

# AN IGNATIAN METHOD OF PRAYER TO PRAY ON THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

(St. Ignatius' Spiritual Exercises Nos. 238 to 243)

## It Consists on Reflecting, Praying and Examining Ourselves on the Practice of Our Christian Faith

### Introduction:

- ✓ *St. Ignatius, anxious to help people to improve the quality of their Christian life, offered us in his Spiritual Exercises a prayer method of Self-examination. .*
- ✓ *This method helps us to faithfully keep God's Commandments and to improve the quality of our Christian living.*

## THE TEN COMMANDMENTS"

**In WHAT THEY COMMAND US  
And in WHAT THEY FORBID.**

### Preparation:

- Before you begin this exercise, decide the length of time you want to spend in prayer and then strictly stick to that time.
- Quiet down and relax.
- Place yourself in the presence of God and for a short while remain in silence before Him
- Ask for the assistance of the Holy Spirit to lead you in prayer.
- To reap the fruits of this method of prayer, kindly, strictly follow to the procedure laid down by Ignatius quoted below.

### Petition:

Ask God our Lord for TWO GRACES:

**One: to know in what way, in the past, you failed to keep the Commandments,**

**Two: to help you, in future, how to keep them more faithfully and serve Him better.**

### Personal Examination:

- Begin by meditating on the First Commandment. (Cfr: Appendix Below)
- **First: Examine yourself on how faithfully you have kept it.** Then, thank God for the times He helped you to keep it.
- **Second: Examine yourself in what way you have failed to keep it.** After that, - make an act of contrition - **say sorry to God** - for the times you failed to keep his commandment, and beg Him for the grace to be more faithful in future.

- After you finished examining yourself and praying on the First Commandment, say one ‘Our Farther and a Hail Mary’
- Then, take the second Commandment and follow the same procedure, then the next and next commandment until your time for prayer is over

### **Closure:**

- If in the time you allotted to prayer you cannot cover the Ten Commandments, later on, some time or other, following the same method, carry on mediating on them, starting at the point where you stopped previously.
- End by saying The Our Father and reciting or singing an appropriate hymn.

## **APPENDIX;SUMMARY DESCRIPTION OF THE TEN COMMANDMENTS IN THEIR POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE ASPECTS:**

### **1<sup>st</sup>. COMMANDMENT: I, the Lord, am your God. You shall not have other gods before me.**

**Things Commanded:** Love of God, Faith and Trust. Thanksgiving, Praise, Adoration and Obedience to God.

**Things Forbidden:** Unbelief, Indifference in your religious practice, Superstition and Idol worship. Giving up your faith. Joining other religious groups. Neglect of prayer.

### **2<sup>nd</sup>. COMMANDMENT: You shall not take the name of the Lord, your God, in vain..**

**Things Commanded:** Praise and reverence of God’s name, Keep vows, oaths and promises made to God.

**Things Forbidden:** Blasphemy, Complaining and talking against God, Cursing, Making fun of sacred things, Misusing the Sacraments and sacred things, False oaths and swearing.

### **3<sup>rd</sup>. COMMANDMENT: Remember to keep holy the Sabbath day.**

**Things Commanded:** On Sundays you have to make time for God, for your family, for yourself and for others. Make your Sunday a ‘Holy Day’, not just a ‘Holiday’ by attending Mass, Scripture reading, extra time for prayer, works of charity and acts of service to your neighbors.

**Things Forbidden:** Missing Sunday Mass, On Sundays spending too much time for yourself or in worldly things and entertainments, enjoying sinful and dangerous pleasures.

### **4<sup>th</sup>. COMMANDMENT. Honor your Father and Mother.**

**Things Commanded:** Love the members of your family especially your parents, children and grandparents. Take care of their needs: material, emotional and spiritual.. See to the Christian education of your children. Respect lawful authorities, both Church and Government. Willingly listen to them and humbly accept their correction. . Keep the laws both of the Church and of the state.

**Things Forbidden;** Neglecting your family members, specially, you’re Parents in their economical and emotional needs, much more in their old age. Disobedience.

Insubordination. Negative criticisms and disrespect to authorities both ecclesiastical and civil. Breaking laws, both civil and ecclesiastical.

**5<sup>th</sup>. COMMANDMENT: *You shall not kill.***

**Things Commanded:** Love others as you love yourself. Respect for Human life at all stages and circumstances from conception to old age. Caring for the well being of others irrespectively of caste, religion, economical status, sex, etc. Be sensitive to the feelings of others, Respect and safeguard their health, their bodies, their reputation and dignity. Take proper care of your health and safety.

**Things Forbidden:**

Murder. Abortion, Mercy killing, Abuses, Striking. Assaulting others physically or verbally. Harming others' health or their feelings and personal integrity. Blackmail. Suicide, Neglect of your health. Harmful habits. Addictions such as abuse of alcohol, drugs, over-eating. Etc.

**6<sup>th</sup> & 9<sup>th</sup> COMMANDMENTS: *You shall not commit adultery.***

**Things Commanded:** Proper use of sex, Fidelity to your marriage vows. Mutual love among the spouses. Providing for the sexual, emotional, economical, physical and religious needs of your partner.

**Things Forbidden:** Pre-marital sex, Extra-marital Sex, Adultery, Immoral methods of birth control, Divorce, Rape, Masturbation, Pornography and Unnatural sex practices like homosexuality, promiscuity, Etc.

**7<sup>th</sup> & 10<sup>th</sup> COMMANDMENTS: *You shall not Steal.***

**Things Commanded:** Justice and fairness to one and all. Respect for others' property. Keep contracts and other agreements. Pay just salaries to your employees. Give to each one his due.

**Things Forbidden:** Stealing, Cheating, Corruption. Giving and taking bribes and "Haptas" Extortion. Misappropriation. Depriving others from their rights and properties, Exploitation of any type. Taking advantage of others' plight and ignorance. Greed for money and properties, etc.

**8<sup>th</sup>. COMMANDMENT: *You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor***

**Things Commanded:** Truthfulness in word and action. Let your speech be "Yes, Yes – No, No". Sincerity and honesty in all dealings with others.

**Things Forbidden:** Lies, Bluffing, Cheating, Carrying Tales, Gossip, Spreading others' sins and mistakes, False witness, False accusations, Exaggerations, Spoiling others' good name, Spreading rumors, Backbiting, Destructive criticisms, Malicious insinuations, Etc.

