



Exodus 20: 1 - 17	Deuteronomy 5: 6 - 21
VI. You shall not commit adultery	VI. You shall not commit adultery

Today we will learn about marriage and the Sixth Commandment. We can think of the Sixth Commandment as a statement about the beauty of marriage. Yet, such a commandment would hardly be needed if the beauty of marriage overwhelmed the temptations to being unfaithful. Why is the beauty of marriage powerless at times to prevent adultery? The Catechism of the Catholic Church teaches: "In marriage the physical intimacy of the spouses becomes a sign and pledge of spiritual communion." (See §2360) We can substitute for the word 'beauty' the phrase 'spiritual communion'. Now we can reread our need for the Sixth Commandment as the fact that the desire for a spiritual communion seemingly does not exist for many people today. The lack of this desire we understand when we see ourselves consumed and overwhelmed by our busy lives, our lust for possessions and the like. Rightly the Catechism teaches that the sin of adultery treats women as objects and possessions. For example, Section 2355 declares: Prostitution does injury to the dignity of the person...reducing the person to an instrument of sexual pleasure." As our love of God becomes cold so does our love of neighbor grow cold. When we look at such institutions as slavery and such feelings as prejudice we realize that dehumanizing others has been a part of human history. Why do we have such an ability? Listen to the First Letter of John: "If someone who has worldly means sees a brother in need and refuses him compassion, how can the love of God remain in him?" (1 Jn 3, 17) "Whoever is without love does not know God; for God is love." (1 Jn 4, 8) "If anyone says, 'I love God,' but hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen." (1 Jn 4, 20) Our freedom allows us to not love God. There is such thing as love without the freedom to be disobedient to God. Maybe we wish that God would not allow us this ability to dehumanize one another? God would need to be cruel in order to remove our freedom. The better outlook is to encourage one another to love God with all our heart, mind, and strength. Our problems today with human trafficking, pornography, prostitution, child abuse, and more are always first a problem with our love for God. Today, Palm Sunday, we should be sincere about our desire to follow Christ!