

MORAL vs. LEGAL DECISIONS

Question: How do we Catholics learn to make moral decisions?

Before we take action, we ought to know how to make good choices in first place:

- (1) We ought to know the moral teachings of the Catholic Church.
- (2) We ought to conform our conscience to what is morally good.
- (3) We ought to know the moral consequences of the choices that we make.

Before making choices and **before** acting on them, we need to know what is moral. Scripture and the Church define faith and morals to help us avoid sin. Sins we ought to avoid are not a matter of politics, but a matter of morality. Let's look at some moral alternatives we can choose to avoid falling into sin.

--Sex Addict Counseling vs. Pornography, Cybersex, and Sex trafficking

--Protecting Life in the Womb vs. Harvesting human eggs or embryos

--Natural Procreation through Marital Love vs. In Vitro Fertilization

--Preserving Natural Family Childbirth vs. Surrogate pregnancies

--Respecting the Human Body vs. Sexual abuse, rape, and domestic violence

--Protecting the Sanctity of Marriage and Family Life vs. Redefining the Sacrament of Matrimony in terms of same-sex unions

Why are these actions bad choices?

- They separate human conception from the conjugal act of love
- A good end never justifies the use of an immoral means
- What is legal is not necessarily moral
- Above all else, we may never judge or condemn anyone whom we believe has made a bad choice. Jesus heals and forgives—this is our ministry.

What can we do positively to help ourselves and others to make good choices?

- (1) Teach children modesty, purity, sexual abstinence, sacrament of marriage
- (2) If anyone needs assistance in dealing with thorny issues before you make a moral decision on how to act, priests are available for pastoral consultation.
- (3) If we fail to make moral decisions or sin by our actions, we always have recourse to the Sacrament of Reconciliation for the forgiveness of sin.
- (4) Regardless of the bad choices we may have made in the past, our God is a God of compassion and mercy who sent us his Son, Jesus, not to judge us, condemn or hold grudges. Neither should we. Thank God who saves us!

Conclude: When we avoid the bad choices and intentionally make good choices, we are making a difference in a positive way in our culture and society.