

Christian Morality and Moral Development

LEARNING STRAND: THEOLOGY



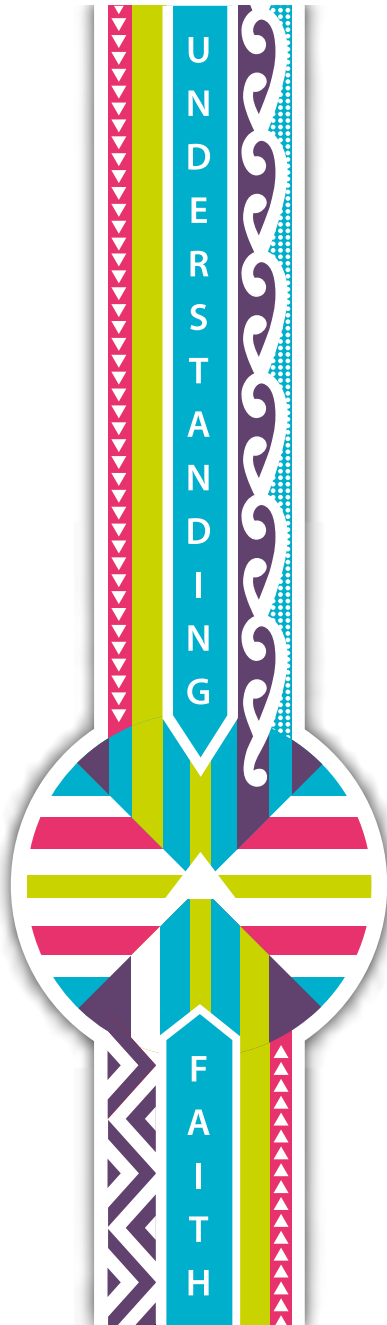
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**RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION
PROGRAMME**

**FOR CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN
AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND**

12F



THE LOGO

The logo is an attempt to express Faith as an inward and outward journey.

This faith journey takes us into our own hearts, into the heart of the world and into the heart of Christ who is God's love revealed.

In Christ, God transforms our lives. We can respond to his love for us by reaching out and loving one another.

The circle represents our world. White, the colour of light, represents God. Red is for the suffering of Christ. Red also represents the Holy Spirit. Yellow represents the risen Christ.

The direction of the lines is inwards except for the cross, which stretches outwards.

Our lives are embedded in and dependent upon our environment (green and blue) and our cultures (patterns and textures).

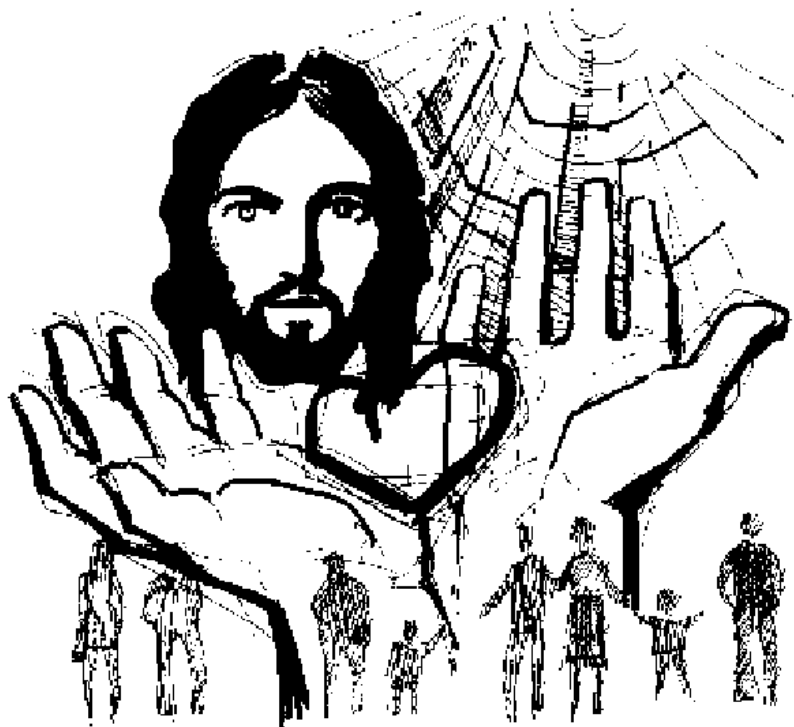
Mary, the Mother of Jesus Christ, is represented by the blue and white pattern.

The blue also represents the Pacific...

Annette Hanrahan RSCJ

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Māori terms are italicised in the text. The first time a Māori term appears in the text, its English meaning appears in brackets after it. A Māori glossary at the back of the book gives a more detailed explanation of these terms and provides a guide for their pronunciation.

