

St. Luke the Evangelist Parish  
13 North St., Geneseo, NY



## *Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part IV*

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April 14, 2021

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## *Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part IV*

### Opening Prayer



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## *Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part IV*

### Webinar Tips

- All participants are muted to reduce background noise
- If slides are not fully visible, check at the top center of your screen for “fit to window” under arrow.
- If you would like to ask a question, at the bottom of your screen you should see a box with the letters “Q & A”. Click it and you can type your question. It will show on my screen.
- In addition to the slides, you should see a video of me. It should appear in the upper right of your screen. It should not block any significant content on the slides. If it does, you can drag it around.

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## *Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part IV*

### Review

- Dignity of Life
- The beginning and end of earthly life
  - Abortion & Death penalty
  - Suicide – Comment from evaluation “We never know what is in a person’s mind when they commit suicide. I have never thought that suicide was a rational decision, so wouldn’t God extend his mercy on the individual so that he may one day be able to enter Heaven?”
  - Euthanasia – Comment from evaluation – doctor who feels it is “torture to use a feeding tube instead of not providing nutrition when a person is near death...What I questioned is the pain medication dulling any sense of hunger thus the person stops eating and dies.”

If you missed any of the first three webinars, you can watch them at [www.renewaloffaith.org/profile](http://www.renewaloffaith.org/profile).

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#### Questions From Part III Evaluations

- Evaluation Comment - Coronavirus Vaccine
  - Material from the Vatican and the USCCB is available online on our diocesan Life Issues website (<https://www.liferoc.org>) and <https://www.usccb.org/prolife/biomedical-research>.
  - Vaccines from aborted fetus lines
  - Is one morally obligated to take the vaccine?

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#### Review

#### When Does the Soul Leave the Body?"

*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 366*

“The Church teaches that every spiritual soul is created immediately by God – it is not “produced” by the parents – and also that it is immortal: it does not perish when it **separates from the body at death**, and it will be **reunited with the body** at the final Resurrection.”

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#### Treating the Body After Death with Dignity

- Burial - *Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2300* – “The bodies of the dead must be treated with respect and charity, in faith and hope of the Resurrection. The burial of the dead is a corporal work of mercy.”
- Cremation
  - Why it **was** not allowed
  - Proper care of the cremains
  - (See CDF “Instruction *Ad resurgendum cum Christo* regarding the burial of the deceased and the conservation of the ashes in the case of cremation.” 8/15/2016 online at [http://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_20160815\\_ad-resurgendum-cum-christo\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20160815_ad-resurgendum-cum-christo_en.html))

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#### Organ Donation

*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2296*

- From a Living Donor – “*Organ transplants* are in conformity with the moral law if the physical and psychological dangers and risks to the donor are proportionate to the good that is sought for the recipient.”
- After Death - “Organ donation after death is a noble and meritorious act and is to be encouraged as an expression of generous solidarity.”
- On the living and deceased – “It is **not** morally acceptable if the donor or his proxy has not given **explicit consent**.”

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### Medical Research on the Deceased

- Donating body for medical research
  - The body must always be treated with respect
  - Burial

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### Medical Research on the Living

*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2295*

“Research or experimentation on the human being cannot legitimate acts that are in themselves contrary to the dignity of persons and to the moral law. the subjects' **potential consent does not justify such acts.** Experimentation on human beings is **not morally legitimate if it exposes the subject's life or physical and psychological integrity to disproportionate or avoidable risks.** Experimentation on human beings does not conform to the dignity of the person if it takes place **without the informed consent** of the subject or those who legitimately speak for him.”

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### Medical Research on the Living cont'd

- A human being should never be used as a guinea pig in medical research
- The source of embryos in research and cell development for vaccines, stem cells, etc.
  - One's own stem cells
  - “Organ donation” from another
  - Placenta
  - Abortion

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### Cloning

“Human cloning is intrinsically illicit in that, by taking the ethical negativity of techniques of artificial fertilization to their extreme, it seeks to *give rise to a new human being without a connection to the act of reciprocal self-giving between the spouses* and, more radically, *without any link to sexuality*. This leads to manipulation and abuses gravely injurious to human dignity” (*Dignitas Personae*, 28).

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### Cloning cont'd

"If cloning were to be done for *reproduction*, this would impose on the resulting individual a predetermined genetic identity, subjecting him – as has been stated – to a form of *biological slavery*, from which it would be difficult to free himself. The fact that someone would arrogate to himself the right to determine arbitrarily the genetic characteristics of another person represents *a grave offense to the dignity of that person as well as to the fundamental equality of all people*" (*Dignitas Personae*, 29).

