the Church herself that the "Gift of God" has been entrusted.... In it is in her that communion with Christ has been deposited, that is to say: the Holy Spirit, the pledge of incorruptibility, the strengthening of our faith and the ladder of our ascent to God.... For where the Church is, there also is God's Spirit; where God's Spirit is, there is the Church and every grace (St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 3, 24, 1: PG 7/1, 966).

### (1Cor 3, 21) No one boast about human beings

[21] So let no one boast about human beings, for everything belongs to you,

(CCC 293) Scripture and Tradition never cease to teach and celebrate this fundamental truth: "The world was made for the glory of God" (*Dei Filius*, can. § 5: DS 3025). St. Bonaventure explains that God created all things "not to increase his glory, but to show it forth and to communicate it" (St. Bonaventure, *In II Sent.* I, 2, 2, 1), for God has no other reason for creating than his love and goodness: "Creatures came into existence when the key of love opened his hand" (St. Thomas Aquinas, *Sent.* II, Prol.). The First Vatican Council explains: This one, true God, of his own goodness and "almighty power", not for increasing his own beatitude, nor for attaining his perfection, but in order to manifest this perfection through the benefits which he bestows on creatures, with absolute freedom of counsel "and from the beginning of time, made out of nothing both orders of creatures, the spiritual and the corporeal..." (*Dei Filius* I: DS 3002; cf. Lateran Council IV (1215): DS 800).

### (1Cor 3, 22-23) All belong to you and you to Christ

[22] Paul or Apollos or Kephass, or the world or life or death, or the present or the future: all belong to you, [23] and you to Christ, and Christ to God.

(CCC 294) The glory of God consists in the realization of this manifestation and communication of his goodness, for which the world was created. God made us "to be his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, *to the praise of his glorious grace*" (Eph 1:5-6), for "the glory of God is man fully alive; moreover man's life is the vision of God: if God's revelation through creation has already obtained life for all the beings that dwell on earth, how much more will the Word's manifestation of the Father obtain life for those who see God" (St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 4, 20, 7: PG 7/1, 1037). The ultimate purpose of creation is that God "who is the creator of all things may at last become "all in all", thus simultaneously assuring his own glory and our beatitude" (AG 2; cf. 1 Cor 15:28). (CCC 1024) This perfect life with the Most Holy Trinity - this communion of life and love with the Trinity, with the Virgin Mary, the angels and all the blessed - is called "heaven." Heaven is the ultimate end and fulfillment of the deepest human longings, the state of supreme, definitive happiness. (CCC 1029) In the glory of heaven the blessed continue joyfully to fulfill God's will in relation to other men and to all creation. Already they reign with Christ; with him "they shall reign for ever and ever" (Rev 22:5; cf. Mt 25:21, 23).

## 1Corinthians 4

### (1Cor 4, 1-2) Servants of Christ and stewards of God

[1] Thus should one regard us: as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. [2] Now it is of course required of stewards that they be found trustworthy.

(CCC 859) Jesus unites them to the mission he received from the Father. As "the Son can do nothing of his own accord," but receives everything from the Father who sent him, so those whom Jesus sends can do nothing apart from him (Jn 5:19, 30; cf. 15:5), from whom they received both the mandate for their mission and the power to carry it out. Christ's apostles knew that they were called

by God as "ministers of a new covenant," "servants of God," "ambassadors for Christ," "servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God" (2 Cor 3:6; 6:4; 5:20; 1 Cor 4:1). (CCC 860) In the office of the apostles there is one aspect that cannot be transmitted: to be the chosen witnesses of the Lord's Resurrection and so the foundation stones of the Church. But their office also has a permanent aspect. Christ promised to remain with them always. The divine mission entrusted by Jesus to them "will continue to the end of time, since the Gospel they handed on is the lasting source of all life for the Church. Therefore,... the apostles took care to appoint successors" (LG 20; cf. Mt 28:20). (CCC 1116) Sacraments are "powers that comes forth" from the Body of Christ (Cf. Lk 5:17; 6:19; 8:46), which is ever-living and life-giving. They are actions of the Holy Spirit at work in his Body, the Church. They are "the masterworks of God" in the new and everlasting covenant. (CCC 1117) As she has done for the canon of Sacred Scripture and for the doctrine of the faith, the Church, by the power of the Spirit who guides her "into all truth," has gradually recognized this treasure received from Christ and, as the faithful steward of God's mysteries, has determined its "dispensation" (Jn 16:13; cf. Mt 13:52; 1Cor 4:1). Thus the Church has discerned over the centuries that among liturgical celebrations there are seven that are, in the strict sense of the term, sacraments instituted by the Lord.

#### **(1Cor 4, 3-5) The one who judges me is the Lord**

[3] It does not concern me in the least that I be judged by you or any human tribunal; I do not even pass judgment on myself; [4] I am not conscious of anything against me, but I do not thereby stand acquitted; the one who judges me is the Lord. [5] Therefore, do not make any judgment before the appointed time, until the Lord comes, for he will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will manifest the motives of our hearts, and then everyone will receive praise from God.

(CCC 678) Following in the steps of the prophets and John the Baptist, Jesus announced the judgment of the Last Day in his preaching (cf. Dan 7:10; Joel 3-4; Mal 3:19; Mt 3:7-12). Then will the conduct of each one and the secrets of hearts be brought to light (cf. Mk 12:38-40; Lk 12:1-3; Jn 3:20-21; Rom 2:16; 1 Cor 4:5). Then will the culpable unbelief that counted the offer of God's grace as nothing be condemned (cf. Mt 11:20-24; 12:41-42). Our attitude to our neighbor will disclose acceptance or refusal of grace and divine love (cf. Mt 5:22; 7:1-5). On the Last Day Jesus will say: "Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me" (Mt 25:40). (CCC 679) Christ is Lord of eternal life. Full right to pass definitive judgment on the works and hearts of men belongs to him as redeemer of the world. He "acquired" this right by his cross. The Father has given "all judgment to the Son" (Jn 5:22; cf. 5:27; Mt 25:31; Acts 10:42; 17:31; 2 Tim 4:1). Yet the Son did not come to judge, but to save and to give the life he has in himself (Cf. Jn 3:17; 5:26). By rejecting grace in this life, one already judges oneself, receives according to one's works, and can even condemn oneself for all eternity by rejecting the Spirit of love (Cf. Jn 3:18; 12:48; Mt 12:32; 1 Cor 3:12-15; Heb 6:4-6; 10:26-31).

#### **(1Cor 4, 6-8) None of you will be inflated with pride**

[6] I have applied these things to myself and Apollos for your benefit, brothers, so that you may learn from us not to go beyond what is written, so that none of you will be inflated with pride in favor of one person over against another. [7] Who confers distinction upon you? What do you

possess that you have not received? But if you have received it, why are you boasting as if you did not receive it? [8] You are already satisfied; you have already grown rich; you have become kings without us! Indeed, I wish that you had become kings, so that we also might become kings with you.

