



PRO-LIFE SESSION 1 DIGNITY OF LIFE



The Church teaches that every human life, from the moment of conception until death, is sacred and the murder of an innocent human being is gravely contrary to the dignity of the person.

The CONNECT section of the PARENT SHEET connects you with the information that was presented to your teen in our last small discipleship group. The DISCUSS section contains questions that you can use to start meaningful discussion on the topic covered and how it relates to your teen's life. The COMMIT section explains to you the commitment or challenge that your teen committed to as a way to grow in his/her faith.



CONNECT

There is no shortage of controversy related to the topic of life. Abortion, euthanasia, the death penalty, end-of-life issues, embryonic stem cell research, self-defense...the list can go on and on. All of these topics have moral complexities that have to be considered. So how is a Catholic supposed to understand these complicated issues?

In this session, the discipleship group discussed the value of each human life and answered the question, "Does every life have equal value?" Teens were provided a formula to understand the dignity of human life. This formula was intended to provide them with a better understanding of each of the moral issues surrounding life.



"For thou didst form my inward parts, thou didst knit me together in my mother's womb. I praise thee, for thou art fearful and wonderful. Wonderful are thy works! Thou knowest me right well."
—Psalm 139:13-14



PARENT TIPS

- » Consider purchasing the talk *There Is Life in the Womb* by Archbishop Fulton Sheen at Lighthouse Catholic Media.
lighthousecatholicmedia.org/store/title/there-is-life-in-the-womb
- » Read the story of Thomas S. Vander Woude that was shared in your teen's discipleship group. You can find the story at:
washingtonpost.com/wp-dyn/content/article/2008/09/09/AR2008090903691.html?sid=ST2008091502973



DISCUSS

Here are some conversation starters to help you engage in discussion with your teen. Remember to share your own perspectives as well.

- » Why is it important to have moral principles when making decisions that affect human life?
- » Which of the Church's positions do you have a difficult time understanding? (We recommend offering to study the position together.)

Pope Francis wrote in his book *On Heaven and Earth*: "The moral problem of abortion is pre-religious in nature because the genetic code of a person happens at the moment of conception. A human being is already there. I separate the topic of abortion from any religious concept. It is a scientific problem. To not let the development continue of a being who already has all of the genetic code of a human being is not ethical. The right to life is the first of human rights."

- » Why do you think Pope Francis is making an argument against abortion from science and not religion?

One possible answer: Many have tried to frame the issue of abortion as a religious issue and not an ethical issue. If it is a religious issue, it can be dismissed as the "beliefs of some that should not be imposed upon others." However, the right to life is not just a religious issue but an ethical issue. Ethics are well-founded standards of right and wrong that apply to both religious people and non-religious people. Pope Francis, who has a Master's Degree in Chemistry, points out that science has proven that life begins at conception and therefore the right-to-life ethic should apply to a newly conceived human being.



COMMIT

Teens were challenged to go to the website amazima.org and read about a remarkable young woman named Katie Davis (her story is found under the "About" tab). They were also encouraged to pray to God about how they can be just as heroic with their own lives.