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### Cloning cont'd

- Cloning done to "replace" a lost child fails to recognize the human being as more than a biological machine, humans more than the sum of their parts
- Designer babies
  - Control over human evolution – selecting those "with superior qualities" (*Dignitas Personae*, 28)
  - Sex selection
- Medical Therapy
- Research

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### What about life in between conception and death?



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### Consistent Life Ethic

- We need to consistently value and respect life from conception through natural death to the grave ***and all*** stages in between
- "The Fifth Commandment calls us to foster the physical, spiritual, emotional, and social well-being of self and others" (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 389).

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## The Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy Are Pro-Life

In part II we talked about reasons why a woman might choose abortion. This included concern about being able to care for the child after he/she is born. Here we help with the Corporal Works of Mercy to:

- Feed the Hungry
- Give drink to the thirsty
- Clothe the naked

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## Corporal Work – Visit the Imprisoned

- In part II we talked about the death penalty. If we stand up for the life of the imprisoned is this a step towards the Corporal Work of Mercy to visit the imprisoned?
- What can we do now to “visit the imprisoned” to help them change their lives for the better before they are released as well as after? Does this not help make the world a better place?
- It can help them just to know someone cares.

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## Corporal Work – Visit the Sick

- In part III we talked about accompanying the dying. Here we fulfill the Corporal Work of Mercy to visit the sick.
- Visit the Sick is not for just the terminally ill
  - Communion to the Homebound and Nursing Homes
  - Visits/aid to show we care

## Related Spiritual Works

- Comfort the sorrowful
- Whether or not we are able to do other corporal and spiritual works of mercy to help others, we can also participate in the Spiritual Work of Mercy to pray for the living and the dead

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## Caring for Others in this Life

“And how can we fail to consider the violence against life done to millions of human beings, especially children, who are forced into poverty, malnutrition and hunger because of an **unjust distribution of resources** between peoples and between social classes?” (*Evangelium Vitae*, 10, my emphasis).

If one is starving and unclothed in poverty, how are they going to feel loved by God and by their neighbor?

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## The Seventh Commandment – “You shall not steal.”

- "The Seventh Commandment not only deals with matters of property and stealing, but also with issues of social justice and human dignity" (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 418).
  - Overconsumption (gluttony) → feed the hungry
  - Just wage – A fair day's work for fair day's pay
- "Theft includes not only robbery but also actions such as embezzlement, computer theft, counterfeit money, fraud, **identity theft**, **copyright violations** (including pirating things such as music or computer software), and mail scams" (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 419).

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## Preferential Option for the Poor

- Why should the “poor” be given **preference**?
  - It is not simply because they are “poor”. Rather, the poor are often disadvantaged and unable to stand up for themselves
- Those unable to work - Is there something we can do? Medical care? Training?
- For those “unwilling”
  - Remember the children!
  - “In fact, when we were with you, we instructed you that if anyone was unwilling to work, neither should that one eat. We hear that some are conducting themselves among you in a disorderly way, by not keeping busy but minding the business of others. Such people we instruct and urge in the Lord Jesus Christ to work quietly and to eat their own food” (2 Thessalonians 3:10-12).
  - What makes them “unwilling”? How do they view themselves? Can't get to interviews? Training?

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## Preferential Option for the Poor

- Charity vs. Advocacy
  - “Give a man a fish and you feed him for a day. Teach a man to fish and you feed him for a lifetime.”
  - “A hand up, not just a handout.”

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## Racism

- The USCCB says, “Racism is a moral problem that requires a moral remedy—a transformation of the human heart—that impels us to act” (*Open Wide Our Hearts*, 20).
- Racism is a sin against the dignity of life
  - “Go, therefore, and make disciples of **all** nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit” (Matthew 28:19).
  - “Everyone who hates his brother is a murderer, and you know that no murderer has eternal life remaining in him” (1 Jn 3:15).

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## What is Racism?