(CCC 224) *It means living in thanksgiving*: if God is the only One, everything we are and have comes from him: "What have you that you did not receive?" (1 Cor 4:7). "What shall I render to the LORD for all his bounty to me?" (Ps 116:12). (CCC 225) *It means knowing the unity and true dignity of all men*: everyone is made in the image and likeness of God (Gen 1:26). (CCC 226) *It means making good use of created things*: faith in God, the only One, leads us to use everything that is not God only insofar as it brings us closer to him, and to detach ourselves from it insofar as it turns us away from him: "My Lord and my God, take from me everything that distances me from you. My Lord and my God, give me everything that brings me closer to you. My Lord and my God, detach me from myself to give my all to you" (St. Nicholas of Flüe; cf. Mt 5:29-30; 16:24-26).

#### (1Cor 4, 9-12) God has exhibited us as the last of all

[9] For as I see it, God has exhibited us apostles as the last of all, like people sentenced to death, since we have become a spectacle to the world, to angels and human beings alike. [10] We are fools on Christ's account, but you are wise in Christ; we are weak, but you are strong; you are held in honor, but we in disrepute. [11] To this very hour we go hungry and thirsty, we are poorly clad and roughly treated, we wander about homeless [12] and we toil, working with our own hands. When ridiculed, we bless; when persecuted, we endure;

(CCC 164) Now, however, "we walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor 5:7); we perceive God as "in a mirror, dimly" and only "in part" (1 Cor 13:12). Even though enlightened by him in whom it believes, faith is often lived in darkness and can be put to the test. The world we live in often seems very far from the one promised us by faith. Our experiences of evil and suffering, injustice and death, seem to contradict the Good News; they can shake our faith and become a temptation against it. (CCC 272) Faith in God the Father Almighty can be put to the test by the experience of evil and suffering. God can sometimes seem to be absent and incapable of stopping evil. But in the most mysterious way God the Father has revealed his almighty power in the voluntary humiliation and Resurrection of his Son, by which he conquered evil. Christ crucified is thus "the power of God and the wisdom of God. For the foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men" (1 Cor 1:24-25). It is in Christ's Resurrection and exaltation that the Father has shown forth "the immeasurable greatness of his power in us who believe" (Eph 1:19-22).

#### (1Cor 4, 13-14) When slandered, we respond gently

[13] when slandered, we respond gently. We have become like the world's rubbish, the scum of all, to this very moment. [14] I am writing you this not to shame you, but to admonish you as my beloved children.

(CCC 385) God is infinitely good and all his works are good. Yet no one can escape the experience of suffering or the evils in nature which seem to be linked to the limitations proper to creatures: and above all to the question of moral evil. Where does evil come from? "I sought whence evil comes and there

was no solution", said St. Augustine (St. Augustine, *Conf.* 7, 7, 11: PL 32, 739), and his own painful quest would only be resolved by his conversion to the living God. For "the mystery of lawlessness" is clarified only in the light of the "mystery of our religion" (2 Thess 2:7; 1 Tim 3:16). The revelation of divine love in Christ manifested at the same time the extent of evil and the superabundance of grace (Cf. Rom 5:20). We must therefore approach the question of the origin of evil by fixing the eyes of our faith on him who alone is its conqueror (Cf. Lk 11:21-22; Jn 16:11; 1 Jn 3:8). (CCC 572) The Church remains faithful to the interpretation of "all the Scriptures" that Jesus gave both before and after his Passover: "Was it not necessary that the Christ should suffer these things and enter into his glory?" (Lk 24:26-27, 44-45). Jesus' sufferings took their historical, concrete form from the fact that he was "rejected by the elders and the chief priests and the scribes", who handed "him to the Gentiles to be mocked and scourged and crucified" (Mk 8:31; Mt 20:19).

### (1Cor 4, 15-21) I became your father in Christ Jesus

[15] Even if you should have countless guides to Christ, yet you do not have many fathers, for I became your father in Christ Jesus through the gospel. [16] Therefore, I urge you, be imitators of me. [17] For this reason I am sending you Timothy, who is my beloved and faithful son in the Lord; he will remind you of my ways in Christ (Jesus), just as I teach them everywhere in every church. [18] Some have become inflated with pride, as if I were not coming to you. [19] But I will come to you soon, if the Lord is willing, and I shall ascertain not the talk of these inflated people but their power. [20] For the kingdom of God is not a matter of talk but of power. [21] Which do you prefer? Shall I come to you with a rod, or with love and a gentle spirit?

(CCC 2214) The divine fatherhood is the source of human fatherhood (Cf. Eph 3:14) this is the foundation of the honor owed to parents. The respect of children, whether minors or adults, for their father and mother (Cf. Prov 1:8; Tob 4:3-4) is nourished by the natural affection born of the bond uniting them. It is required by God's commandment (Cf. Ex 20:12). (CCC 2222) Parents must regard their children as *children of God* and respect them as *human persons*. Showing themselves obedient to the will of the Father in heaven, they educate their children to fulfill God's law. (CCC 2223) Parents have the first responsibility for the education of their children. They bear witness to this responsibility first by *creating a home* where tenderness, forgiveness, respect, fidelity, and disinterested service are the rule. The home is well suited for *education in the virtues*. This requires an apprenticeship in self-denial, sound judgment, and self-mastery - the preconditions of all true freedom. Parents should teach their children to subordinate the "material and instinctual dimensions to interior and spiritual ones" (CA 36 § 2). Parents have a grave responsibility to give good example to their children. By knowing how to acknowledge their own failings to their children, parents will be better able to guide and correct them: He who loves his son will not spare the rod.... He who disciplines his son will profit by him (Sir 30:1-2). Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Eph 6:4). (CCC 2224) The home is the natural environment for initiating a human being into solidarity and communal responsibilities. Parents should teach children to avoid the compromising and degrading influences which threaten human societies.

# 1Corinthians 5

(1Cor 5, 1-2) There is immorality among you

[1] It is widely reported that there is immorality among you, and immorality of a kind not found even among pagans - a man living with his father's wife. [2] And you are inflated with pride. Should you not rather have been sorrowful? The one who did this deed should be expelled from your midst.

(CCC 2232) Family ties are important but not absolute. Just as the child grows to maturity and human and spiritual autonomy, so his unique vocation which comes from God asserts itself more clearly and forcefully. Parents should respect this call and encourage their children to follow it. They must be convinced that the first vocation of the Christian is to *follow Jesus*: "He who loves father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he who loves son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me" (Mt 10:37; cf. 16:25). (CCC 2233) Becoming a disciple of Jesus means accepting the invitation to belong to God's *family*, to live in conformity with His way of life: "For whoever does the will of my Father in heaven is my brother, and sister, and mother" (Mt 12:49). Parents should welcome and respect with joy and thanksgiving the Lord's call to one of their children to follow him in virginity for the sake of the Kingdom in the consecrated life or in priestly ministry. (CCC 2388) *Incest* designates intimate relations between relatives or in-laws within a degree that prohibits marriage between them (Cf. Lev 18:7-20). St. Paul stigmatizes this especially grave offense: "It is actually reported that there is immorality among you.... For a man is living with his father's wife.... In the name of the Lord Jesus ... you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh...." (1 Cor 5:1, 4-5). Incest corrupts family relationships and marks a regression toward animality. (CCC 2389) Connected to incest is any sexual abuse perpetrated by adults on children or adolescents entrusted to their care. The offense is compounded by the scandalous harm done to the physical and moral integrity of the young, who will remain scarred by it all their lives; and the violation of responsibility for their upbringing.

