

heaven or by earth or with any other oath, but let your yes be yes and your no be no, that you may not fall under condemnation." The Catholic faith, together with that of the majority of Christians (e.g. the Church of England Articles of Faith Art. xxxix), considers this view to be mistaken since:

(i) Apart from the above examples from St Paul, Jesus Himself replied in the affirmative to Caiaphas' question based on an oath: *"I adjure you by the living God, tell us if you are the Christ, the Son of God."* (Matthew 26:63) **(ii)** Jesus tells us in the Sermon of the Mount that He was completing/fulfilling, not repealing, the moral law of Moses. If He is interpreted as banning all oaths, He would be repealing that law. Also, in the above extract from the Sermon on the Mount, Jesus sets the scene by referring to not swearing by Heaven, or Jerusalem, or by our head. It was not unusual for people to try to circumvent misuse of oaths by reference to things, rather than God Himself. Jesus may properly be interpreted as condemning such attempts to bolster false or trivial statements.
-Stephen S.

Entrance antiphon: O sing a new song to the Lord, for he has worked wonders; in the sight of the nations he has shown his deliverance, alleluia.

First Reading: Acts 6: 1-7

Psalm 32: Response: May your love be upon us, O Lord, as we place all our hope in you.

Second Reading: 1Peter 2: 4-9

Gospel Acclamation: Alleluia, alleluia! Jesus said : 'I am the Way, the Truth and the Life. No one can come to the Father except through me.' Alleluia!

Gospel: John 14: 1-12

Memorial Acclamation: We proclaim your Death, O Lord, and profess your Resurrection until you come again.

Communion Antiphon: I am the true vine and you are the branches , says the Lord. Whoever remains in me, and I in him, bears fruit in plenty, alleluia.



Fifth Sunday of Easter

Cycle A, 2023 Weekly Reflection: Oaths and the Second Commandment: The Second Commandment forbids us from taking the name of the Lord our God in vain. The Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)

paragraphs 2142-2167 explains the significance of the commandment. This article focuses on the use of oaths and when it is legitimate to swear an oath. Oaths which misuse God's name, even without the intent of blasphemy, show a lack of respect for God. The second commandment forbids false oaths. Using the name of God as a pledge of one's own truthfulness aligns God's name with our words. A false oath calls on God to be a witness to a lie. The statement that an oath engages the Lord's name goes back to Deuteronomy (6:13): "You shall fear the LORD your God; you shall serve him, and swear by his name."

However, in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus refers to the fact that it was said to 'the men of old' that they should not swear falsely. He continues (Matthew 5:34-37) *"But I say to you, Do not swear at all, either by heaven, for it is the throne of God, or by the earth, for it is his footstool, or by Jerusalem, for it is the city of the great King. And do not swear by your head, for you cannot make one hair white or black. Let what you say be simply 'Yes' or 'No'; anything more than this comes from evil."* Does this rule out invoking God's name as a witness to the truth of our word in any way? Are we forbidden, for example, to take the oath if we give evidence in Court? The answer is 'No'. Why is this? The CCC (para 2154) tells us that the tradition of the Church has understood Jesus' words as not excluding oaths made for grave and right reasons. It invokes St Paul who wrote: *"In what I am writing to you, before God, I do not lie!"* (Galatians 1:20; also 2 Corinthians 1:23).

Nevertheless, some Christians (e.g Quakers) take the words of Jesus at face value and refuse to take any oath, however formal. They rely also on St James' letter (5:12): *"But above all, my brethren, do not swear, either by*