A clear, profound, and contemporary guide to guarding purity of heart

1. The Sixth Commandment: much more than “do not commit adultery”

The Sixth Commandment is often — mistakenly — reduced to a simple external prohibition: *“do not commit adultery.”* However, in the constant teaching of the Church, this commandment **protects one of the most sacred gifts God has entrusted to man: human sexuality**, which is called to be an expression of true, faithful, and fruitful love.

Jesus elevates this commandment to a much deeper level when He says:

> *“Everyone who looks at a woman with lust has already committed adultery with her in his heart” (Mt 5:28).*

Here the key is revealed: **the Sixth Commandment is not limited to actions**, but also encompasses **thoughts, desires, looks, intentions, words, and omissions**. It is a commandment of the **heart**, not merely of the body.

2. Chastity: a forgotten virtue… yet indispensable

In a hypersexualized culture, where pleasure is presented as an absolute right and purity as repression, the virtue of chastity is mocked or ignored. Nevertheless, the Church teaches clearly:

- Chastity **is not the denial of love**, but its purification.
- It is not contempt for the body, but **the ordered integration of sexuality**.
- It is not only for consecrated persons, but **obligatory for everyone**, according to one’s state of life.

The Sixth Commandment protects:

- The dignity of one’s own body
- The dignity of the body of one’s neighbor
- The sanctity of marriage
- The truth of human love

Breaking this commandment **darkens the intellect**, **weakens the will**, **hardens the heart**, and **deeply damages spiritual life**, even when the sin appears “normal” or “socially accepted.”

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3. Sins Against the Sixth Commandment

An extensive and meticulous list for examination of conscience

Below is a **detailed list of concrete sins**, organized by categories, intended to **help a traditional Catholic examine his conscience with honesty and depth** before confession.

> *Important note: not all sins listed are always mortal; gravity depends on **the matter**, **full knowledge**, and **deliberate consent**. Nevertheless, **all wound the soul** and must be fought against.*

A. Sins of thought, desire, and interior consent

1. Willfully consenting to impure thoughts.
2. Deliberately indulging in sexual fantasies.
3. Entertaining sexual desires toward persons with whom one has no marital bond.
4. Consenting to impure thoughts even without external action.
5. Imagining sexual acts for pleasure.
6. Recalling past sins with complacency.
7. Desiring illicit sexual acts even if they cannot be carried out.
8. Internally justifying impure thoughts.
9. Failing to reject impure thoughts when one could do so.
10. Seeking occasions to nourish sexual fantasies.

B. Sins of the eyes and the senses

11. Willfully looking at another person with sexual desire.
12. Seeking provocative images for pleasure.
13. Deliberately lingering on impure scenes.
14. Failing to avert one’s gaze from clearly immoral content.
15. Watching movies, series, or videos with explicit sexual scenes.
16. Occasional consumption of pornography.
17. Habitual consumption of pornography.
18. Reading erotic or sensual literature.
19. Listening to music with explicitly sexual lyrics for arousal.
20. Using social media to look at bodies with impure intention.

C. Sins of speech and communication

21. Telling obscene jokes.
22. Engaging in morbid sexual conversations.
23. Vulgar comments about the bodies of others.
24. Provoking with double-meaning words.
25. Sexting (sending sexual messages).
26. Sending or receiving intimate images.
27. Sexually provoking others through words.
28. Encouraging impure conversations.
29. Glorifying sexual sin in speech.
30. Minimizing the gravity of sins against chastity.

D. Sins of impure actions in solitude

31. Occasional masturbation.
32. Habitual masturbation.
33. Justifying masturbation as “necessary” or “inevitable.”

34. Deliberately seeking sexual arousal.
35. Using objects or means for self-excitation.
36. Failing to seriously fight against this sin.
37. Willfully provoking arousal without just cause.
38. Despising spiritual means to combat this sin.

E. Sins against chastity with others (outside marriage)

39. Fornication (sexual relations outside marriage).
40. Premarital sexual relations.
41. Casual sexual relationships.
42. Sexual relations with engaged persons.
43. Sexual relations with married persons.
44. Adultery.
45. Living in concubinage.
46. Justifying cohabitation without marriage.
47. Disordered sexual practices.
48. Using another as an object of pleasure.
49. Pressuring another to sin sexually.
50. Cooperating in another’s sexual sin.

F. Sins against purity in courtship and marriage

51. Lack of chastity in courtship.
52. Impure acts under the pretext of love.
53. Sexually provoking one’s boyfriend or girlfriend.
54. Use of contraceptive methods.
55. Willfully rejecting openness to life.
56. Onanism.
57. Conjugal relations closed to procreation.
58. Imposing immoral sexual practices on one’s spouse.
59. Unjustly refusing the marital duty.
60. Using marriage solely for pleasure.

G. Grave sins against the natural order

61. Practiced homosexuality.
62. Homosexual acts.
63. Promoting or justifying homosexual acts.
64. Gender ideology.
65. Transsexualism.
66. Bestiality.
67. Incest.
68. Prostitution.
69. Consumption of prostitution.
70. Production or distribution of pornography.

H. Sins of scandal and cooperation

71. Scandalizing others through impure behavior.
72. Facilitating sexual sin in others.
73. Failing to correct when one ought to.
74. Normalizing sexual sin.
75. Poorly educating children in sexual matters.
76. Ridiculing chastity.
77. Rejecting the Church’s teaching on sexuality.
78. Mocking those who live purity.
79. Failing to avoid near occasions of sin.
80. Despising sacramental grace for living chastity.

4. God’s mercy and the daily struggle

The Sixth Commandment does not exist to condemn, but to **heal**. Christ did not come to crush the sinner, but to **raise him up**. No sin against chastity is stronger than God’s mercy when there is **sincere repentance** and a **firm purpose of amendment**.

Chastity is conquered:

- Through daily prayer
- Through frequent reception of the sacraments
- Through custody of the senses
- Through humility
- Through perseverance

> *“Blessed are the pure of heart, for they shall see God” (Mt 5:8)*

Living the Sixth Commandment is not losing freedom, but **recovering it**. It is not extinguishing love, but **ordering it toward its true fulfillment**.