(1Cor 5, 3-4) I have already pronounced judgment

[3] I, for my part, although absent in body but present in spirit, have already, as if present, pronounced judgment on the one who has committed this deed, [4] in the name of (our) Lord Jesus: when you have gathered together and I am with you in spirit with the power of the Lord Jesus,

(CCC 1460) The *penance* the confessor imposes must take into account the penitent's personal situation and must seek his spiritual good. It must correspond as far as possible with the gravity and nature of the sins committed. It can consist of prayer, an offering, works of mercy, service of neighbor, voluntary self-denial, sacrifices, and above all the patient acceptance of the cross we must bear. Such penances help configure us to Christ, who alone expiated our sins once for all. They allow us to become co-heirs with the risen Christ, "provided we suffer with him" (Rom 8:17; Rom 3:25; 1 Jn 2:1-2; cf. Council of Trent (1551): DS 1690). The satisfaction that we make for our sins, however, is not so much ours as though it were not done through Jesus Christ. We who can do nothing ourselves, as if just by ourselves, can do all things with the cooperation of "him who strengthens" us. Thus man has nothing of which to boast, but all our boasting is in

Christ... in whom we make satisfaction by bringing forth "fruits that befit repentance." These fruits have their efficacy from him, by him they are offered to the Father, and through him they are accepted by the Father (Council of Trent (1551): DS 1691; cf. Phil 4:13; 1 Cor 1:31; 2 Cor 10:17; Gal 6:14; Lk 3:8).

**(1Cor 5, 5) His spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord**

[5] you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of his flesh, so that his spirit may be saved on the day of the Lord.

(CCC 1459) Many sins wrong our neighbor. One must do what is possible in order to repair the harm (e.g., return stolen goods, restore the reputation of someone slandered, pay compensation for injuries). Simple justice requires as much. But sin also injures and weakens the sinner himself, as well as his relationships with God and neighbor. Absolution takes away sin, but it does not remedy all the disorders sin has caused (Cf. Council of Trent (1551): DS 1712). Raised up from sin, the sinner must still recover his full spiritual health by doing something more to make amends for the sin: he must "make satisfaction for" or "expiate" his sins. This satisfaction is also called "penance."

**(1Cor 5, 6-8) Clear out the old yeast**

[6] Your boasting is not appropriate. Do you not know that a little yeast leavens all the dough? [7] Clear out the old yeast, so that you may become a fresh batch of dough, inasmuch as you are unleavened. For our paschal lamb, Christ, has been sacrificed. [8] Therefore let us celebrate the feast, not with the old yeast, the yeast of malice and wickedness, but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

(CCC 608) After agreeing to baptize him along with the sinners, John the Baptist looked at Jesus and pointed him out as the "Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29; cf. Lk 3:21; Mt 3:14-15; Jn 1:36). By doing so, he reveals that Jesus is at the same time the suffering Servant who silently allows himself to be led to the slaughter and who bears the sin of the multitudes, and also the Paschal Lamb, the symbol of Israel's redemption at the first Passover (Isa 53:7, 12; cf. Jer 11:19; Ex 12:3-14; Jn 19:36; 1 Cor 5:7). Christ's whole life expresses his mission: "to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many" (Mk 10:45). (CCC 610) Jesus gave the supreme expression of his free offering of himself at the meal shared with the twelve Apostles "on the night he was betrayed" (*Roman Missal*, EP III; cf. Mt 26:20; 1 Cor 11:23). On the eve of his Passion, while still free, Jesus transformed this Last Supper with the apostles into the memorial of his voluntary offering to the Father for the salvation of men: "This is my body which is given for you." "This is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Lk 22:19; Mt 26:28; cf. 1 Cor 5:7). (CCC 613) Christ's death is both the *Paschal sacrifice* that accomplishes the definitive redemption of men, through "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (Jn 1:29; cf. 8:34-36; 1 Cor 5:7; 1 Pt 1:19), and the *sacrifice of the New Covenant*, which restores man to communion with God by reconciling him to God through the "blood of the covenant, which was poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins" (Mt 26:28; cf. Ex 24:8; Lev 16:15-16; 1 Cor 11:25).

**(1Cor 5,9-13) Purge the evil person from your midst**

[9] I wrote you in my letter not to associate with immoral people, [10] not at all referring to the immoral of this world or the greedy and robbers

or idolaters; for you would then have to leave the world. [11] But I now write to you not to associate with anyone named a brother, if he is immoral, greedy, an idolater, a slanderer, a drunkard, or a robber, not even to eat with such a person. [12] For why should I be judging outsiders? Is it not your business to judge those within? [13] God will judge those outside. "Purge the evil person from your midst."

(CCC 827) "Christ, 'holy, innocent, and undefiled,' knew nothing of sin, but came only to expiate the sins of the people. The Church, however, clasping sinners to her bosom, at once holy and always in need of purification, follows constantly the path of penance and renewal" (LG 8 § 3; Cf. UR 3; 6; Heb 2:17; 7:26; 2 Cor 5:21). All members of the Church, including her ministers, must acknowledge that they are sinners (Cf. 1 Jn 1:8-10). In everyone, the weeds of sin will still be mixed with the good wheat of the Gospel until the end of time (Cf. Mt 13:24-30). Hence the Church gathers sinners already caught up in Christ's salvation but still on the way to holiness: The Church is therefore holy, though having sinners in her midst, because she herself has no other life but the life of grace. If they live her life, her members are sanctified; if they move away from her life, they fall into sins and disorders that prevent the radiation of her sanctity. This is why she suffers and does penance for those offenses, of which she has the power to free her children through the blood of Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit (Paul VI, CPG § 19).

## 1Corinthians 6

(1Cor 6, 1-8) Why not rather put up with injustice?

[1] How can any one of you with a case against another dare to bring it to the unjust for judgment instead of to the holy ones? [2] Do you not know that the holy ones will judge the world? If the world is to be judged by you, are you unqualified for the lowest law courts? [3] Do you not know that we will judge angels? Then why not everyday matters? [4] If, therefore, you have courts for everyday matters, do you seat as judges people of no standing in the church? [5] I say this to shame you. Can it be that there is not one among you wise enough to be able to settle a case between brothers? [6] But rather brother goes to court against brother, and that before unbelievers? [7] Now indeed (then) it is, in any case, a failure on your part that you have lawsuits against one another. Why not rather put up with injustice? Why not rather let yourselves be cheated? [8] Instead, you inflict injustice and cheat, and this to brothers.