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Part One: The Human Condition

Focus:

- Human persons are made in the image and likeness of *Te Atua* (God) to enjoy the fullness of God's life and *aroha* (love).
- Despite the presence of evil in the world, *he tangata* (human beings) are able to develop their human potential and achieve genuine happiness by freely making moral choices that lead them to God.
- Through the use of human reason, people are able to recognise a universal moral law that enables them to do good and avoid evil.
- People become genuinely human by developing loving relationships with *Te Atua*, others, the rest of creation, and with themselves.



Made in God's Image

Christians

affirm the goodness of God and the goodness of all God's creation.

While all creation reflects the glory of the Creator, humans have a unique place among God's works. We may seem insignificant when compared to the mighty wonders of the universe, but human beings are made in the image and likeness of *Te Atua*. As the psalmist tells us:

When I look at your heavens, the work of your fingers,
the moon and the stars that you have established;
what are human beings that you are mindful of them,
mortals that you care for them?
Yet you have made them a little lower than God,
and crowned them with glory and honour.
(Psalm 8)

Whether we recognise it or not, when we look at each other, we see God's image reflected back at us. This means that each human life is infinitely precious and has a value beyond anything we can imagine. Even in the poorest, ugliest or least important human beings, God's image is present – regardless of their circumstances.



Made in the image of God, all people are created to enjoy eternal life – the fullness of God's life and love. True happiness cannot be found in riches, fame, beauty or power, but in *Te Atua* alone.

Something to Think About

What are some of the implications for us if we really accept that we are made in God's image and likeness?

Moral Choices and Decisions

Despite the obvious presence of sin and evil in our world – in international disputes, civil wars, social violence, poverty, family conflicts, and in our own faults and wrong doings – we are called by *Te Atua* to find true happiness. We do this by using God's gift of freedom to make choices and decisions that will lead us to God and so develop our potential as people made in God's image and likeness. By relating to God in freedom and *aroha* we become fully human.

Each of our lives is like a journey. On this journey we have the opportunity to become our true selves and grow into the persons that we ought to be through the free choices and decisions that we make.

What we choose may be directed towards what is genuinely good for ourselves and others. In this case, the object of our choice is morally good and as a result we grow in human freedom. If the object of our choice is morally evil, we harm ourselves and others, and limit our freedom to develop our human potential.

Throughout our lives we have countless opportunities to learn from our experiences. We can learn from our mistakes, from other people and from past events, but our choices and decisions are ultimately ours alone. They create the kind of person we are going to be. Choices for sin or evil are an indication that our human freedom has become distorted either through failure to inform our conscience or from the compulsions that are part of our nature. When our moral choices are really free, we accept responsibility for them and their consequences. The essence of morality is whether what we become is what we ought to be – what God calls us to be.



Task One

Explain in your own words the relationship between freedom, moral choice and happiness.

Natural Law

Down the ages, people of all cultures and religions have recognised that certain common values and ways of behaving are essential aspects of human nature and necessary for the stability and well-being of human societies. Through human reason, men and women have been able to work out a basic moral code based on the principle that good must be done and evil avoided. This moral code is often referred to as “natural law” because it is part of our very nature as human beings. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, quoting from the Second Vatican Council’s *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (16), describes natural law in this way:

Deep within their conscience human beings discover a law which they have not laid upon themselves but which they must obey. Its voice, ever calling them to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in their heart at the right moment. ...For human persons have in their hearts a law inscribed by God....Their conscience is men and women’s most secret core and their sanctuary. There they are alone with God whose voice echoes in their depths. (Catechism of the Catholic Church 1776)

Natural law is the light of understanding placed in us by *Te Atua* which enables people to take responsibility for their actions. Natural law protects the dignity of the human person and provides the foundation for people’s rights and duties. From ancient times, the legal codes of various cultures and societies, including Israel, have been based on the natural law. The Decalogue (Ten Commandments) revealed by God to Moses on Mount Sinai is also regarded by Jews and Christians as the highest expression of natural law.

In situations involving serious crimes such as murder, rape and incest it is obvious that the natural law’s requirement that good be done and evil avoided has been disregarded.

When a person rapes, murders or brutally assaults another person, it is not difficult to recognise that there is something seriously wrong. It is normal for the family and friends of the victim to experience strong feelings of revulsion and anger towards the attacker and even towards the society which allowed that person to develop uncontrollable aggression and which failed to “do something about it”. Our society has certain commonly held attitudes about what is human behaviour and what is inhuman behaviour. Society harshly judges those whom it believes are guilty of behaving in an inhuman way, especially those who threaten or harm society’s weakest and most vulnerable members, children and the elderly.



Task Two

Write your own paragraph about natural law.

Something to Discuss

What important aspects of the natural law, revealed in the Ten Commandments, are also expressed in New Zealand law?

