

UNIT THREE: HOW WE LIVE

LESSON 1: THE COMMANDMENTS: A Call to Love

CONTENTS OF LESSON:

1. **Recapitulation and Introduction:**
 - i. The 'House of Faith' is based on God's Word to us (Divine Revelation). We heard of the work of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in creating, saving and sanctifying us. [FIRST YEAR]
 - ii. All those who believe and accept God's truth live in this house. [SECOND YEAR UNIT1]
 - iii. God cares for his family through the liturgy, especially the Sacraments. [UNIT2]
 - iv. God calls us to LIVE as members of this family. [UNIT3] [CCC1692]
2. The incident of Jesus' encounter with the rich young man brings out the truth that:
 - i. All human beings have a built-in desire for eternal happiness. [CCC1718-19]
 - ii. Jesus invites us to follow him and obey the Commandments. This will bring us life and happiness. [CCC2053]
 - iii. Each of us has the freedom to choose: obedience and happiness OR disobedience and sorrow. [CCC1730]
3. The Ten Commandments (Decalogue or 'ten words') were given to us through Moses. They are God's words and are relevant for all time. They were already 'written on our hearts' by God. Obedience to the Commandments is a response to God's love; since he first loved us and liberated us. [CCC 2056, 2072, 2061-62]
4. Jesus summed up the Ten Commandments by giving us the 2 'great' commandments: to love God and love our neighbour. These two commandments are closely connected. [CCC2055]

REFERENCES: Deut 5: 6-22; Mt 19:16-22; 22:34-40; Mk 10:21; Jn 15:9-11; 1Jn 4:19, 21.

MATERIALS NEEDED: Handouts, Bibles, blackboard.

I. STARTER:

[Draw an empty house with a cross.]

- Before we start the new unit let's look at what we have already learnt. Suppose this is the 'House of Faith'.

[Write HOUSE OF FAITH above the house.]

- I have 4 questions which you should be able to answer. The first is: **What is the house based on?** *[Draw hill]*
[The house of faith is based on God's Word to us: God revealed himself to us and we believed.]

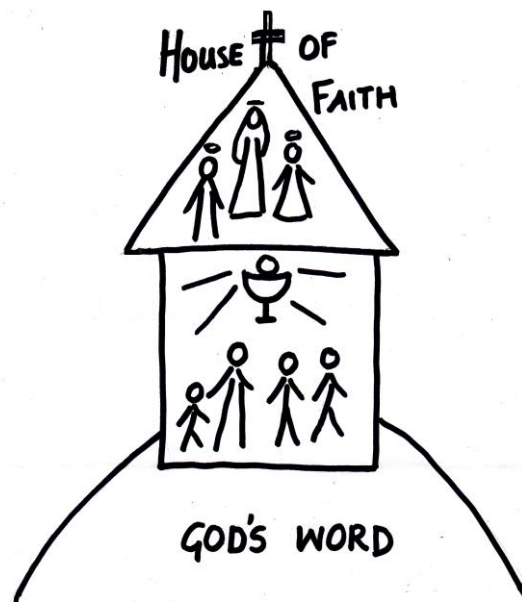
This is what we learnt last year. We got to know about God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit; how God created the universe and human beings; how we sinned and death entered the world; how God prepared the way for Jesus; how Jesus came and lived among us, taught and healed and finally died and rose to life again. We learned how the Holy Spirit came and how the Church was born.

- This brings us to our second question: **Who lives in this house of faith?** *[Draw people.]*
[All who believe and accept God and his truths.]

We studied about our Church family in the first unit this year. We realized that the Church includes all the saints in heaven as well as those in purgatory. We learnt about Mother Mary, a very special member of our family. *[Draw figures in the roof.]*

- Our third question: **How does God care for this family?**
[Through the liturgy; especially the Sacraments.]

We saw how God gives us life, nourishes, heals and strengthens us through the Sacraments. *[Draw chalice and host.]* This was the last unit we studied.



- The last question: **God has done all this for us. What does he ask from us? What is our part?**

[We must live as his children.]

We already talked about faith. Faith is not just saying, “Yes, I believe in God!” but it means doing what he asked, like Abraham and Mary. This is what we will be studying in this last unit. We will be thinking about how I must LIVE as a Christian, as a member of God’s family.

II. DEVELOPMENT:

- Let’s see what Jesus has to say about it. Once a young man came up to Jesus. He was a ‘cool’ person: young, rich, and powerful (The Bible tells us that he was a ruler). But in spite of all this, he was still in search of something. He hoped that Jesus could tell him how to find it. Let’s see if you can understand what was happening here and what it means for us.