(CCC 2534) 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. "Lust of the eyes" leads to the violence and injustice forbidden by the fifth commandment (Cf. 1 Jn 2:16; Mic 2:2). Avarice, like fornication, originates in the idolatry prohibited by the first three prescriptions of the Law (Cf. Wis 14:12). The tenth commandment concerns the intentions of the heart; with the ninth, it summarizes all the precepts of the Law. (CCC 2535) The sensitive appetite leads us to desire pleasant things we do not have, e.g., the desire to eat when we are hungry or to warm ourselves when we are cold. These desires are good in themselves; but often they exceed the limits of reason and drive us to covet unjustly what is not ours and belongs to another or is owed to him. (CCC

2536) The tenth commandment forbids *greed* and the desire to amass earthly goods without limit. It forbids *avarice* arising from a passion for riches and their attendant power. It also forbids the desire to commit injustice by harming our neighbor in his temporal goods: When the Law says, "You shall not covet," these words mean that we should banish our desires for whatever does not belong to us. Our thirst for another's goods is immense, infinite, never quenched. Thus it is written: "He who loves money never has money enough" (*Roman Catechism*, III, 37; cf. Sir 5:8).

### (1Cor 6, 9-10) Unjust will not inherit the kingdom of God

[9] Do you not know that the unjust will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators nor idolaters nor adulterers nor boy prostitutes nor practicing homosexuals [10] nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor robbers will inherit the kingdom of God.

(CCC 1852) There are a great many kinds of sins. Scripture provides several lists of them. The *Letter to the Galatians* contrasts the works of the flesh with the fruit of the Spirit: "Now the works of the flesh are plain: fornication, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, factions, envy, drunkenness, carousing, and the like. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God" (Gal 5:19-21; cf. Rom 1:28-32; 1 Cor 9-10; Eph 5:3-5; Col 3:5-8; 1 Tim 9-10; 2 Tim 2-5). (CCC 2357) Homosexuality refers to relations between men or between women who experience an exclusive or predominant sexual attraction toward persons of the same sex. It has taken a great variety of forms through the centuries and in different cultures. Its psychological genesis remains largely unexplained. Basing itself on Sacred Scripture, which presents homosexual acts as acts of grave depravity (Cf. Gen 19:1-29; Rom 12:4-27; 1 Cor 6:10; 1 Tim 1:10), tradition has always declared that "homosexual acts are intrinsically disordered" (CDF, *Persona humana* 8). They are contrary to the natural law. They close the sexual act to the gift of life. They do not proceed from a genuine affective and sexual complementarity. Under no circumstances can they be approved.

### (1Cor 6, 11) You were justified in the name of the Lord

[11] That is what some of you used to be; but now you have had yourselves washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.

(CCC 1227) According to the Apostle Paul, the believer enters through Baptism into communion with Christ's death, is buried with him, and rises with him: Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life (Rom 6:3-4; cf. Col 2:12). The baptized have "put on Christ" (Gal 3:27). Through the Holy Spirit, Baptism is a bath that purifies, justifies, and sanctifies (Cf. 1 Cor 6:11; 12:13). (CCC 1425) "You were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor 6:11). One must appreciate the magnitude of the gift God has given us in the sacraments of Christian initiation in order to grasp the degree to which sin is excluded for him who has "put on Christ" (Gal 3:27). But the apostle John also says: "If we say we have no sin, we deceive

ourselves, and the truth is not in us" (1 Jn 1:8). And the Lord himself taught us to pray: "Forgive us our trespasses" (Cf. Lk 11:4; Mt 6:12), linking our forgiveness of one another's offenses to the forgiveness of our sins that God will grant us.

### (1Cor 6, 12-16) Your bodies are members of Christ

[12] "Everything is lawful for me," but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is lawful for me," but I will not let myself be dominated by anything. [13] "Food for the stomach and the stomach for food," but God will do away with both the one and the other. The body, however, is not for immorality, but for the Lord, and the Lord is for the body; [14] God raised the Lord and will also raise us by his power. [15] Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ? Shall I then take Christ's members and make them the members of a prostitute? Of course not! [16] (Or) do you not know that anyone who joins himself to a prostitute becomes one body with her? For "the two," it says, "will become one flesh."

(CCC 2355) *Prostitution* does injury to the dignity of the person who engages in it, reducing the person to an instrument of sexual pleasure. The one who pays sins gravely against himself: he violates the chastity to which his Baptism pledged him and defiles his body, the temple of the Holy Spirit (Cf. 1 Cor 6:15-20). Prostitution is a social scourge. It usually involves women, but also men, children, and adolescents (The latter two cases involve the added sin of scandal.). While it is always gravely sinful to engage in prostitution, the imputability of the offense can be attenuated by destitution, blackmail, or social pressure. (CCC 1003) United with Christ by Baptism, believers already truly participate in the heavenly life of the risen Christ, but this life remains "hidden with Christ in God" (Col 3:3; cf. Phil 3:20). The Father has already "raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph 2:6). Nourished with his body in the Eucharist, we already belong to the Body of Christ. When we rise on the last day we "also will appear with him in glory" (Col 3:4). (CCC 1004) In expectation of that day, the believer's body and soul already participate in the dignity of belonging to Christ. This dignity entails the demand that he should treat with respect his own body, but also the body of every other person, especially the suffering: The body [is meant] for the Lord, and the Lord for the body. And God raised the Lord and will also raise us up by his power. Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?... You are not your own; ... So glorify God in your body (Cor 6:13-15, 19-20).

### (1Cor 6, 17-20) Your body is a temple of the holy Spirit

[17] But whoever is joined to the Lord becomes one spirit with him. [18] Avoid immorality. Every other sin a person commits is outside the body, but the immoral person sins against his own body. [19] Do you not know that your body is a temple of the holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? [20] For you have been purchased at a price. Therefore, glorify God in your body.

(CCC 2353) *Fornication* is carnal union between an unmarried man and an unmarried woman. It is gravely contrary to the dignity of persons and of human sexuality which is naturally ordered to the good of spouses and the generation and education of children. Moreover, it is a grave scandal when there is corruption of the young. (CCC 1265) Baptism not only purifies from all sins, but also makes the neophyte "a new creature," an adopted son of God, who has become a "partaker of the divine nature" (2 Cor 5:17; 2 Pet 1:4; cf. Gal 4:5-7), member of

Christ and coheir with him (Cf. 1 Cor 6:15; 12:27; Rom 8:17), and a temple of the Holy Spirit (Cf. 1 Cor 6:19). (CCC 1269) Having become a member of the Church, the person baptized belongs no longer to himself, but to him who died and rose for us (Cf. 1 Cor 6:19; 2 Cor 5:15). From now on, he is called to be subject to others, to serve them in the communion of the Church, and to "obey and submit" to the Church's leaders (Heb 13:17), holding them in respect and affection (Cf. Eph 5:21; 1 Cor 16:15-16; 1 Thess 5:12-13; Jn 13:12-15). Just as Baptism is the source of responsibilities and duties, the baptized person also enjoys rights within the Church: to receive the sacraments, to be nourished with the Word of God and to be sustained by the other spiritual helps of the Church (Cf. LG 37; CIC, cann. 208-223; CCEO, can. 675:2).