“Racism arises when—either consciously or unconsciously—**a person holds that his or her own race or ethnicity is superior**, and therefore **judges** persons of other races or ethnicities as inferior and unworthy of equal regard. When this conviction or attitude leads individuals or groups to exclude, ridicule, mistreat, or unjustly discriminate against persons on the basis of their race or ethnicity, **it is sinful**. Racist acts are sinful because they violate justice. They reveal a failure to acknowledge the human dignity of the persons offended, to recognize them as the neighbors Christ calls us to love (Mt 22:39)” (USCCB, *Open Wide Our Hearts*, 3, my emphasis)

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## Just War Theory

- I offer the following on Just War Theory as taking the Consistent Life Ethic and applying it not just to private individuals but to a group of people, such as a nation. We are called to respect all life, even that of our enemies for Jesus calls us to love our enemies (Matthew 5:43-48, Luke 6:27-36).
- In paragraph 2309, the [Catechism of the Catholic Church](#), presents the criteria for a just war. The teaching seeks to present guidelines to determine if war is justified at all and if it is justified, what level of military action is appropriate.
- The quoted information on the following slides comes from my website. - <http://www.renewaloffaith.org/just-war-theory.html>

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## Just War Theory cont'd

1. **“Just Cause** - Force may be used only to **correct a serious evil**. The emphasis here is that the evil must be done against a large group. Attacks against individuals or small groups do not justify serious military action.”

\*Our response must never be based on revenge or greed (see #4)

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## Just War Theory cont'd

2. “Comparative Justice - The response to the attack must be in proportion to the original attack. Thus, attacks against a small group of people does not justify attacks against a whole country. I would also include here that a single attack does not warrant a response that knowingly results in a prolonged war.”

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### Just War Theory cont'd

3. "Legitimate Authority - War can only be initiated by those who are duly recognized as the proper authority. The proper authority must be a properly recognized public government. I would question if one country has the authority to attack another country except perhaps in the case of self defense. I believe an individual country does not have any right to invade another country under violations of human rights to the people of the "unjust" government. By this, I mean that we cannot attack another country alone for what it does to its own people. I believe in this situation, the competent authority should be the United Nations or a coalition of a major portion of the world nations."

\*Each individual soldier is not personally responsible for the overall decision to attack. Those with the greater knowledge are responsible but each individual soldier must act prudently and with minimal force.

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### Just War Theory cont'd

4. "**Right Intention** - We must only resort to force for good motives. **If we attack to protect or secure human lives, we are attacking properly** (if amount of force used is in proportion). However, if we attack to obtain economic gain or political power that is evil."

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### Just War Theory cont'd

5. "Probability of Success - There must be a reasonable hope of accomplishing our goals. I would include under this that we must consider the after effects of our attacks. We attacked Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein from power. We were successful in removing him from power. **However, we must ask are the Iraqi people more secure and safe with their human rights intact now than they were under Saddam Hussein.**"

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### Just War Theory cont'd

6. "Proportionality – "the use of arms must not produce evils and disorders graver than the evil to be eliminated" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2309*)."

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#### Just War Theory cont'd

7. "Last Resort - War can only be done as a last resort. We must exhaust all diplomatic means and any other peaceful means possible."

\*As I said under #3, the command officers make the general decision, not individual soldiers. However, again, the individual soldiers must use wise judgment in the moment. For example, recognizing **when it is clear** faulty intelligence incorrectly identified a hospital or school as a military installation.

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#### Summary on Life

- Life is a precious gift from God that begins at conception and comes to an end in this world at natural death. This is true for all people regardless of abilities, color, language, or belief system.
- "Man is called to a fullness of life which far exceeds the dimensions of his earthly existence, because it consists in sharing the very life of God...After all, life on earth is not an "ultimate" but a "penultimate" reality" (*Evangelium Vitae* EV, 2).

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#### Summary – Our Duty to Speak Up for Life

- "We have been sent. For us, being at the service of life is not a boast but rather a duty" (EV, 79).
- Luke 2:34, "a sign that will be contradicted"
- Mark 13:9-13 – "Watch out for yourselves. They will hand you over to the courts. You will be beaten in synagogues. You will be arraigned before governors and kings because of me, as a witness before them. **But the gospel must first be preached to all nations. When they lead you away and hand you over, do not worry beforehand about what you are to say. But say whatever will be given to you at that hour. For it will not be you who are speaking but the holy Spirit.** Brother will hand over brother to death, and the father his child; children will rise up against parents and have them put to death. You will be hated by all because of my name. But the one who perseveres to the end will be saved."

