

Morality: Application to Some Current Issues

(Reference: *This Is Our Faith*, Chapters 20 and 21)

Opening Prayer: Psalm 95: 1-8

I. Introduction.

- Preliminary points about moral judgments.
- Application of principles learned in the first session on morality – a “quiz.”
- Relationship between human sexuality and human life.

II. Human Sexuality.

A. Natural Law.

B. Scripture.

1. Old Testament. (Gen. 1:26-28, 2:24; Sg.)
2. New Testament. (Mt. 19:3-9; Mk. 10:2-12; 1 Cor. 6:9-20; Eph. 5:28-33)

C. Church Teaching.

1. *Catechism of the Catholic Church (CCC)* ¶¶ 2331 – 2400.
2. *Gaudium et Spes* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Vatican II) ¶¶ 50, 51.
3. Papal Encyclicals: *Casti Cannubii*, Pius XI (1930); *Humanae Vitae*, Paul VI (1968).

4. *Theology of the Body*, John Paul II (1979 – 1984).
5. Summary: The Church teaches that human sexual intercourse is an action inscribed by the Creator with a twofold meaning, that is, with both a unitive and procreative dimension. Outside of marriage, sexual intimacy is objectively morally wrong. (summary based on a document published by the U.S. bishops)

D. Specific Questions.

1. Birth Control.
2. Homosexuality.

III. Human Life.

A. Natural Law.

B. Scripture. (Jer. 1:5; Ps. 139:13-16; Lk. 2:21)

C. Church Teaching. (*Gaudium et Spes* Pt. I, Ch. I (Vatican II, 1965); *Evangelium Vitae* (JP II, 1995); *Donum Vitae* (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 1987); *Dignitas Personae* (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2008))

D. Beginning of Life Issues.

1. Abortion. (CCC ¶¶ 2270-75)
2. Embryonic Stem Cell Research.
3. In Vitro Fertilization and Surrogate Motherhood.
4. Genetic Testing.

5. Recommended Reading: Robert P. George and Christopher Tollefsen, *Embryo: A Defense of Human Life* (2008).

E. End of Life Issues.

1. Suicide and Euthanasia. (CCC ¶¶ 2276-83)
2. Withholding or Withdrawing Medical Treatment.
3. Withholding or Withdrawing Nutrition and Hydration.
4. “Living Wills” and Medical Powers of Attorney.

- F. Further Study: <http://www.nbccenter.org> (National Catholic Bioethics Center).

IV. Morality and Law.

- A. Nature and Role of Civil Law. (CCC ¶¶ 2235-37)
- B. Unjust Laws. (CCC ¶ 2242)
- C. Obligations of Catholics. (CCC ¶ 2239; *The Participation of Catholics in Political Life* (Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, 2002); *Living the Gospel of Life* (United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1998))
- D. Recommended Reading: Charles J. Chaput, *Render Unto Caesar* (2008).