

Made in God's Image and Likeness

God made human beings, as male and female, in his image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). The Catholic Church throughout her 2,000 years has come to understand and interpret what it means to be made in God's image and likeness.

1. **Intellect.** When God created us he gave us the ability to learn about things and understand them by the use of our intellects. A perfect example of this is the university. The university is our attempt to learn the truth about God, ourselves, and the world we live in. You see this in all the subjects of study: biology, chemistry, mathematics, physics, psychology, religion, pharmacy, and so forth.

Our intellects are our guides for our lives. Unlike animals that live primarily by instinct (reflex action) humans live by learning, knowing, and understanding. [Ex. of ants and we don't fault animals for their behavior.]

2. **Free will.** We have the ability to choose between one action or another action, e.g. I want to be a nurse or I want to marry this particular person. We can choose a goal to work toward and choose the ways in which to achieve that goal.

The opposite of freedom is slavery. A slave is ruled by another person and is denied the ability to choose his own daily activities, his occupation, and so forth. God gave us freedom to freely choose what is true and good, not what is false and evil. To choose what is false and evil is an abuse of freedom and contrary to our intelligent nature. The guide of our freedom is the truth.

3. **Self-determination.** Thanks to our intellects and freedom, we are capable of determining our own lives. Pope John Paul the II wrote this about self-determination: "Giving man an intelligent and free nature, God wants each person to decide for himself his activities, so he/she will not be the blind tool of someone else" (Karol Wojtyla, Love and Responsibility, pg 27).
4. **Spiritual and immortal soul.** Every person has an interior life. This is the interior life that no one has access to (except God), unless it is opened up to others. Our interior lives revolve around truth and goodness.

Our spiritual nature is why we are not completely satisfied with the world we live in. One can have a good spouse, a great job, family and friends, a home, education, and more, yet in spite of all these goods, we hunger for something more.

As Jesus said: "Man does not live by bread alone but by every word that comes from the mouth of God" (Mt 4:4). Our spiritual nature hungers especially for God. As St. Augustine wrote in his book, "Confessions": "Our hearts are restless O Lord, until they rest in You." As Jesus told the Samaritan woman at the water well: "whoever drinks the water I shall give, will never thirst" (John 4:14). Jesus satisfies our spirit.

Summary: God gave us all these amazing faculties and abilities so we can live deeply rich lives. Contrary to animals with limited abilities and therefore limited experiences, we have greater abilities and a deeper experience of the lives we live. Yet, the primary reason God made us in his “image and likeness” is so we can know, love and live in communion with Him and each other. We can experience the joy of living with God and with each other.

The Fall of Humanity

As discussed, we are made in the image and likeness of God, but because of the sin this reflection of God within us has been greatly diminished. Instead of knowing, loving and living with God we often reject him and instead of loving our neighbors, we often hurt them.

“Man, tempted by the devil, let his trust in his Creator die in his heart and, abusing his freedom, disobeyed God’s command. This is what the first sin consisted of. All subsequent sin would be disobedience toward God and lack of trust in his goodness.” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 397).

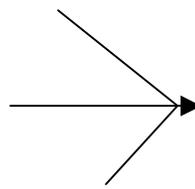
"What is the ultimate source of this inner division within man? His history of sin begins when he no longer acknowledges the Lord as Creator and himself wishes to be the one who determines, with complete independence [from God] what is good and what is evil. 'You will be like God, knowing good and evil' (Gen 3:5): this was the first temptation and it echoes in all other temptations . . ." (John Paul II, The Splendor of Truth, 102).

Jesus is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15)

In order to restore our relationship with God and each other, the eternal Son of God became a human being in Jesus of Nazareth: “For us men and for our salvation he came down from heaven,” we read in the Creed during Mass.

Jesus is the “image of the invisible God.” In Jesus we see how we are supposed to live and by being conformed to Jesus – his way, truth, and life -- our “image and likeness” to God is restored. A primary way of Jesus is living the Ten Commandments.

Jesus obeyed and fulfilled the Ten Commandments: The summary of the Commandments is love of God and love of neighbor. The Ten Commandments are an articulation of the fundamental goods God wants us to have in our lives.

1. I am the Lord your God: you shall not have false Gods before me.
 2. You shall not take the name of the Lord your God in vein.
 3. Remember to keep holy the Lords Day.
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- Communion with God, the Creator and greatest good.

