

MORAL CONSCIENCE / LƯƠNG TÂM

THE POINT

Conscience is a call to love, and to do what is good.

THE POINT, UNWRAPPED

Explore:

How would a good conscience help you discover God's will in your life? And how would doing God's will enable you to live your fullest (freedom, growth, peace, and joy)?

WHERE IN THE WORD

Roman 2:12-16

For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be judged by the Law; for *it is* not the hearers of the Law *who* are just before God, but the doers of the Law will be justified. **For when Gentiles who do not have the Law do instinctively the things of the Law, these, not having the Law, are a law to themselves, in that they show the work of the Law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness and their thoughts alternately accusing or else defending them, on the day when, according to my gospel, God will judge the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.**

STUDYING OUR FAITH / Học Hỏi Đức Tin

Second Vatican Council's Decree on the Church had this to say: "In the depths of his conscience, man detects a law which he does not impose upon himself, but which holds him to obedience. Always summoning him to love and avoid evil, the voice of conscience can, when necessary, speak to his heart more specifically: do this, shun that. For man in his heart a law written by God. To obey it is the very dignity of man; according to it he will be judged."

CCC 1776: "Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in his heart at the right moment. . . . For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God. . . . His conscience is man's most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths."

DISCUSSION / Thảo Luận

Discuss the following reasoning "a man killed another after a minor dispute, and then argued that his conscience told him to do so."

1. Is this a valid argument? Lập luận nào có đúng không?
2. Is he really following his conscience? Người đó có làm theo lương tâm không?

LIVING OUR FAITH / Sống Đức Tin

Reflect back on an incident where your conscience spoke to you, guiding you to act.

1. What did your conscience tell you to do?
2. Is it in accordance with what the Church teaches?
3. Did your action promote love and harmony?
4. Did you feel good afterward?

PRACTICING OUR FAITH / Huấn Luyện Đức Tin

- Conscience is ill-formed simply because they have never been taught right from wrong in a proper manner.
- Conscience, like all our other human faculties, must be disciplined and trained through time.
- There are also individuals in whom the voice of conscience has become distorted, or even silenced, because of habitual sin.

How can we train our conscience?

1. Through daily prayer, reflection on the Scripture, and spiritual reading.
2. Christian faithful ought carefully to attend to the sacred and certain doctrine of the Church. Read CCC 1776 – 1802.

http://www.vatican.va/archive/ccc_css/archive/catechism/p3s1c1a6.htm

1783 Conscience must be informed and moral judgment enlightened. A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful. It formulates its judgments according to reason, in conformity with the true good willed by the wisdom of the Creator. The education of conscience is indispensable for human beings who are subjected to negative influences and tempted by sin to prefer their own judgment and to reject authoritative teachings.

1784 The education of the conscience is a lifelong task. From the earliest years, it awakens the child to the knowledge and practice of the interior law recognized by conscience. Prudent education teaches virtue; it prevents or cures fear, selfishness and pride, resentment arising from guilt, and feelings of complacency, born of human weakness and faults. The education of the conscience guarantees freedom and engenders peace of heart.

1785 In the formation of conscience the Word of God is the light for our path, we must assimilate it in faith and prayer and put it into practice. We must also examine our conscience before the Lord's Cross. We are assisted by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, aided by the witness or advice of others and guided by the authoritative teaching of the Church.

PRAYER / Lời Nguyện - The Serenity Prayer



God grant me the serenity
to accept the things I cannot change;
courage to change the things I can;
and wisdom to know the difference.

Living one day at a time;
Enjoying one moment at a time;
Accepting hardships as the pathway to peace;
Taking, as He did, this sinful world
as it is, not as I would have it;
Trusting that He will make all things right
if I surrender to His Will;
That I may be reasonably happy in this life
and supremely happy with Him
Forever in the next.
Amen.

--Reinhold Niebuhr

Trust in the LORD with all your heart
and lean not on your own understanding;
in all your ways acknowledge him,
and he will direct your paths.

Proverbs 3, 5-6