[Give out the handouts. Students read the passage from the Bible and try to answer the questions. This could be done in small groups. Using their answers, bring out:]

1. What was the young man looking for? *[Eternal life, or perhaps we could say happiness forever.]*
2. What was Jesus’ answer? *[Keep the commandments.]* The young man again asked, “Which ones?” and Jesus give him a list of the important ones in relation to others; finally he summed them all up by saying, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.”
3. What words of Jesus express an invitation? *[“Come, follow me.”]* Jesus was not giving another answer to the young man, but the same answer in a better way. He was showing the young man that the best way to obey the Commandments was to be his follower: to learn from him and obey him. (In Mark’s gospel it is written, “Jesus, looking at him, LOVED HIM and said, “You lack one thing...” (Mk10:21) The invitation he gave was out of love. He knew what the young man really needed and he wanted to give it to him.)
4. Why do you think the young man refused the invitation? *[He had many possessions and was attached to them. Maybe he didn’t really trust Jesus.]* Whatever the reason, he made a choice and went away sad.
5. What does this story tell you about ourselves?
 - i. Deep down, all of us are looking for life and happiness. This is something that we are programmed for. God placed this desire in our hearts.
 - ii. Jesus invites each of us to put away any obstacles and follow him. That means to learn from him and obey him. We must obey the commandments. This is the way to eternal life and happiness.
 - iii. Like the young man, we also have freedom to choose. God does not force anyone to follow him. It is up to us. We can choose happiness or sorrow; life or death.
- Let’s look at the Commandments. Where did they come from? *[Moses received them from God on the mountain.]*
- DECALOGUE is another word used for the Ten Commandments. It means ‘10 WORDS’. *[Students enter this. As a class, the passage from Deuteronomy is read and the Commandments:]*
 1. I am the Lord your God. You shall not have strange gods before me.
 2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vain.
 3. Remember to keep holy the Lord’s Day. (We will study later why the Sabbath Day was changed to the Lord’s Day.)
 4. Honour your father and your mother.
 5. You shall not kill.
 6. You shall not commit adultery.
 7. You shall not steal.
 8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
 9. You shall not covet your neighbour’s wife.
 10. You shall not covet your neighbour’s goods.

- What did God remind the people about at the beginning of the Commandments? [*He said, 'I am the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery.'*]
- Why do you think he said this? [*He was saying, "I have loved you first. I have done everything for you. It is only right that you should love and obey me. Look at all I have done for you. Should you not trust me and do what I say for your own good?"*]
- Why do you think there are only 3 commandments on one and 7 on the other tablet? Why not 5 and 5? [*Because the first 3 relate to God and the other 7 to others.*]
- Out of all the commandments, which do you think is the most important? [*Students respond*]
A lawyer once asked Jesus the same question. Let's see what reply he gave.
[Students read Matthew 22:34-40 and fill in the 'great' commandments below the tablets:]
 1. You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind.
 2. You shall love your neighbour as yourself.
- So according to Jesus, which is the greatest commandment? [*To love God with all our hearts.*]
- Why do you think Jesus added another commandment when he was asked only about the greatest one? [*He wanted to make it clear that both are connected.*] If we truly love God, we try to make him happy; and that means we love his children too. Saint John wrote, "Those who say 'I love God' and hate their brothers or sisters are liars."
- What is the connection between Jesus' reply and the 10 commandments? [*The first three Commandments are summed up in the great commandment 'Love God' and the remaining 7 are summed up in the second commandment of Jesus, 'Love your neighbour as you love yourself.'*]
- So how should we complete the heading? THE COMMANDMENTS: A call to? [*LOVE.*]
[If they suggest the word 'LIFE', 'LIFE and LOVE' could be used. Students enter the word.]

III. INTERIORISATION/PRAAYER:

- Think about all we have been reading and discussing. The commandments are actually 'written in our hearts'. This means that even if no one tells us so, deep down every human being knows that he should love God and love others.
- Today, put yourself in the place of the rich young man. Jesus speaks personally to each one of us, not just once in our life, but every day.
Every day he invites you to follow him, to be with him. This means to obey him and do what he asks. Like the young man, he looks at you and loves you. But he also respects your freedom. You are free to choose. If you do choose him, he gives you the grace to follow him.
- Spend a few minutes in silence and bring yourself before Jesus. He is the one who can lead you to eternal life and happiness. Listen to him speak.

[After the students have settled down, someone reads (slowly):]

Jesus said: 'As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; remain in my love...

If you keep my commandments you will remain in my love... I have said these things to you so that my joy may be in you, and that your joy may be complete." (John 15:9-11)

[Students write a reply to Jesus.]

IV. ACTIVITY:

[Students plan and enact a short play: An encounter of Jesus with a modern-day personality. E.g. a movie star/ successful businessman/ politician. They bring out the person's desire for happiness and Jesus' invitation. The end could be happy or sad. If there are many students, they could work in groups and do different presentations.]

HOME ASSIGNMENT: ⇨ Read the handout.