



The Holy See

VIDEO MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XVI FOR THE INITIATIVE "10 SQUARES FOR THE 10 COMMANDMENTS"

Saturday, 8 September 2012

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I am pleased to extend a cordial greeting to all of you who are taking part in this catechesis in various squares of Italian cities on the Ten Commandments and part of the initiative: "When Love gives meaning to your life ...". In particular I greet and thank the members of the Ecclesial Movement Renewal in the Holy Spirit who organized this praiseworthy initiative, with the support of the Pontifical Council for the Promoting the New Evangelization and the Italian Episcopal Conference.

The Decalogue takes us back to Mount Sinai when God enters in a special way into the history of the Jewish people, and through this people, the history of all humanity, giving it the "Ten Words" that express his will and which are a kind of "ethical code" to build a society where the relationship of the Covenant with the holy and just God enlightens and guides the relationships between people. And Jesus comes to fulfil these words, raising them and summarizing them in the double Commandment of love: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind... You shall love your neighbour as yourself" (cf. Mt 22:37-40).

But let us ask ourselves: what meaning do these Ten Commandments have for us, in the present cultural context in which secularism and relativism risk becoming the criteria of every choice and this society of ours that seems to live as if God does not exist? We answer that God gave us the Commandments to teach us true freedom and genuine love, so that we can be truly happy. They are a sign of the love of God the Father, of his desire to teach us how to distinguish between good and evil, truth and falsehood, right and wrong. They are comprehensible to all because they set fundamental values as concrete rules and regulations, by putting them into practice man can walk the path of true freedom, which set him firmly on the path that leads to life and happiness. By

contrast, when man ignores the Commandments in his life, not only does he alienate himself from God and abandon the alliance with him but he also distances himself from life and lasting happiness. Man left to himself, indifferent to God, proud of his absolute autonomy, eventually ends up following the idols of selfishness, power, domination, polluting the relationship with himself and with others and taking paths that do not lead to life but death. The sad experience of history, especially of the last century, is a warning to all humanity.

“When Love gives meaning to your life...”. Jesus brings to fulfilment the path of the Commandments with his Cross and Resurrection; he brings it to radically overcome selfishness, sin and death with the gift of himself for love. Welcoming the infinite love of God, trusting him, following the path that he has laid down, can we give deeper meaning to life and open up a future of hope.

Dear friends, I hope that this initiative will inspire a renewed commitment to witnessing that the path of love laid down by the Commandments and perfected by Christ is the only one that can make our life, the lives of others and of our communities fuller, better and happier. May the Virgin Mary accompany this journey, as I impart my blessing.