

**“Cases on the Second Precept (Third Commandment) of the Decalogue.”**

“Gervais, a youth, vowed: 1st, to preserve a perpetual chastity; 2nd, not to eat the heads of animals, in honour of St. John the Baptist, the beheaded.”

“Are these vows valid?”

Answer—“Yes, for the first; no, for the second.”

Unquestionably neither of these vows could create any obligation. Gervais might, from choice, live in perpetual celibacy, and refuse to eat the heads of animals, but his vows could not bind him.

“Veronica, observing that her daughter Martine is pregnant by Titus, vows before God and the Virgin to give a hundred pieces of gold to the Church if her daughter dies before giving birth to a child.

“Is the vow valid?”

Answer—“Though valid as to the object of the vow, it is illicit as to the end; indeed, though one cannot condemn (?) a mother who, to avoid dishonour, wishes for God to take away her daughter. However, as there is an eternal injury for the child, and as the desire of the mother is not subject to the condition of her eternal salvation, but is absolute, that desire is illicit.”

Whence comes the mother's right to wish and pray for her daughter's death?