

Ten After Ten Session 100: The First Commandment, continued

2095 The theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity inform and give life to the moral virtues. Thus charity leads us to render to God what we as creatures owe him in all justice. The virtue of religion disposes us to have this attitude.

2096 Adoration is the first act of the virtue of religion. To adore God is to acknowledge him as God, as the Creator and Savior, the Lord and Master of everything that exists, as infinite and merciful Love.

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...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.

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.

2099 It is right to offer sacrifice to God as a sign of adoration and gratitude, supplication and communion: Every action done so as to cling to God in communion of holiness, and thus achieve blessedness, is a true sacrifice.

2100 The only perfect sacrifice is the one that Christ offered on the cross as a total offering to the Father’s love and for our salvation. By uniting ourselves with his sacrifice we can make our lives a sacrifice to God.

2101 In many circumstances, the Christian is called to make promises to God. Baptism and Confirmation, Matrimony and Holy Orders always entail promises. Out of personal devotion, the Christian may also promise to God this action, that prayer, this alms-giving, that pilgrimage, and so forth. Fidelity to promises made to God is a sign of the respect owed to the divine majesty and of love for a faithful God.

2102 A vow is a deliberate and free promise made to God concerning a possible and better good which must be fulfilled by reason of the virtue of religion. A vow is an act of devotion in which the Christian dedicates himself to God or promises him some good work.

2103 The Church recognizes an exemplary value in the vows to practice the evangelical counsels.

2104 “All men are bound to seek the truth, especially in what concerns God and his Church, and to embrace it and hold on to it as they come to know it...It does not contradict...the requirement of charity, which urges Christians to treat with love, prudence and patience those who are in error or ignorance with regard to the faith.

2105 The duty of offering God genuine worship concerns man both individually and socially...By constantly evangelizing men, the Church works toward enabling them “to infuse

the Christian spirit into the mentality and mores, laws and structures of the communities in which [they] live.” The social duty of Christians is to respect and awaken in each man the love of the true and the good. It requires them to make known the worship of the one true religion which subsists in the Catholic and apostolic Church. Christians are called to be the light of the world. Thus, the Church shows forth the kingship of Christ over all creation and in particular over human societies.

2106 “Nobody may be forced to act against his convictions, nor is anyone to be restrained from acting in accordance with his conscience in religious matters in private or in public, alone or in association with others, within due limits.”³⁴ This right is based on the very nature of the human person, whose dignity enables him freely to assent to the divine truth which transcends the temporal order.

2107 If because of the circumstances of a particular people special civil recognition is given to one religious community in the constitutional organization of a state, the right of all citizens and religious communities to religious freedom must be recognized and respected as well.

2108 The right to religious liberty is neither a moral license to adhere to error, nor a supposed right to error, but rather a natural right of the human person to civil liberty, i.e., immunity, within just limits, from external constraint in religious matters by political authorities. This natural right ought to be acknowledged in the juridical order of society in such a way that it constitutes a civil right.

2109 The right to religious liberty can of itself be neither unlimited nor limited only by a “public order” conceived in a positivist or naturalist manner. The “due limits” which are inherent in it must be determined for each social situation by political prudence, according to the requirements of the common good, and ratified by the civil authority in accordance with “legal principles which are in conformity with the objective moral order.”