



REBUILD *this* TEMPLE

DAY 11

W E D N E S D A Y , M A R C H 1 9 , 2 0 2 5

THE FOURTH COMMANDMENT

The concept of honoring someone holds profound significance within the Christian tradition, particularly as it relates to the Fourth Commandment: “Honor your father and your mother.” At its core, honoring someone from a Christian perspective involves recognizing their dignity, valuing their wisdom, and transcending our own interests. However, we might reconsider the Fourth Commandment through the perspective of *Deus Caritas Est* no. 18, where Pope Benedict XVI connects loving as God loves with seeing as God sees. He says: “I learn to look on this other person not simply with my eyes and my feelings, but from the perspective of Jesus Christ.” (no. 18)

We should be profoundly grateful to our parents for not only the visible things they have done for us, but also for the myriad hidden sacrifices they have made, many of which we may never fully understand or even know about. Parents often place their children’s needs above their own. When we are young, we often lack the maturity and wisdom to fully appreciate their struggles and the depth of their love. As we grow older, gaining a broader perspective on life, we begin to recognize not only the overt acts of care and support but also the quiet, enduring commitment they have shown. Acknowledging these unseen sacrifices and understanding the wisdom behind their decisions helps us appreciate the profound impact they have on our lives and fosters a deeper bond rooted in respect and gratitude.

To see our parents through God’s eyes is to acknowledge their inherent dignity, flaws, and struggles with unwavering compassion. In our daily lives, it may be easy to view our parents solely through the lens of our personal experiences—colored by moments of conflict, disappointment, or unmet expectations. However, when we embrace the divine perspective, we are invited to transcend these limitations and recognize them as individuals loved and cherished by God.

God’s love offers an infinite reservoir of patience and kindness, encouraging us to practice forgiveness and empathy. Viewing our parents through this lens challenges us to appreciate their sacrifices, acknowledge their humanity, and understand the generational and cultural circumstances that have shaped them. This understanding fosters a deeper love that focuses on who they are in their entirety, rather than solely on how they meet our needs. Recognizing that parents, like any person, have flaws and may have faltered at times helps cultivate an environment of understanding and love. Practicing forgiveness allows the relationship to grow beyond past grievances, fostering mutual respect and harmony.

G O I N G D E E P E R

1. Have I spoken to and about my parents with respect and dignity, being mindful of my words and tone, even in disagreements?
2. Do I regularly acknowledge and appreciate the sacrifices and contributions my parents have made for my well-being and upbringing? How have I expressed my gratitude to them recently?
3. Am I attentive to the needs of my parents, offering help and support without being asked, particularly as they age or face challenges?
4. Do I take my parents’ advice and guidance seriously, considering their wisdom and experience, and abiding by their counsel when it aligns with broader moral principles?
5. Have I held onto any resentment or anger towards my parents for past grievances? Have I made efforts to understand and forgive them, acknowledging their human imperfections?