

# **Catechetical Moments**

## **The Fifth Commandment**

March 20, 2022

“Thou shall not kill.”

Pretty straight forward, uncomplicated.

Jesus faced his own murder. His eleven best friends were behind him. His very best friend Simon-Peter was already swinging his sword. The army of angels was at-the-ready, waiting for a mere nod from their Master's head. Yet Jesus, affirming the Commandment's simplicity, exhorts, **“Put away your swords! Those who live by the sword will die by the sword.”**

How could Jesus, the human face of God who is love itself, destroy what his own action created? How could Jesus resort to doing what he would soon die and rise to defeat?

Each and every one of us enjoys sacred value – a strand of sacred DNA. Each one of us remains in a special and unique love relationship with God, whether or not we want it or even realize it. Each one of us always has a path back to God. That's God's covenant with us.

How could we kill? How can we kill? But we've become pretty good at it.

- We continue to dig up archeological evidence that we have been practicing, even perfecting, the art of killing for millennia
- Holy Scripture record's God's chosen people indulging in what today would be branded genocide
- Even popes have rationalized and financed killing
- The “war to end all wars” didn't
- The bomb to end all future bombings hasn't
- The Hippocratic oath is a mere guideline for some

- Our own country's Constitution can be blind to an individual's possession of weapons made for warfare
- Nations spend countless trillions on the waging of war yet fractions on the waging of peace
- We even debate what constitutes life itself. When does life begin? How much external value must a life exhibit so as not to be killed?

Our conscience must always reflect and affirm the simple fact “God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being.” (CCC, no. 2258 citing *The Gift of Life*, no. 5)

**Next Time:** The Sixth Commandment