## 1Corinthians 7

### (1Cor 7, 1-3) Every man should have his own wife

[1] Now in regard to the matters about which you wrote: "It is a good thing for a man not to touch a woman," [2] but because of cases of immorality every man should have his own wife, and every woman her own husband. [3] The husband should fulfill his duty toward his wife, and likewise the wife toward her husband.

(CCC 1601) "The matrimonial covenant, by which a man and a woman establish between themselves a partnership of the whole of life, is by its nature ordered toward the good of the spouses and the procreation and education of offspring; this covenant between baptized persons has been raised by Christ the Lord to the dignity of a sacrament" (CIC, can. 1055 § 1; cf. GS 48 § 1). (CCC 1602) Sacred Scripture begins with the creation of man and woman in the image and likeness of God and concludes with a vision of "the wedding-feast of the Lamb" (Rev 19:7, 9; cf. Gen 1:26-27). Scripture speaks throughout of marriage and its "mystery," its institution and the meaning God has given it, its origin and its end, its various realizations throughout the history of salvation, the difficulties arising from sin and its renewal "in the Lord" in the New Covenant of Christ and the Church (1 Cor 7:39; cf. Eph 5:31-32).

### (1Cor 7, 4-6) Do not deprive each other

[4] A wife does not have authority over her own body, but rather her husband, and similarly a husband does not have authority over his own body, but rather his wife. [5] Do not deprive each other, except perhaps by mutual consent for a time, to be free for prayer, but then return to one another, so that Satan may not tempt you through your lack of self-control. [6] This I say by way of concession, however, not as a command.

(CCC 1603) "The intimate community of life and love which constitutes the married state has been established by the Creator and endowed by him with its own proper laws.... God himself is the author of marriage" (GS 48 § 1). The vocation to marriage is written in the very nature of man and woman as they came from the hand of the Creator. Marriage is not a purely human institution despite the many variations it may have undergone through the centuries in different cultures, social structures, and spiritual attitudes. These differences should not cause us to forget its common and permanent characteristics. Although the dignity of this institution is not transparent everywhere with the same clarity (Cf. GS 47 § 2), some sense of the greatness of the matrimonial union exists in all

cultures. "The well-being of the individual person and of both human and Christian society is closely bound up with the healthy state of conjugal and family life" (GS 47 § 1).

### (1Cor 7, 7-9) Each has a particular gift from God

[7] Indeed, I wish everyone to be as I am, but each has a particular gift from God, one of one kind and one of another. [8] Now to the unmarried and to widows, I say: it is a good thing for them to remain as they are, as I do, [9] but if they cannot exercise self-control they should marry, for it is better to marry than to be on fire.

(CCC 1619) Virginity for the sake of the kingdom of heaven is an unfolding of baptismal grace, a powerful sign of the supremacy of the bond with Christ and of the ardent expectation of his return, a sign which also recalls that marriage is a reality of this present age which is passing away (Cf. Mk 12:25; 1 Cor 7:31). (CCC 502) The eyes of faith can discover in the context of the whole of Revelation the mysterious reasons why God in his saving plan wanted his Son to be born of a virgin. These reasons touch both on the person of Christ and his redemptive mission, and on the welcome Mary gave that mission on behalf of all men. (CCC 503) Mary's virginity manifests God's absolute initiative in the Incarnation. Jesus has only God as Father. "He was never estranged from the Father because of the human nature which he assumed.... He is naturally Son of the Father as to his divinity and naturally son of his mother as to his humanity, but properly Son of the Father in both natures" (Council of Friuli (796): DS 619; cf. Lk 2:48-49).

### (1Cor 7, 10) A wife should not separate from her husband

[10] To the married, however, I give this instruction (not I, but the Lord): a wife should not separate from her husband

(CCC 2364) The married couple forms "the intimate partnership of life and love established by the Creator and governed by his laws; it is rooted in the conjugal covenant, that is, in their irrevocable personal consent" (GS 48 § 1). Both give themselves definitively and totally to one another. They are no longer two; from now on they form one flesh. The covenant they freely contracted imposes on the spouses the obligation to preserve it as unique and indissoluble (Cf. CIC, can. 1056). "What therefore God has joined together, let not man put asunder" (Mk 10:9; cf. Mt 19:1-12; 1 Cor 7:10-11). (CCC 2365) Fidelity expresses constancy in keeping one's given word. God is faithful. The Sacrament of Matrimony enables man and woman to enter into Christ's fidelity for his Church. Through conjugal chastity, they bear witness to this mystery before the world. St. John Chrysostom suggests that young husbands should say to their wives: I have taken you in my arms, and I love you, and I prefer you to my life itself. For the present life is nothing, and my most ardent dream is to spend it with you in such a way that we may be assured of not being separated in the life reserved for us.... I place your love above all things, and nothing would be more bitter or painful to me than to be of a different mind than you (St. John Chrysostom, *Hom. in Eph.* 20, 8: PG 62, 146-147).

### (1Cor 7, 11a) If she does separate she must remain single

[11] and if she does separate she must either remain single or become reconciled to her husband

(CCC 2382) The Lord Jesus insisted on the original intention of the Creator who willed that marriage be indissoluble (Cf. Mt 5:31-32; 19:3-9; Mk 10 9; Lk 16:18; 1 Cor 7:10-11). He abrogates the accommodations that had slipped into the old Law (Cf. Mt 19:7-9). Between the baptized, "a ratified and consummated marriage cannot be dissolved by any human power or for any reason other than death" (CIC, can. 1141). (CCC 2383) The *separation* of spouses while maintaining the marriage bond can be legitimate in certain cases provided for by canon law (Cf. CIC, cann. 1151-1155). If civil divorce remains the only possible way of ensuring certain legal rights, the care of the children, or the protection of inheritance, it can be tolerated and does not constitute a moral offense. (CCC 2386) It can happen that one of the spouses is the innocent victim of a divorce decreed by civil law; this spouse therefore has not contravened the moral law. There is a considerable difference between a spouse who has sincerely tried to be faithful to the sacrament of marriage and is unjustly abandoned, and one who through his own grave fault destroys a canonically valid marriage (Cf. FC 84).

