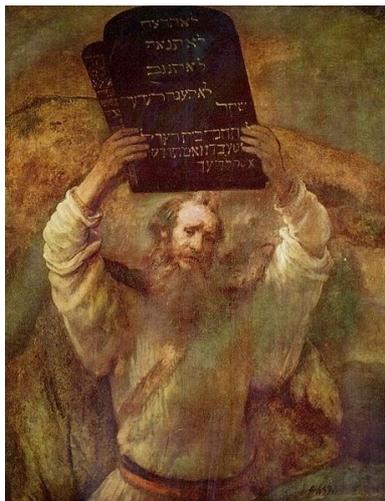


THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

LAW AND GRACE. THE CHURCH, MOTHER AND TEACHER

Biblical Reflection: Col 1:2b-6

Called to beatitude but wounded by sin, man stands in need of salvation from God. Divine help comes to him in Christ through the law that guides him and the grace that sustains him. (CCC 1949)



The natural law, present in the heart of each man and established by reason, is universal in its precepts and its authority extends to all men. It expresses the dignity of the person and determines the basis for his fundamental rights and duties. (CCC 1956)

The Old Law is a preparation for the Gospel... It prophesies and presages the work of liberation from sin which will be fulfilled in Christ" it provides the New Testament with images, "types," and symbols for expressing the life according to the Spirit... (CCC 1964)

Grace is first and foremost the gift of the Spirit who justifies and sanctifies us. But grace also includes the gifts that the Spirit grants us to associate us with his work, to enable us to collaborate in the salvation of others and in the growth of the Body of Christ, the Church. (CCC 2003)

It is in the Church, in communion with all the baptized, that the Christian fulfills his vocation. From the Church he receives the Word of God containing the teachings of "the law of Christ" ... (CCC 2030)

The precepts of the Church concern the moral and Christian life united with the liturgy and nourished by it. (CCC 2048)

"God wrote on the tablets of the Law what men did not read in their hearts" St. Augustine, En. In Ps. 57,1.. (CCC 1962)

Questions for discussion:

- **What is the most marvelous thing about the grace of God acting in your life?**
- **St. Augustine said that theft is condemned in God's law but it is as well condemned in the natural law (see CCC 1958). What other examples you can think where the same commandments are in both laws?**
- **A man asked Jesus about the most important commandment (Mt 22:36-39). How did Jesus reply to him? In your opinion, is there anything in God's Law or the natural law that will not be included in Jesus response?**
- **The Catechism says that "the New Law is a law of love, a law of grace, a law of freedom" (CCC 1985). Explain what that means to you.**
- **Do you think that God's Law is an obstacle to your freedom? Explain your thoughts.**

Further reading: Catechism of the Catholic Church, numbers 1949-2051