

THE CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY

Biblical Reflection: Gn 2:15-17

The more one does what is good, the freer one becomes. There is no true freedom except in the service of what is good and just. The choice to disobey and do evil is an abuse of freedom and leads to “the slavery of sin.” (CCC 1733)

Freedom makes man responsible for his acts to the extent that they are voluntary. Progress in virtue, knowledge of the good, and asceticism enhance the mastery of the will over the acts. (CCC 1734)



The right to the exercise of freedom, especially in religious and moral matters, is an inalienable requirement of the dignity of man. But the exercise of freedom does not entail the putative right to say or do anything. (CCC 1747)

The object, the intention, and the circumstances make up the three “sources” of the morality of human acts. (CCC 1757)

In the passions, as movements of the sensitive appetite, there is neither moral good nor evil. But insofar as they engage reason and will, there is moral good or evil in them. (CCC 1773)

... The upright will orders the movements of the senses it appropriates to the good and to beatitude; an evil will succumbs to disordered passions and exacerbates them. Emotions and feelings can be taken up into the virtues or perverted by the vices. (CCC 1768)

The perfection of the moral good consists in man’s being moved to the good not only by his will but also by his “heart”. (CCC 1775)

“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. (CCC 1730)

Questions for discussion:

- **Let us reflect upon the words of God to Adam upon his creation: “You are free to eat from any of the trees of the garden except the tree of knowledge of good and bad. From that tree you shall not eat...” (Gn 2:16-17). How this passage could help you to understand freedom and responsibility? Please, explain your thoughts about it.**
- **How something legal could also be illicit? Please give some examples.**
- **In what instances could a passionate love be something morally good or bad? Discuss.**
- **At a given moment I may wish bad things to a person who hurt me, but at the same time I do not accept that idea and it does not find a place in my heart. Is that morally wrong? Why?**

Further reading: Catechism of the Catholic Church, numbers 1730-1775