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#### "Homework"

- Promoting a Culture of Life
  - Public policy advocacy with legislatures and/or executive branch
  - Changing our own attitudes to that of God's so we in turn may change the general attitude of general society towards life

In doing Corporal and Spiritual Works of Mercy we follow:  
Station 5 Simon of Cyrene helps Jesus carry the cross

When we feel like there is nothing else we can do,  
Station 6 Veronica wipes the face of Jesus.

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### Future Schedule

- Webinar - Wednesday, May 19<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30 pm – new topic, **“Three Saints to Aid Us”** discussing St. Michael the Archangel, St. John Fisher, and St. Thomas More
- When you exit this webinar a short evaluation questionnaire should come up to invite your feedback.
- The slides for this presentation will be available online at [www.renewaloffaith.org/prolife](http://www.renewaloffaith.org/prolife).

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### Related Articles on My Blog

- “Biology Makes Me Pro-Life”, January 31, 2020  
<http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=3124>
- On the death penalty - “What About Accountability”, December 7, 2020. <http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=5395>
- For more on the purpose of punishment see my blog article, “Receiving a Penance”, (September 1, 2020)  
<http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=4776>
- “What About Accountability?” (December 7, 2020) online at  
<http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=5395>
- Fr. Jeffrey S. Tunnickliff, “Homily for 5<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A” covering Public Policy weekend on issue of Assisted Suicide. February 8, 2000. <http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=3142>
- Fr. Jeffrey S. Tunnickliff, “27<sup>th</sup> Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A” Homily given on Respect Life Sunday, 10/4/20”) <http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=5007>.

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### Resources

Ashley, Benedict M, OP and O’Rourke, Kevin D. Op, *Health Care Ethics: A Theological Analysis 4<sup>th</sup> Edition*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press. 1997.

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dignitas Personae: Instruction on Certain Bioethical Questions*. September 8, 2008. Available online at [https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_20081208\\_dignitas-personae\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20081208_dignitas-personae_en.html)

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### Resources cont’d

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae – Instruction on Respect For Human Life In Its Origin and On the Dignity of Procreation: Replies to Certain Questions of the Day*. February 22, 1987. Accessed online at [https://www.vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_19870222\\_respect-for-human-life\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19870222_respect-for-human-life_en.html).

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Letter Samaritanus Bonus, On the Care of Persons in the Critical and Terminal Phases of Life*. June 25, 2020. Available online at [vatican.va/roman\\_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc\\_con\\_cfaith\\_doc\\_20200714\\_samaritanus-bonus\\_en.html](https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20200714_samaritanus-bonus_en.html).

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#### Resources cont'd

*Catechism of the Catholic Church. Second Edition.* Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997.

Kelly, David F., *Medical Care at the End of Life: A Catholic Perspective.* Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press. 2006.

Kraybill, Nolt, and Weaver-Zercher, *Amish Grace: How Forgiveness Transcended Tragedy.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. 2007.

Meilaender, Gilbert, *Bioethics: A Primer for Christians Second Edition.* Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company. 2005.

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#### Resources cont'd

Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae The Gospel of Life.* Boston: Pauline Books & Media. 1995.

Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae.* July 25, 1968. Available online at [http://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-vi\\_enc\\_25071968\\_humanae-vitae.html](http://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html)

Reilly, Robert R., *America on Trial A Defense of the Founding.* San Francisco: Ignatius Press. 2020.

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#### Resources (cont'd)

Second Vatican Council, *Gaudium et Spes Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World.* December 7, 1965.  
[http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_cons\\_19651207\\_gaudium-et-spes\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html)

*St. Joseph Edition of The New American Bible Revised Edition.* New Jersey, Catholic Book Publishing Corp. 2010.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), *Ethical and Religious Directives for Catholic Health Care Services: Sixth Edition.* 2018. Online at [https://www.usccb.org/resources/ethical-religious-directives-catholic-health-service-sixth-edition-2016-06\\_0.pdf](https://www.usccb.org/resources/ethical-religious-directives-catholic-health-service-sixth-edition-2016-06_0.pdf)

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#### Resources (cont'd)

USCCB, *Open Wide Our Hearts: The Enduring Call to Love, a Pastoral Letter Against Racism.* 2018. Available online at <https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/racism/upload/open-wide-our-hearts.pdf>

USCCB, *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults.* Washington, DC: USCCB. 2006.

Vatican News, "Pope Francis: 'death penalty inadmissible'," August 2, 2018. Available online at <https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2018-08/pope-francis-cdf-ccc-death-penalty-revision-ladaria.html>

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