



## 1. A short commandment... yet immense

The Fifth Commandment — **“You shall not kill”** — seems, at first glance, one of the clearest and simplest. Many people think: *“I have never killed anyone, so this commandment has nothing to do with me.”* However, the teaching of the Church, illuminated by Sacred Scripture and deepened by Tradition, shows us that this precept **goes far beyond physical homicide**.

The Fifth Commandment **protects human life in all its dimensions**: bodily, spiritual, psychological, and social. It defends life **from conception to natural death**, but also the dignity of the person, the integrity of body and soul, and love of neighbor.

Jesus raises this commandment to a radical depth when He says:

*“You have heard that it was said to the men of old, ‘You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgment.’ But I say to you that everyone who is angry with his brother shall be liable to judgment” (Mt 5:21-22).*

Therefore, **not killing** also means **not destroying, not despising, not wounding, not harming, not abandoning, not hating**.

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## 2. Human life: a sacred gift from God

Life does not belong to us. **It is a gift from God**, and He alone is its Lord. To attack human life is, at its core, **a rebellion against the Creator**.

The Church teaches clearly:

- Every human life is **sacred**
- Every person has an **inviolable dignity**
- No one may decide who deserves to live or die



This applies **to the unborn, to the sick, to the elderly, to the disabled, to the poor, to the enemy, to those who think differently.**

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### 3. Grave and direct sins against human life

#### □ 1. Voluntary homicide

- Killing a person directly and deliberately
- Ordering someone to be killed, hiring hitmen, ordering unjust executions
- Actively participating in a murder

#### □ 2. Abortion (a most grave sin)

- Directly or indirectly causing the death of an unborn child
- Consenting to, facilitating, financing, or promoting abortion
- Pressuring another person to have an abortion
- Morally justifying abortion
- Doctors or healthcare workers who cooperate in abortions
- Politicians or legislators who promote abortion laws

#### □ 3. Euthanasia and assisted suicide

- Causing the death of a sick or elderly person “out of compassion”
- Helping, advising, or facilitating suicide
- Justifying euthanasia as a “dignified death”
- Withholding basic care in order to hasten death

#### □ 4. Suicide

- Voluntarily attempting against one’s own life
- Planning, attempting, or seriously desiring to take one’s own life

*(The Church always distinguishes subjective culpability, but the act itself is gravely disordered)*



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## 4. Sins against physical integrity and health

### △ 5. Physical violence

- Striking, wounding, torturing
- Domestic abuse
- Physical abuse of children, the elderly, or dependents
- Violence in fights, assaults, or brawls

### △ 6. Psychological abuse

- Systematic humiliation
- Threatening
- Emotional manipulation
- Deliberately causing suffering through words or silence
- Destroying another person's self-esteem

### △ 7. Hatred and desires for revenge

- Wishing someone's death
- Rejoicing in another's misfortune
- Deliberately harboring resentment
- Feeding thoughts of revenge

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## 5. Sins of speech against the Fifth Commandment

Words can also kill.

### □ 8. Grave insults

- Calling someone names with contempt
- Dehumanizing others through words
- Publicly ridiculing someone



## □ 9. Curses

- Wishing evil upon others
- Invoking misfortune upon someone

## □ 10. Calumny and defamation

- Unjustly damaging a person's reputation
  - Destroying someone's honor or good name
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# 6. Sins of omission: killing through indifference

Sin is committed not only by what is done, but also by what **is left undone**.

## ⚖ 11. Refusal to help

- Failing to assist someone in danger
- Ignoring those in need when one is able to help
- Passing by without concern in the face of another's suffering

## ⚖ 12. Abandonment

- Abandoning children, parents, or spouse
  - Neglecting the care of the weak
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# 7. Sins against one's own life and body

## ⚠ 13. Self-destruction

- Drug addiction
- Alcoholism
- Serious abuse of the body
- Unnecessary risk-taking behaviors



#### △ 14. Grave negligence regarding health

- Refusing necessary care without just cause
  - Endangering one's own life or the lives of others through recklessness
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## 8. Social and structural sins against life

#### □ 15. Injustices that kill

- Extreme labor exploitation
- Indifference toward poverty
- Systems that marginalize and exclude

#### □ 16. Promotion of the culture of death

- Supporting ideologies that relativize life
  - Normalizing abortion, euthanasia, or violence
  - Mocking the value of human life
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## 9. For the examination of conscience: concrete questions

Before going to confession, ask yourself sincerely:

- Have I despised the life of others or my own?
  - Have I harbored hatred or resentment?
  - Have I wounded others with words or silence?
  - Have I been indifferent to suffering?
  - Have I justified abortion or euthanasia?
  - Have I physically or psychologically abused others?
  - Have I responsibly cared for my life and health?
  - Have I promoted peace or conflict?
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## 10. Christ, Lord of life

The Fifth Commandment is not only a prohibition, but a **call to love**. Christ came so that we might have **life in abundance** (Jn 10:10). To defend life is **to love as He loves**.

Every confession is an opportunity for **healing, reconciliation, and choosing life once again**.

| *“Choose life, that you and your descendants may live” (Dt 30:19).*