

## **FP-053**

### **TEN COMMANDMENTS PLAQUE**

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What do the 10 Commandments have to do with Fair Park, you ask? The answer is actually more promotional than spiritual.

In 1946, a juvenile court judge in Minnesota told a story about a delinquent boy who came into his court and didn't know what the 10 Commandments were. So, the judge got an idea: he would print up copies of the commandments for courtrooms and classrooms all over North America.

In 1951, his idea was taken up by an organization called the Fraternal Order of Eagles. And a few years later it got the attention of Cecil B. DeMille, the legendary director whose epic film, *The Ten Commandments*, was about to hit theaters in 1956.

The two men joined forces to find Catholic, Jewish and Protestant scholars willing to come up with a version of the Commandments that incorporated the spirit of all three traditions. That's because in the different texts, the Commandments are worded, and even numbered, differently. In fact, if you look closely, you'll see embedded in the slab both the Jewish Star of David, and the Greek letter combination Chi Rho, which Catholics often use to symbolize Christ.

The Fraternal Order of Eagles eventually placed about 4 thousand granite slabs around the country during the 1950s. This slab is one of those, as is the one on the state capitol grounds in Austin that the Supreme Court recently ruled to be constitutional. This monument spent most of the 1970s and 1980s in warehouse storage but was put back on display in the 1990s.

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