

MORAL DECISIONS THAT RESPECT LIFE

How can we Catholics learn to make decisions that respect life? Human life is given to us by God and made holy by the Incarnation of his Son. It is the most precious gift we have. We come from God, we belong to God, and we are going back to God. The God-given gift of our human life deserves our gratitude, respect and protection. Jesus is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. In the Gospels, Jesus preaches and teaches us the value of the Kingdom of God that cherishes human life lived for God. We too cherish this gift of life when we prepare ourselves to make moral decisions in all the stages of our life that contribute to a Culture of Life in our families as well as our society. And, we celebrate this Gospel of Life when we cherish all of human life as a gift from God.

Before we act, we ought to know how to make good choices in the first place. To do so, we need to be aware of the moral teachings of the Catholic Church, to conform our conscience to what is morally good, and to reflect on the moral consequences of the choices that we are about to make.

How do we know what is moral before we make choices that affect human life? We need to know the difference between sin and virtue in regard to choices and actions. Scripture and the Church define faith and morals to help us avoid sin. Sin we ought to avoid is not a matter of politics, but rather a matter of morality. We ought to seek moral alternatives instead of accepting sinful behaviors. Here are some examples of moral alternatives concerning life that we can choose in order to avoid falling into sin.

- Sex Addict Counseling vs. Pornography, Cybersex, and Sex trafficking
- Adoption respects Human Life vs. Abortion and Infanticide
- Natural Family Planning vs. Sterilization and Artificial Birth Control
- Adult Stem Cells respect the Unborn vs. Extracting embryonic stem cells
- 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
- God alone is Creator of our Life vs. Human cloning and Genetic engineering
- Hospice and Palliative Care vs. Assisted Suicide and Euthanasia
- 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 legal same-sex unions
- Valuing the Human Life of every Person vs. The Use of the Death Penalty

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--Dialogue and Conciliation vs. Resolving conflict by War and bloodshed

Why are these actions bad choices?

- They prevent or destroy human life
- They separate human conception from the conjugal act of love
- A good end never justifies the use of an immoral means
- Immoral actions today result in even greater moral problems later on
- 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.

In today's society, we are all challenged to actively resist the Culture of Death. What can we do positively to help ourselves and others to make good choices?

- (1) Parents: Teach your children modesty, purity and sexual abstinence.
- (2) Adults: Care for the unborn, those who are vulnerable, people living with disabilities, and the terminally ill.
- (3) Adults and Youth: Register for Safe Environment Training and become more aware of your environment in order to prevent and to report abuse.
- (4) Click on "Resources" at our Website for a link to explanations of Catholic teachings from the Church on human life and the moral options we have.
- (5) All of us are called to take a moral stance on human life from conception to natural death to preserve the Sanctity of Life and a consistent life ethic.
- (6) If anyone needs assistance in dealing with the thorny issues of life before you make a moral decision on how to act, I am available for pastoral consultation.
- (7) 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.
- (8) 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!

When we avoid the bad choices and intentionally make good choices, we are making a difference in a positive way for the Culture of Life in our families and our society.

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