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| 4. Honor your mother and father. | —————▶ | Respect and love of parents, who gave us the gift of life. |
| 5. You shall not kill. | —————▶ | Respect for one's own life and the lives of others. |
| 6. You shall not commit adultery. | —————▶ | Happiness of man and woman in a marriage. |
| 7. You shall not steal. | —————▶ | Respect for property. |
| 8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor. | —————▶ | Respect for truth and the reputation of others. |
| 9. You shall not covet thy neighbor's wife. | —————▶ | Purity of heart = proper attitude and actions toward women and men and toward all of creation. |
| 10. You shall not covet thy neighbors goods. | —————▶ | |

Jesus loved, trusted, and obeyed his heavenly Father, even through rejection and death on a cross. He lived in relation to God, as Father and Son, which is what God had always desired from humanity. As the Father said during Jesus' baptism: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased" (Matthew 3:17).

In Jesus' relationship with his Father he fulfilled the Commandment: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind. This is the first and greatest commandment" (Matthew 22: 37-40).

Jesus fulfilled the Commandments regarding love of neighbor. He gave a fuller and deeper meaning of the commandments for us to follow. Jesus wants to purify our hearts – the center of our lives – so we are free from sin.

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| Do not murder | —————▶ | Do not be angry; do not insult. |
| Do not commit adultery | —————▶ | Do not look with lust. |
| Divorce allowed | —————▶ | Divorce of lawful marriage prohibited. |
| Eye for eye and tooth for a tooth | —————▶ | Turn the other cheek. |
| Love your neighbor and hate your enemy | —————▶ | Love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you. |

Quotes for understanding the Commandments

“Following Jesus Christ involves keeping the Commandments. The Law has not been abolished, but rather man is invited to rediscover it in the person of his Master who is its perfect fulfillment” (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2053).

“The commandments: ‘You shall not commit adultery, You shall not kill, you shall not steal, You shall not covet,’ and any other commandment are summed up in this sentence: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore love is the fulfillment of the law” (Romans 13:9-10).

“Those who are impelled by love and 'walk by the Spirit' (Gal 5:16) and who desire to serve others, find in God's Law the fundamental and necessary way in which to practice love . . .” (Pope John Paul II, The Splendor of Truth, 18).

Jesus lived the Beatitudes: the poor in spirit, those who mourn, the meek, those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, the merciful, the pure of heart, the peacemakers, and the persecuted for Jesus’ sake. The beatitudes reveal the character of Jesus. They are the attitudes, action, and experiences of Jesus’ disciples (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 1717). People in the pro-life movement experience the Beatitudes more than most Christians.

Corporeal Works of Mercy: Feeding the hungry, giving drink to the thirsty, welcoming the stranger, clothing the naked, caring for the sick, visiting those in prison. Those who do these will hear these words at the judgment of humanity: “Come you who are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world” (Matthew 25:31-46).

Summary: The Ten Commandments express the fundamental goods God wants for us: Union with God; parents; life; a loving, monogamous, and unbroken marriage; truth; property; and purity of heart.

Jesus fulfilled the Law in his own life. In following Jesus we become holy. We become holy by refraining from what is evil – “thou shall not” -- and by doing what is good.

Jesus Redeems Us By Giving the Holy Spirit

All of Jesus’ actions spring from the deep love within him. The Holy Spirit shares the love of God with us. To love is to seek what is good for another and to work with all one’s strength to bring about those goods. The fundamental goods in life are expressed in the Ten Commandments. The only way to love God and love our neighbors is to request from God the power of the Holy Spirit. The primary ways in which we receive the Holy Spirit are the Sacraments and prayer.

Quotes for understanding the Holy Spirit

1. “Saint Augustine asks: ‘Does love bring about the keeping of the commandments, or does the keeping of the commandments bring about love?’ And he answers: ‘But who can doubt that love comes first? For the one who does not love has no reason for keeping the commandments.’” (Pope John Paul II, The Splendor of Truth, 22).
2. “To imitate and live out the love of Christ is not possible for man by his own strength alone. He becomes capable of this love only by virtue of a gift received . . . Christ’s gift is his Spirit, whose first ‘fruit’ (cf. Gal 5:22) is charity: “God’s love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit which has been given to us” (Rom 5:5), (John Paul II, The Splendor of Truth, 22).
3. “If the Spirit of the one who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, the one who raised Christ from the dead will give life to your mortal bodies also, through his Spirit that dwells in you” (Romans 8:11-13).

Summary

We are made in the image and likeness of God. God made us with great abilities and powers so we can live in a relationship with Him and each other. Sin separates us from God and one another. Sin is an attempt to act like God, or to determine good and evil independent of God, which results in great evil, as legalized abortion proves.

Jesus came to restore human beings to their dignity. This is accomplished by being conformed to Jesus who fulfilled the Ten Commandments. The Commandments are the fundamental goods God wants for us, resulting in life with God in heaven. Only by the power of the Holy Spirit – who shares God’s love with us – can we live as Jesus lived.

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