

Catechesis Minute: 8th Commandment

You shall not give false testimony against your neighbor.

What does this mean? We should fear and love God so that we do not tell lies about our neighbor, betray him, slander him, or hurt his reputation, but defend him, speak well of him, and explain everything in the kindest way.

This Commandment tells us what it takes to be a good friend. I want to tell you two stories of friendship.

David and Jonathan (1 Samuel 19:4)

David and Jonathan were two young men. Jonathan was the son of Saul, the king of Israel. David was a shepherd who God had called to be the next king after Saul. Normally, that would go to the king's oldest son. You would think this would have made Jonathan jealous. But they were good friends. Jonathan knew that his father wasn't a good king and that is why God was taking the kingdom from him. After killing the giant Goliath with a stone and a sling, David became a warrior, fighting for Saul. He also played his harp for Saul whenever he got depressed. So, David and Jonathan spent a lot of time together. When Saul talked about killing David, Jonathan spoke up for him and defended David to his father. He even warned David and helped him get away, saving his life. Jonathan was a good friend because he spoke well of David and protected him from the king.

Jesus and Judas (Matthew 26:14—16)

Judas was one of Jesus' disciples. Jesus had called him to be His follower. He had seen Jesus perform miracles, heal people, and heard Him talk about love and forgiveness. Jesus even trusted Judas to carry the money bag for the Twelve. Then one day, Judas went to Jesus' enemies and agreed to betray Him to them for thirty pieces of silver. One night, while Jesus was praying in a garden, Judas led a group of men there to arrest Jesus. They took Jesus, tried Him, and turned Him over to the Romans to be crucified. Judas wasn't a good friend because he betrayed his friend to death. This friendship was only worth thirty pieces of silver to him.

Prayer: Lord, help us to be good friends by keeping the 8th Commandment. May we help our neighbor and not hurt him in any way.