**(1Cor 7, 11b) A husband should not divorce his wife  
[11b] and a husband should not divorce his wife.**

(CCC 2384) *Divorce* is a grave offense against the natural law. It claims to break the contract, to which the spouses freely consented, to live with each other till death. Divorce does injury to the covenant of salvation, of which sacramental marriage is the sign. Contracting a new union, even if it is recognized by civil law, adds to the gravity of the rupture: the remarried spouse is then in a situation of public and permanent adultery: If a husband, separated from his wife, approaches another woman, he is an adulterer because he makes that woman commit adultery, and the woman who lives with him is an adulteress, because she has drawn another's husband to herself (St. Basil, *Moralia* 73, 1: PG 31, 849-852). (CCC 2385) Divorce is immoral also because it introduces disorder into the family and into society. This disorder brings grave harm to the deserted spouse, to children traumatized by the separation of their parents and often torn between them, and because of its contagious effect which makes it truly a plague on society.

**(1Cor 7, 12-17) God has called you to peace**

[12] To the rest I say (not the Lord): if any brother has a wife who is an unbeliever, and she is willing to go on living with him, he should not divorce her; [13] and if any woman has a husband who is an unbeliever, and he is willing to go on living with her, she should not divorce her husband. [14] For the unbelieving husband is made holy through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is made holy through the brother. Otherwise your children would be unclean, whereas in fact they are holy. [15] If the unbeliever separates, however, let him separate. The brother or sister is not bound in such cases; God has called you to peace. [16] For how do you know, wife, whether you will save your husband; or how do you know, husband, whether you will save your wife? [17] Only, everyone should live as the Lord has assigned, just as God called each one. I give this order in all the churches.

(CCC 1637) In marriages with disparity of cult the Catholic spouse has a particular task: "For the unbelieving husband is consecrated through his wife, and the unbelieving wife is consecrated through her husband" (1 Cor 7:14). It is a great joy for the Christian spouse and for the Church if this "consecration" should

lead to the free conversion of the other spouse to the Christian faith (Cf. 1 Cor 7:16). Sincere married love, the humble and patient practice of the family virtues, and perseverance in prayer can prepare the non-believing spouse to accept the grace of conversion. (CCC 2387) The predicament of a man who, desiring to convert to the Gospel, is obliged to repudiate one or more wives with whom he has shared years of conjugal life, is understandable. However *polygamy* is not in accord with the moral law." [Conjugal] communion is radically contradicted by polygamy; this, in fact, directly negates the plan of God which was revealed from the beginning, because it is contrary to the equal personal dignity of men and women who in matrimony give themselves with a love that is total and therefore unique and exclusive" (FC 19; cf. GS 47 § 2). The Christian who has previously lived in polygamy has a grave duty in justice to honor the obligations contracted in regard to his former wives and his children.

### (1Cor 7, 18-24) Do not become slaves to human beings

[18] Was someone called after he had been circumcised? He should not try to undo his circumcision. Was an uncircumcised person called? He should not be circumcised. [19] Circumcision means nothing, and uncircumcision means nothing; what matters is keeping God's commandments. [20] Everyone should remain in the state in which he was called. [21] Were you a slave when you were called? Do not be concerned but, even if you can gain your freedom, make the most of it. [22] For the slave called in the Lord is a freed person in the Lord, just as the free person who has been called is a slave of Christ. [23] You have been purchased at a price. Do not become slaves to human beings. [24] Brothers, everyone should continue before God in the state in which he was called.

(CCC 2339) Chastity includes an *apprenticeship in self-mastery* which is a training in human freedom. The alternative is clear: either man governs his passions and finds peace, or he lets himself be dominated by them and becomes unhappy (Cf. Sir 1:22). "Man's dignity therefore requires him to act out of conscious and free choice, as moved and drawn in a personal way from within, and not by blind impulses in himself or by mere external constraint. Man gains such dignity when, ridding himself of all slavery to the passions, he presses forward to his goal by freely choosing what is good and, by his diligence and skill, effectively secures for himself the means suited to this end" (GS 17). (CCC 2340) Whoever wants to remain faithful to his baptismal promises and resist temptations will want to adopt the *means* for doing so: self-knowledge, practice of an asceticism adapted to the situations that confront him, obedience to God's commandments, exercise of the moral virtues, and fidelity to prayer. "Indeed it is through chastity that we are gathered together and led back to the unity from which we were fragmented into multiplicity" (St. Augustine, *Conf.* 10, 29, 40: PL 32, 796). (CCC 2341) The virtue of chastity comes under the cardinal virtue of *temperance*, which seeks to permeate the passions and appetites of the senses with reason. (CCC 2342) Self-mastery is a *long and exacting work*. One can never consider it acquired once and for all. It presupposes renewed effort at all stages of life (Cf. *Titus* 2:1-6). The effort required can be more intense in certain periods, such as when the personality is being formed during childhood and adolescence.

(1Cor 7, 25-27) It is good for a person to remain as he is

[25] Now in regard to virgins, I have no commandment from the Lord, but I give my opinion as one who by the Lord's mercy is trustworthy. [26] So this is what I think best because of the present distress: that it is a good thing for a person to remain as he is. [27] Are you bound to a wife? Do not seek a separation. Are you free of a wife? Then do not look for a wife.

(CCC 504) Jesus is conceived by the Holy Spirit in the Virgin Mary's womb because he is the New Adam, who inaugurates the new creation: "The first man was from the earth, a man of dust; the second man is from heaven" (1 Cor 15:45, 47). From his conception, Christ's humanity is filled with the Holy Spirit, for God "gives him the Spirit without measure" (Jn 3:34). From "his fullness" as the head of redeemed humanity "we have all received, grace upon grace" (Jn 1:16; cf. Col 1:18). (CCC 505) By his virginal conception, Jesus, the New Adam, ushers in *the new birth* of children adopted in the Holy Spirit through faith. "How can this be?" (Lk 1:34; cf. Jn 3:9). Participation in the divine life arises "not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God" (Jn 1:13). The acceptance of this life is virginal because it is entirely the Spirit's gift to man. The spousal character of the human vocation in relation to God (Cf. 2 Cor 11:2) is fulfilled perfectly in Mary's virginal motherhood.

(1Cor 7, 28-29) I tell you, brothers, the time is running out

[28] If you marry, however, you do not sin, nor does an unmarried woman sin if she marries; but such people will experience affliction in their earthly life, and I would like to spare you that. [29] I tell you, brothers, the time is running out. From now on, let those having wives act as not having them,

(CCC 2346) Charity is the *form* of all the virtues. Under its influence, chastity appears as a school of the gift of the person. Self-mastery is ordered to the gift of self. Chastity leads him who practices it to become a witness to his neighbor of God's fidelity and loving kindness. (CCC 922) From apostolic times Christian virgins and widows (*Vita consecrata* 7), called by the Lord to cling only to him with greater freedom of heart, body, and spirit, have decided with the Church's approval to live in a state of virginity or perpetual chastity "for the sake of the Kingdom of heaven" (Mt 19:12; cf. 1 Cor 7:34-36).

(1Cor 7, 30-31) The world in its present form is passing

[30] those weeping as not weeping, those rejoicing as not rejoicing, those buying as not owning, [31] those using the world as not using it fully. For the world in its present form is passing away.

