

Online Catechism Lesson 8: Alcohol, drugs, smoking tobacco, gambling, music, dances, and art

By Richard Joseph Michael Ibranyi

1. Drinking alcohol is good if done in moderation but sinful if drunk to get drunk. *“Wine was created from the beginning to make men joyful, and not to make them drunk. Wine drunken with moderation is the joy of the soul and the heart. Sober drinking is health to soul and body. Wine drunken with excess raiseth quarrels; and wrath, and many ruins. Wine drunken with excess is bitterness of the soul. The heat of drunkenness is the stumbling block of the fool, lessening strength and causing wounds.”* (Eclcus. 31:35-40)
2. Drug abuse is a sin against the Fifth Commandment.
3. The ingestion of drugs that greatly alter the mind (such as marijuana in which THC has not been removed, cocaine, and LSD) is sinful.
4. The legitimate use of non-mind altering drugs (such as pain killers, sleeping medicine, relaxation medicine, or stay-awake medicine) is good. However, they must not be abused by taking them when not needed or contrary to the orders of a good doctor.
5. Smoking tobacco is not intrinsically evil and thus is good if used in moderation. However, the immoderate smoking of tobacco is a sin against the Fifth Commandment because it harms one’s health. The smoker must also be considerate of others who do not smoke by keeping the smoke from them if it bothers them.
6. Gambling is not intrinsically evil and hence is good if done in moderation. However, immoderate gambling is sinful, which is gambling with money that must be used for the necessities of life, taxes, tithes and donations to the Catholic Church, and alms.
 - a) Recreational gambling consists of using money that is set aside for entertainment, such as for eating at restaurants, going to movies or plays or concerts, skiing, bowling, hunting, golfing, or gambling. It matters not how one spends his money for recreation as long as the recreation is not sinful. The proper attitude for recreational gambling is to count the money as lost and be thankful if you win—hope to win but expect to lose. For example, if you were going to spend \$50.00 on a concert but instead spent it on gambling, you still spent the same amount of money.
 - b) Professional gambling is not sinful as long as the gambler is consistently making money and thus is not losing money that is needed for necessities of life, taxes, tithes and donations to the Catholic Church, and alms. If he begins to consistently lose money, then he must only gamble for recreation.
7. All forms of music (such as folk, country, classical, big-band, jazz, soul, rock, disco, and rap) are good as long as it fulfills the following conditions:
 - c) The tone of the music is not discordant, erratic, chaotic, or extremely violent.
 - d) The lyrics are not sinful. Sinful lyrics include effeminate, silly, or buffoonish lyrics.
 - e) The musicians do not look or act like freaks, crazy people, or criminals; such as having off-colored hair, men dressing like girls, or acting like criminals as most Rap musicians do;
 - f) The name of the musical group does not have a satanic or otherwise evil name; such as Black Sabbath.

Examples of good rock music are some but not all of the songs from Eric Clapton, The Allman Brothers, The Eagles, Bruce Springsteen, Moody Blues, Santana, Creedence Clear Water Revival, and 1950's rock music.

Examples of sinful rock music are as follows: most heavy metal rock because most of it has an extremely violent tone or sinful lyrics or the musicians have a sinful demeanor; most Rap music because most of it has sinful lyrics or the musicians have a sinful demeanor; and rock groups that dress or act that freaks, such as *Kiss*, *Alice Cooper*, and the *Rolling Stones*.

Some classical and jazz music has a sinful tone because it is discordant or chaotic.

An example of music that has a good tone but sinful lyrics is Frank Sinatra's "I Did It My Way" and "Its Witchcraft." Music that has a good tone but sinful lyrics could be played if the lyrics are cleaned up or the music is played with no vocals.

8. It is good to use music with a sinful tone or sinful lyrics (but not immodest lyrics such as forbidden curse words) in a movie or video in order to depict evil or sinful things; such as discordant music to depict discord; or weird music to depict mental illness; or extremely violent music to depict sinful rebellion and chaos.
9. Dancing is not intrinsically evil. Dances that are modest, not sexually suggestive, dignified, and non-pagan are good dances and dances that are not are sinful dances.

Examples of sexually suggestive dancing are dances that require close body to body contact or the moving of the hips or other body parts in a sexually suggestive manner.

Some good dances are as follows: waltzes, polkas, and folk and ballet dances that are modest and dignified and not sexually suggestive or pagan.

Sinful dances consist of the following: dances that are good but the dancers are immodestly dressed, such as most modern ballets; dances that are either sexually suggestive or pagan or undignified, such as Tangos or dances glorifying paganism (such as Indian war dances in which they dress and act like mad animals); or Rock and Rap dances in which the dancers act like mad, insane, spastic, criminal, or delirious persons.

10. Good art is rational, modest, dignified, and non-pagan. Hence art that is blasphemous, pagan, immodest, sexually suggestive, irrational, unrecognizable, distorted, disoriented, deviant, or weird is sinful art.
11. It is a sin of idolatry to idolize actors, musicians, dancers, artists, sports players, or any other person.

For the glory of God; in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Michael, St. Joseph, Ss. Joachim and Anne, St. John the Baptist, the other angels and saints; and for the salvation of men

Original version: 10/2021; Current version: 10/2021

Mary's Little Remnant

302 East Joffre St.

Truth or Consequences, New Mexico 87901-2878, USA

Website: www.JohnTheBaptist.us