

Vatican issues 'Ten Commandments' for drivers

VATICAN CITY - The Vatican has issued a set of "Ten Commandments" for drivers, saying motor vehicles can be an "occasion of sin."

A document titled "Guidelines for the Pastoral Care of the Road" said driving can unleash road rage and other immoral behavior, including excess speed, reckless passing, cursing and just plain rudeness.

"Cars tend to bring out the 'primitive' side of human beings, thereby producing rather unpleasant results," the document said.

The warning about driving came in the first part of the 59-page instruction, released June 19 by the Pontifical Council for Migrants and Travelers.

The document said drivers need to remember that even when there is no one sitting next to them, they are never alone.

"Driving a vehicle is basically a way of relating with and getting closer to other people and of integrating within a community of people," it said.

"This capacity for coexistence, of entering into relations with others, presupposes certain specific qualities in a driver: namely self-mastery, prudence, courtesy, a fitting spirit of service and knowledge of the highway code," it said.

Accidents can occur anytime, and when they do motorists have a moral responsibility to stop and help others, it said.

The document cited statistics to demonstrate the risks of driving. In the 20th century, about 35 million people lost their lives in road accidents, and 1.5 billion people were injured. In the year 2000 alone, traffic deaths reached nearly 1.3 million, and 90 percent of the accidents were due to human error.

"The harm caused to the families of those involved in accidents, as well as the protracted consequences for the injured, who all too often are permanently disabled,

should also be borne in mind," it said.

The "Ten Commandments" for drivers, as listed in the document, are:

1. You shall not kill.
2. The road shall be for you a means of communion between people and not of mortal harm.
3. Courtesy, uprightness and prudence will help you deal with unforeseen events.
4. Be charitable and help your neighbor in need, especially victims of accidents.
5. Cars shall not be for you an expression of power and domination and an occasion of sin.
6. Charitably convince the young and not so young not to drive when they are not in a fitting condition to do so.
7. Support the families of accident victims.
8. Bring guilty motorists and their victims together, at the appropriate time, so that they can undergo the liberating experience of forgiveness.
9. On the road, protect the more vulnerable party.
10. Feel responsible toward others.

The text of the document can be found online at:
https://212.77.1.245/news_services/bulletin/news/20451.php?index=20451&lang=en

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