(CCC 2348) All the baptized are called to chastity. The Christian has "put on Christ" (Gal 3:27), the model for all chastity. All Christ's faithful are called to lead a chaste life in keeping with their particular states of life. At the moment of his Baptism, the Christian is pledged to lead his affective life in chastity. (CCC 2349) "People should cultivate [chastity] in the way that is suited to their state of life. Some profess virginity or consecrated celibacy which enables them to give themselves to God alone with an undivided heart in a remarkable manner. Others live in the way prescribed for all by the moral law, whether they are married or single" (CDF, *Persona humana* 11). Married people are called to live conjugal chastity; others practice chastity in continence: There are three forms of the virtue

of chastity: the first is that of spouses, the second that of widows, and the third that of virgins. We do not praise any one of them to the exclusion of the others.... This is what makes for the richness of the discipline of the Church (St. Ambrose, *De viduis* 4, 23: PL 16, 255A).

### (1Cor 7, 32-35) Anxious about the things of the Lord

[32] I should like you to be free of anxieties. An unmarried man is anxious about the things of the Lord, how he may please the Lord. [33] But a married man is anxious about the things of the world, how he may please his wife, [34] and he is divided. An unmarried woman or a virgin is anxious about the things of the Lord, so that she may be holy in both body and spirit. A married woman, on the other hand, is anxious about the things of the world, how she may please her husband. [35] I am telling you this for your own benefit, not to impose a restraint upon you, but for the sake of propriety and adherence to the Lord without distraction.

(CCC 506 Mary) is a virgin because *her virginity is the sign of her faith* "unadulterated by any doubt", and of her undivided gift of herself to God's will (LG 63; cf. 1 Cor 7:34-35). It is her faith that enables her to become the mother of the Savior: "Mary is more blessed because she embraces faith in Christ than because she conceives the flesh of Christ" (St. Augustine, *De virg.* 3: PL 40, 398). (CCC 507) At once virgin and mother, Mary is the symbol and the most perfect realization of the Church: "the Church indeed... by receiving the word of God in faith becomes herself a mother. By preaching and Baptism she brings forth sons, who are conceived by the Holy Spirit and born of God, to a new and immortal life. She herself is a virgin, who keeps in its entirety and purity the faith she pledged to her spouse" (LG 64; cf. 63). (CCC 923) "Virgins who, committed to the holy plan of following Christ more closely, are consecrated to God by the diocesan bishop according to the approved liturgical rite, are betrothed mystically to Christ, the Son of God, and are dedicated to the service of the Church" (CIC, can. 604 § 1). By this solemn rite (*Consecratio Virginum*), the virgin is "constituted... a sacred person, a transcendent sign of the Church's love for Christ, and an eschatological image of this heavenly Bride of Christ and of the life to come" (*Ordo Consecrationis Virginum, Praenotanda* 1). (CCC 924) "As with other forms of consecrated life," the order of virgins establishes the woman living in the world (or the nun) in prayer, penance, service of her brethren, and apostolic activity, according to the state of life and spiritual gifts given to her (Cf. CIC, can. 604 § 1; OCV *Praenotanda* 2). Consecrated virgins can form themselves into associations to observe their commitment more faithfully (Cf. CIC, can. 604 § 2).

### (1Cor 7, 36-40) And I think that I too have the Spirit of God

[36] If anyone thinks he is behaving improperly toward his virgin, and if a critical moment has come and so it has to be, let him do as he wishes. He is committing no sin; let them get married. [37] The one who stands firm in his resolve, however, who is not under compulsion but has power over his own will, and has made up his mind to keep his virgin, will be doing well. [38] So then, the one who marries his virgin does well; the one who does not marry her will do better. [39] A wife is bound to her husband as long as he lives. But if her husband dies, she is free to be married to whomever she wishes, provided that it be in the Lord. [40] She is more

blessed, though, in my opinion, if she remains as she is, and I think that I too have the Spirit of God.

(CCC 1618) Christ is the center of all Christian life. The bond with him takes precedence over all other bonds, familial or social (Cf. Lk 14:26; Mk 10:28-31). From the very beginning of the Church there have been men and women who have renounced the great good of marriage to follow the Lamb wherever he goes, to be intent on the things of the Lord, to seek to please him, and to go out to meet the Bridegroom who is coming (Cf. Rev 14:4; 1 Cor 7:32; Mt 2:56). Christ himself has invited certain persons to follow him in this way of life, of which he remains the model: "For there are eunuchs who have been so from birth, and there are eunuchs who have been made eunuchs by men, and there are eunuchs who have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. He who is able to receive this, let him receive it" (Mt 19:12). (CCC 1619) Virginity for the sake of the kingdom of heaven is an unfolding of baptismal grace, a powerful sign of the supremacy of the bond with Christ and of the ardent expectation of his return, a sign which also recalls that marriage is a reality of this present age which is passing away (Cf. Mk 12:25; 1 Cor 7:31). (CCC 1620) Both the sacrament of Matrimony and virginity for the Kingdom of God come from the Lord himself. It is he who gives them meaning and grants them the grace which is indispensable for living them out in conformity with his will (Cf. Mt 19:3-12). Esteem of virginity for the sake of the kingdom (Cf. LG 42; PC 12; OT 10) and the Christian understanding of marriage are inseparable, and they reinforce each other: Whoever denigrates marriage also diminishes the glory of virginity. Whoever praises it makes virginity more admirable and resplendent. What appears good only in comparison with evil would not be truly good. The most excellent good is something even better than what is admitted to be good (St. John Chrysostom, *De virg.* 10, 1: PG 48, 540; Cf. John Paul II, *FC* 16).

## 1Corinthians 8

(1Cor 8, 1-3) If one loves God, one is known by him

[1] Now in regard to meat sacrificed to idols: we realize that "all of us have knowledge"; knowledge inflates with pride, but love builds up. [2] If anyone supposes he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. [3] But if one loves God, one is known by him.

(CCC 1112) The mission of the Holy Spirit in the liturgy of the Church is to prepare the assembly to encounter Christ; to recall and manifest Christ to the faith of the assembly; to make the saving work of Christ present and active by his transforming power; and to make the gift of communion bear fruit in the Church. (CCC 2097) To adore God is to acknowledge, in respect and absolute submission, the "nothingness of the creature" who would not exist but for God. To adore God is to praise and exalt him and to humble oneself, as Mary did in the Magnificat, confessing with gratitude that he has done great things and holy is his name (cf. Lk 1:46-49). The worship of the one God sets man free from turning in on himself, from the slavery of sin and the idolatry of the world. (CCC 2098) The acts of faith, hope, and charity enjoined by the first commandment are accomplished in prayer. Lifting up the mind toward God is an expression of our adoration of God: prayer of praise and thanksgiving, intercession and petition. Prayer is an indispensable condition for being able to obey God's commandments. "[We] ought always to pray and not lose heart" (Lk 18:1).

