

FAITH CHAT

with James & John

Why's The Church The World's Moral Beacon?

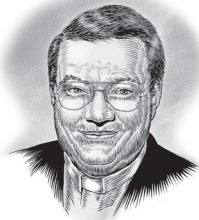
Know This...

Can you imagine our world without Jesus? Can you imagine our world without His Church? To the faithful Christian, the first is impossible to imagine. To the faithful Catholic Christian, both are impossible to imagine. Jesus and His Church are the Father's inseparable gifts to the world. Neither is dispensable; one is God and the other is faultless and not subject to failure or decay. God speaks through His Church on issues of faith and morals. It is the Church alone that stands between God's moral teaching and overwhelming moral corruption and depravity. Many immoral people acknowledge this reality by trying to destroy her.



John: Jesus gave His Church the fullness of all moral truth when He affirmed the two great commandments: love God with all your heart, your soul, your mind, and your strength; then love your neighbor as yourself.

James: Informed, faithful Catholics cannot imagine a world without Jesus or His Church. We recognize and acknowledge that being a true follower of Christ calls us to distinguish good from evil.

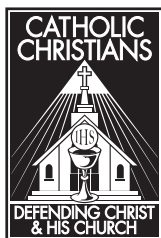


John: We must not do evil to bring about good. The end never justifies the means. God, not man, is the final judge of what is right and wrong. God's right judgment in faith and morals resides in His Church.

James: While we must follow our conscience in all decision making, our conscience must never be set in opposition to the moral law or the Church—the constant beacon that distinguishes good from evil.

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"You are the light of the world. A city set on a hill cannot be hid." ^{Mt 5:14} The Church is that city set on a hill. "A young man asked Jesus, 'Teacher, what good must I do to gain eternal life?' He answered him, 'Why do you ask me about the good? There is only One who is good. If you wish to enter into life, keep the Commandments.'" ^{Mt 19:16-19} "If you love me, you will keep my commandments." ^{Jn 14:15}

"Alone among all animate beings, man can boast of having been counted worthy to receive a law from God: as an animal endowed with reason, capable of understanding and discernment, he is to govern his conduct by using his freedom and reason, in obedience to the One who has entrusted everything to him." ^{Tertullian} "God wrote on the tables of the law [Ten Commandments] what men did not read in their hearts." ^{St. Augustine} "The moral law is the work of divine wisdom." ^{ccc 1950} "Personal conscience and reason should not be set in opposition to the moral law or the Magisterium of the Church." ^{ccc 2039} "An evil end corrupts the action, even if the object is good in itself." ^{ccc 1755} "One may not do evil so that good may result from it." ^{ccc 1756}



PAPA SAYS

"The natural law is written and engraved in the soul of each and every man, because it is human reason ordaining him to do good and forbidding him to sin... But this command of human reason would not have the force of law if it were not the voice and interpreter of a higher reason to which our spirit and our freedom must be submitted." ^{Pope Leo XIII} "Although each individual has a right to be respected in his own journey in search of the truth, there exists a prior moral obligation, and a grave one at that, to seek the truth and to adhere to it once it is known." ^{Pope John Paul II}



"Why not do evil that good may come? — as some people slanderously charge us with saying. Their condemnation is just." ^{Rom 3:8} "So be imitators of God, as beloved children, and live in love, as Christ loved us and handed himself over for us as a sacrificial offering to God... Be sure of this, that no immoral or impure or greedy person... has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." ^{Eph 5:1-2, 5}

Almighty Father, source of all life and truth. Your moral law, which separates good from evil, is found in Your Church—the beacon of morality in the world. I pray that I will always turn to her in the formation of my conscience so I may make decisions that reflect Your will. I ask this through Jesus Christ, Your Son, who lives and reigns with You and the Holy Spirit, one God for ever and ever. Amen.

