



“Remember the Lord’s Day, to keep it holy” (Ex 20:8)

Introduction: a forgotten commandment... and a very current one

In an accelerated society, marked by productivity, consumption, and hyperconnectivity, the **Third Commandment** appears to many as something secondary, even optional. However, for Catholic tradition — and especially for traditional Catholic spirituality — this commandment touches the **very heart of the relationship between man and God**.

It is not only about “going to Mass on Sundays,” but about **recognizing God as Lord of time**, of life, and of history. Sunday is not simply a day off: it is the **Day of the Lord (Dies Domini)**, the memorial of Christ’s Resurrection, an anticipation of eternal rest, and the spiritual axis that gives order to the entire week.

This article aims to **educate, inspire, and serve as a spiritual guide**, offering a clear and profound explanation of the Third Commandment and a **long and meticulous list of concrete sins**, especially designed to help a traditional Catholic prepare a thorough **examination of conscience before Confession**.

1. Biblical and theological foundation of the Third Commandment

1.1. In Sacred Scripture

The commandment of rest appears already in the **account of creation**:

“And God rested on the seventh day from all the work that he had done” (Gen 2:2).

Not because God needed rest, but in order to **teach man the sacred rhythm of time**: work and rest, action and contemplation.

In the Decalogue, the commandment is formulated as follows:



“Remember the sabbath day, to keep it holy” (Ex 20:8).

With Christ, the Sabbath is transformed into **Sunday**, the day of the Resurrection, the new creation, and the center of Christian life.

1.2. Teaching of the Church

The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC 2168–2195) teaches that this commandment obliges us to:

- Give public worship to God
- Participate in the Holy Mass
- Abstain from unnecessary servile work
- Promote rest of body and soul
- Practice charity and family life

It is not an arbitrary rule, but a **gift for man**.

2. Sunday: day of Mass, rest, and charity

Sunday has **three inseparable dimensions**:

1. **Worship of God** (Mass and prayer)
2. **Sanctified rest** (refraining from servile work)
3. **Charity and family life** (time for God and for others)

To sin against the Third Commandment is to break this balance.

3. Sins against the Third Commandment

Below is an **extensive, concrete, and detailed list**, organized by categories to facilitate the examination of conscience.



□ *Important note: The gravity (mortal or venial sin) depends on the **matter, knowledge, and consent.***

3.1. Sins against attendance at Holy Mass

- Deliberately missing Mass on a Sunday or holy day of obligation without a grave reason.
 - Missing Mass out of laziness, comfort, or poor organization.
 - Preferring leisure activities, sports, trips, or rest over Mass.
 - Missing Mass because of having voluntarily stayed up too late.
 - Missing Mass due to avoidable work.
 - Consciously choosing schedules that prevent attending Mass.
 - Habitually arriving late to Mass deliberately.
 - Leaving before the end of Mass without a just cause.
 - Being physically present but voluntarily inattentive out of disinterest.
 - Going to Mass only due to social or family pressure, without any interior disposition.
 - Attending an invalid Mass through negligence when one is aware of the situation.
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3.2. Sins against the interior sanctification of Sunday

- Living Sunday as a day no different from the others.
 - Not dedicating any time to personal prayer on Sunday.
 - Omitting all thanksgiving after Mass.
 - Treating Sunday merely as a day for consumption or entertainment.
 - Not preparing one's heart for Mass (lack of recollection beforehand).
 - Interiorly despising the spiritual value of Sunday.
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3.3. Sins against Sunday rest

- Performing unnecessary servile work when it could be avoided.
- Imposing unnecessary work on employees or subordinates.
- Working out of economic ambition without a just cause.
- Justifying unnecessary work by consumerism.



- Performing heavy household tasks without necessity.
 - Failing to respect the Sunday rest of others.
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3.4. Sins related to commerce and consumption

- Making unnecessary purchases that encourage Sunday labor.
 - Opening businesses without grave necessity.
 - Prioritizing shopping over Mass.
 - Promoting a consumerist mentality on Sunday.
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3.5. Sins against family life and charity

- Not dedicating time to family due to individualistic leisure.
 - Creating unnecessary family conflicts on Sunday.
 - Neglecting the sick or elderly when one could help them.
 - Refusing works of charity out of comfort.
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3.6. Sins of scandal against the Third Commandment

- Ridiculing the Sunday obligation.
 - Teaching others that Mass is not necessary.
 - Giving bad example to children or subordinates.
 - Publicly justifying the omission of Mass.
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3.7. Sins due to culpable ignorance or negligence

- Failing to inform oneself about days of obligation.
 - Not teaching children the sanctification of Sunday.
 - Failing to correct known errors in one's own conduct.
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4. Spiritual guide to living the Third Commandment well

- Prepare Sunday starting on Saturday.
 - Choose Mass as the center of the day.
 - Dress with dignity for worship.
 - Dedicate time to family and to silence.
 - Read the Gospel of the day.
 - Practice some work of charity.
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5. Conclusion: Sunday, a foretaste of Heaven

The Third Commandment is not a burden, but a **prophecy of eternal rest**. Each Sunday lived faithfully is a small step toward Heaven.

To sanctify Sunday is to **reorder one's life**, to restore God to His rightful place, and to remember that we are not slaves of work or of the world, but **children of God called to eternity**.

“Sunday is the day on which the Christian remembers who he is and where he is going.”

May this examination of conscience help lead to a deeper, more humble, and more fruitful Confession.