### (1Cor 8, 4-5) There is no God but one

[4] So about the eating of meat sacrificed to idols: we know that "there is no idol in the world," and that "there is no God but one." [5] Indeed, even though there are so-called gods in heaven and on earth (there are, to be sure, many "gods" and many "lords"),

(CCC 231) The God of our faith has revealed himself as He who is; and he has made himself known as "abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness" (Ex 34:6). God's very being is Truth and Love. (CCC 232) Christians are baptized "in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit" (Mt 28:19). Before receiving the sacrament, they respond to a three-part question when asked to confess the Father, the Son and the Spirit: "I do." "The faith of all Christians rests on the Trinity" (St. Caesarius of Arles, *Sermo 9, Exp. symb.*: CCL 103, 47). (CCC 233) Christians are baptized in the *name* of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: not in their *names* (Cf. Profession of faith of Pope Vigilius I (552): DS 415), for there is only one God, the almighty Father, his only Son and the Holy Spirit: the Most Holy Trinity. (CCC 234) The mystery of the Most Holy Trinity is the central mystery of Christian faith and life. It is the mystery of God in himself. It is therefore the source of all the other mysteries of faith, the light that enlightens them. It is the most fundamental and essential teaching in the "hierarchy of the truths of faith" (GCD 43). The whole history of salvation is identical with the history of the way and the means by which the one true God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, reveals himself to men "and reconciles and unites with himself those who turn away from sin" (GCD 47).

### (1Cor 8, 6) There is one God the Father and one Lord

[6] yet for us there is one God, the Father, from whom all things are and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things are and through whom we exist.

(CCC 237) The Trinity is a mystery of faith in the strict sense, one of the "mysteries that are hidden in God, which can never be known unless they are revealed by God" (*Dei Filius* 4: DS 3015). To be sure, God has left traces of his Trinitarian being in his work of creation and in his Revelation throughout the Old Testament. But his inmost Being as Holy Trinity is a mystery that is inaccessible to reason alone or even to Israel's faith before the Incarnation of God's Son and the sending of the Holy Spirit. (CCC 238) Many religions invoke God as "Father". The deity is often considered the "father of gods and of men". In Israel, God is called "Father" inasmuch as he is Creator of the world (Cf. Dt 32:6; Mal 2:10). Even more, God is Father because of the covenant and the gift of the law to Israel, "his first-born son" (Ex 4:22). God is also called the Father of the king of Israel. Most especially he is "the Father of the poor", of the orphaned and the widowed, who are under his loving protection (Cf. 2 Sam 7:14; Ps 68:6).

### (1Cor 8, 7-8) Food will not bring us closer to God

[7] But not all have this knowledge. There are some who have been so used to idolatry up until now that, when they eat meat sacrificed to idols, their conscience, which is weak, is defiled. [8] Now food will not bring us closer to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, nor are we better off if we do.

(CCC 1730) God created man a rational being, conferring on him the dignity of a person who can initiate and control his own actions. "God willed that

man should be 'left in the hand of his own counsel,' so that he might of his own accord seek his Creator and freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him" (GS 17; Sir 15:14). Man is rational and therefore like God; he is created with free will and is master over his acts (St. Irenaeus, *Adv. haeres.* 4, 4, 3: PG 7/1, 983). (CCC 1731) Freedom is the power, rooted in reason and will, to act or not to act, to do this or that, and so to perform deliberate actions on one's own responsibility. By free will one shapes one's own life. Human freedom is a force for growth and maturity in truth and goodness; it attains its perfection when directed toward God, our beatitude.

### **(1Cor 8, 9) This liberty becomes a stumbling block**

**[9] But make sure that this liberty of yours in no way becomes a stumbling block to the weak.**

(CCC 1739 *Freedom and sin.* Man's freedom is limited and fallible. In fact, man failed. He freely sinned. By refusing God's plan of love, he deceived himself and became a slave to sin. This first alienation engendered a multitude of others. From its outset, human history attests the wretchedness and oppression born of the human heart in consequence of the abuse of freedom. (CCC 1740) *Threats to freedom.* The exercise of freedom does not imply a right to say or do everything. It is false to maintain that man, "the subject of this freedom," is "an individual who is fully self-sufficient and whose finality is the satisfaction of his own interests in the enjoyment of earthly goods" (CDF, instruction, *Libertatis conscientia* 13). Moreover, the economic, social, political, and cultural conditions that are needed for a just exercise of freedom are too often disregarded or violated. Such situations of blindness and injustice injure the moral life and involve the strong as well as the weak in the temptation to sin against charity. By deviating from the moral law man violates his own freedom, becomes imprisoned within himself, disrupts neighborly fellowship, and rebels against divine truth.

### **(1Cor 8, 10-12) You are sinning against Christ**

**[10] If someone sees you, with your knowledge, reclining at table in the temple of an idol, may not his conscience too, weak as it is, be "built up" to eat the meat sacrificed to idols? [11] Thus through your knowledge, the weak person is brought to destruction, the brother for whom Christ died. [12] When you sin in this way against your brothers and wound their consciences, weak as they are, you are sinning against Christ.**

(CCC 1790) A human being must always obey the certain judgment of his conscience. If he were deliberately to act against it, he would condemn himself. Yet it can happen that moral conscience remains in ignorance and makes erroneous judgments about acts to be performed or already committed. (CCC 1791) This ignorance can often be imputed to personal responsibility. This is the case when a man "takes little trouble to find out what is true and good, or when conscience is by degrees almost blinded through the habit of committing sin" (GS 16). In such cases, the person is culpable for the evil he commits. (CCC 1792) Ignorance of Christ and his Gospel, bad example given by others, enslavement to one's passions, assertion of a mistaken notion of autonomy of conscience, rejection of the Church's authority and her teaching, lack of conversion and of charity: these can be at the source of errors of judgment in moral conduct.

(1Cor 8, 13) I may not cause my brother to sin

[13] Therefore, if food causes my brother to sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I may not cause my brother to sin.

(CCC 2285) Scandal takes on a particular gravity by reason of the authority of those who cause it or the weakness of those who are scandalized. It prompted our Lord to utter this curse: "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him to have a great millstone fastened round his neck and to be drowned in the depth of the sea" (Mt 18:6; Cf. 1 Cor 8:10-13). Scandal is grave when given by those who by nature or office are obliged to teach and educate others. Jesus reproaches the scribes and Pharisees on this account: he likens them to wolves in sheep's clothing (Cf. Mt 7:15). (CCC 1789) Some rules apply in every case: - One may never do evil so that good may result from it; - the Golden Rule: "Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them" (Mt 7:12; cf. Lk 6:31; Tob 4:15) - charity always proceeds by way of respect for one's neighbor and his conscience: "Thus sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience... you sin against Christ" (1 Cor 8:12). Therefore "it is right not to... do anything that makes your brother stumble" (Rom 14:21).