

Make Up for 9th Grade Lesson on Abortion (Feb 10-16)

1. You will need internet access for this first step. Go to the following website <http://www.prolifeamerica.com/4D-Ultrasound-pictures/>. Take a look at this marvelous pictures of a baby developing in the womb.
2. Write out a sentence stating what you think is the number one reason in America people give for having an abortion? Next, Read the attached article titled **“Do You Know The Hard Facts About Abortion In America?”**
3. Write a response to this statement, “If I was pregnant or was responsible for someone being pregnant, the following are legitimate reason for aborting the baby.” Note: Although you have a right to your opinion, it is important to understand the teaching of the Church on this Respect Life issue. The Church believes that life is sacred and should be respected/protected from conception to natural death. Further, note that 95% of abortions in the USA are made for social and economic reasons. Lastly, even if a child was conceived under tragic circumstances, the Church urges mothers to give birth to the innocent child and give him/her up for adoption if necessary.
4. Read the attached article by Mother Teresa on abortion. Next, please write out answer to the following questions:
 - What do you think of Mother Teresa’s teaching on LOVE (until it hurts)? Or in other words that love involves self-sacrifice and – at times – putting the needs of other ahead of our own.
 - Ask: What do you think of Mother Teresa’s approach of fighting abortion by adoption and offering supportive services to pregnant women?
5. Write out answers to the following questions having to do with Euthanasia:
 - a. Handicapped people are too big a drain on our health care system and therefore should be killed. True or False (See the Churches answer below)
 - b. People with a terminal illness should be given all the pain medication that they need so that they don’t suffer – even if it means giving them a high amount that wouldn’t be good for a non-terminal patient. True or False (See the Churches answer below)
 - c. *Elderly in nursing homes, especially non-responsive patients, have a low “quality of life” and should be given a lethal injection (or in other words killed). True or False (See the Churches answer below)
 - d. People have a right to determine how they die – even if this means by suicide or assisted suicide. True or False
 - e. Adults can leave what are called “advanced directives” that give instructions on what they want done for them or do not want done for them at such a time as they become unable to express their wishes. For example an elderly person can state that they do not wish to be resuscitated if their heart stops. It is also legal in Illinois and many other states to state that you do not want to receive food or fluids via a

“tube feeding” if you become unable to eat and drink on your own. With the exception of one rather rare situation it is acceptable (according to Catholic teaching) to withhold food and fluids from a patient if they have left advanced directives to do so. TRUE or FALSE (See the Churches answer below)

- f. It is acceptable in some circumstances to withdraw a medical treatment, such as “unplugging” a ventilator, if it is artificially extending someone’s life. If TRUE, then move left. TRUE or FALSE. (See the Churches answer below)

Please read the answer to the above questions to see how your answers compare to Church teaching.

Answers:

- a. False – The Church teaches that we should respect and protect all human life from conception to natural death.
- b. True - The Church is all for reducing suffering of terminally ill patients. Giving them enough pain medication, even if it would be an addicting amount to a regular person or cause some long term health problems to a non-dying patient, is not a problem because they are terminally ill.
- c. False - Every life is precious. God is in charge of life and death. We should not cause people’s death. We should not put ourselves in the position of judging “quality of life”.
- d. False - The Church sees suicide as gravely wrong. It is important to note that people who commit suicide are often suffering from deep depression or other psychological issues that prohibit them from making a truly free choice (and therefore not truly responsible or at least their responsibility is diminished), so the Church is very careful not to judge the person who committed this “wrong” act.
- e. False - The Catholic Church holds that providing food and fluids, even via a feeding tube, is normal and humane care and should not be withheld. Since food and fluids are necessary to sustain human life, then withholding them causes death, which the Church teaches is immoral. The only exception is in the case where someone is going to die imminently – like today or tomorrow, - because the food and fluids would provide no benefit to the body.
- f. True - There are cases when what is considered a “heroic” medical treatment may be discontinued. Examples of this can be unplugging a ventilator or discontinuing aggressive cancer treatment. If someone has been “brain dead” for a significant period of time with little or no hope of recovery, then it can be a legitimate moral choice to disconnect them from a ventilator, which is artificially extending their life. One important distinction is that turning off the ventilator or stopping aggressive cancer treatment doesn’t cause death - it merely allows the disease or medical condition to take its’ natural course. Note: on the other hand, giving someone a lethal injection or withholding food and fluids causes death.

6. Read the following paragraphs:

Share with the students the following definition of Euthanasia & the below explanatory comments: It has been defined by Pope John Paul II, in his *The Gospel of Life* Encyclical, as “an action or omission which of itself and by intention causes death, with the purpose of eliminating all suffering.” Supporters of euthanasia often justify it or

physician-assisted suicide on the grounds that the pain of terminal illness is too great for the average person to bear. They hold that it is more merciful to kill the suffering patient. The Pope, as representative of Christ on earth, holds that “euthanasia is a grave violation of the law of God, since it is the deliberate and morally unacceptable killing of a human person.” It is a fundamentally unreasonable act. (Taken from NCBC: A Catholic Guide to End-of-Life Decisions An Explanation of Church Teaching on Advance Directives, Euthanasia, and Physician Assisted Suicide)

The prospect of intractable pain may be frightening, but such extreme distress rarely occurs. The physician almost always can minimize or eliminate the pain that may accompany terminal illness. Most people, in fact, die peaceful deaths. Although it is certainly preferable to die in a conscious state of prayer, no one should feel obliged to forgo medications and pain relief even though they may bring about disorientation or produce unconsciousness. The Church does not oblige the Catholic to forgo medical treatment for pain even when such treatment may deprive the patient of full consciousness or indirectly shorten life. The Church asks only that appropriate conditions exist before such medication be taken.

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