

2009 Pro-Life Essay

Since the first century, the Catholic Church has had clear and unchanging moral standards. Some of our most important and non-negotiable teachings concern our belief that human life is sacred because it is a possession of God who created it and all things that exist. We believe that God created life to share his love and only he can end it. We believe that God has entrusted us to protect life from the moment of conception until that life comes to a natural ending.

It is understandable then, that the Catholic Faith is against any form of unnatural ending of human life from one human to another. These unnatural endings include abortion, euthanasia, embryonic stem cell research and capital punishment.

Abortion is a murderous act of ending an innocent life shortly after conception. Abortion participants and its proponents willingly make the decision that a woman's convenience is more important than allowing a developing fellow human to live. It is the ultimate form of bullying. The victim, whose conception was unwanted or inconvenient, cannot physically defend itself and certainly not beg for mercy from the persons who desire to end his or her life. Even in rare cases, where a baby is conceived out of the grave injustice of rape, the Catholic Church recognizes that killing the newly created life only results in the violation of yet another innocent person.

Embryonic stem cell research is really another form of abortion. It is murder disguised as a new medical frontier which promises the hope of great advancements which will benefit mankind. The price for this type of research is sacrificing of yet more innocent human life in the form of leftover embryos whose destiny was to become medical waste if not used in experimentation for stem cell research. These leftover embryos were created in test tubes for use in the infertility procedure called in-vitro fertilization, which requires the creation of more embryos that will actually survive the procedure in hopes of getting one to survive implantation into a woman's womb. This is an example of a dark side of humanity where one group of humans satisfy their wants and desires with little regard for the consequences that it will inflict upon others.

Euthanasia is another cause of death by one human to another human. Even if the intentions are for compassionate reasons, direct euthanasia which is bringing an end to the lives of the infirmed, elderly, handicapped, sick or dying persons, is morally unacceptable. We must never end a life that is before the natural end that God chooses, just because it is inconvenient for us. We must give our greatest efforts to respect life at all stages to respect life at all stages and care for it as best as we can.

At one time in the history of the Catholic Church, capital punishment was permissible. Since self defense has never been condemned as an act of murder, in ancient times, putting an end to the behavior of a person who was harmful to civil society was not considered morally wrong because there was no way to contain the criminal. In our modern world, however, it is against the teaching of the Catholic Church. Modern buildings provide maximum security to keep dangerous criminals locked away.

Murderous criminals should never be executed as a revenge for a crime. In the Gospel of the “Sermon on the Mountain”, Jesus told us to love our enemies and forgive them. In the Garden of Gethsemane, on the night before he died, Jesus told Peter to put away his sword when Peter tried to protect Jesus from his captors who were going to soon crucify Jesus.

God created life as a way of sharing his love. He allows us to be faithful stewards of his creations, but God made it clear in the fifth commandment: “Do not slay the innocent and the righteous”. We must promote the Culture of Life. We can do this by believing what our Catholic Faith teaches us about respect for life. We can put our faith into action by volunteering for and supporting groups that help unwed mothers and families who have chosen to honor their faith by not aborting babies with afflictions. We can participate in peaceful demonstrations that promote our beliefs on the subject. We can pray for those caring for the sick and dying. We can visit persons jailed for crimes and share God’s love with them. We also can try to change people’s opinions about respecting life at all stages.