Developing our Human Potential and Growing as Christians

People become genuinely human by developing relationships of love, friendship and *tika* (justice) with others.

Christians seek to develop their human potential by following *Hehu Karaiti* (Jesus Christ) and living faithfully within Christ’s family, the Church. For believers, growth towards true and full humanity consists in living out four different relationships to which God calls all people:

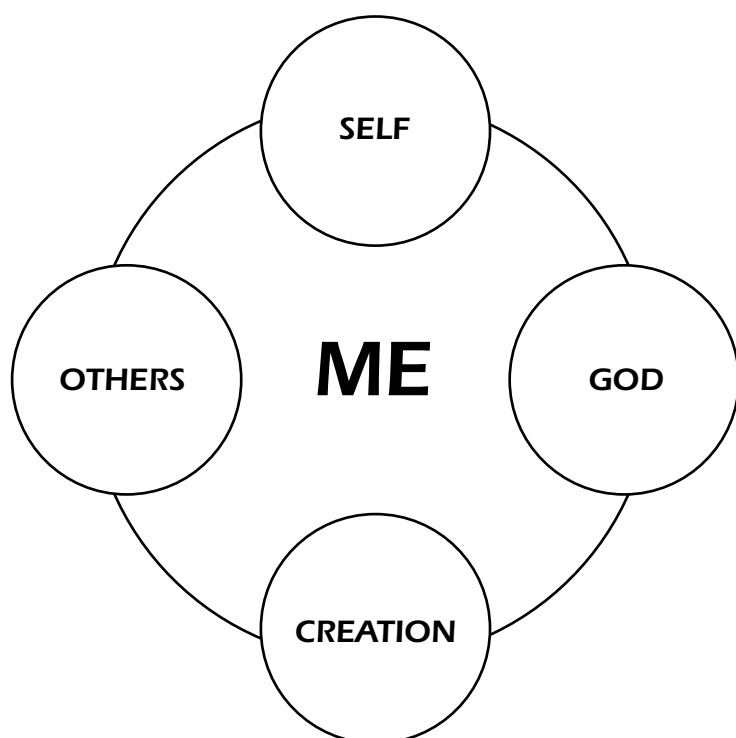
1. All people are called to a deep relationship with God. Human beings are challenged to look beyond their own limitations to find meaning and joy in life by developing their relationship with *Te Atua*. In doing this, they come to recognise the greatness of humankind and the dignity of each human person. This recognition enables people to develop as human beings.
2. All people are called to live in loving relationship with other human beings. When people relate to God happily and thankfully, they are able to be just, generous and forgiving towards others. Human *aroha* is expressed in varying degrees of intimacy, but always recognises the essential dignity of the other person. This basic human dignity comes not from anything the person may do or say or accomplish but from the fact that they bear God’s image.
3. All people are called to live in harmonious relationship with the rest of creation. Humankind is charged with caring for God’s creation, treating this world’s goods and resources responsibly rather than exploiting them. By respecting the forces of nature people safeguard the environment now and for the future. People’s attitudes towards the gifts of creation reflect the relationship they have with *Te Atua* and with one another.
4. Each human person is called to a positive relationship with himself / herself. Because human beings receive their dignity from God, they have the right and duty to respect and love themselves. All people are called to become more fully aware of their own identity as the daughters or sons of God. This requires them to recognise and appreciate their own unique giftedness and circumstances of life.



For Christians, learning to know the right things to believe and the best ways to live ensures that we develop into the people that God intends us to be. Regularly participating in the celebration of *ngā hākarameta* (the sacraments), especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation, and making time each day for personal *karakia* (prayer) help us to grow closer to Jesus Christ and keep us within his community, the Church.

Task Three

Use a diagram to present your own understanding of the four relationships within which people grow and develop their human potential.



Something to Think About

What are some of the helps available to Christians who wish to develop their God-given potential?

Freedom and Sin

When loving relationships with *Te Atua*, others, the world and self are broken or denied, people get hurt or the environment is damaged. Sometimes this suffering is on a dramatic scale – for example, environmental poisonings, wars between nations, or genocide – as in the case of the Holocaust. More often, however, the pain experienced as a result of a broken relationship, such as an argument that divides a group of close friends, seems to affect only a few people, ourselves and those close to us. Whether the impact of sin is felt on a massive scale or

at a more personal level, evil actions or situations originate in various choices or decisions that people make. There is clearly a link between the spread of evil in the world and people's abuse of freedom.



While it is true that the more people choose to do good things, the freer they become, it is also true that the more they misuse freedom, the less free they become. This is the case with addictions such as smoking, gambling, eating chocolate, or drug taking.

Take, for example, the situation of someone who decides to start smoking. The initial choice to take the first puff might be relatively free – simply a matter of curiosity. However, after a period of smoking the addiction takes hold and gradually the decision about whether or not to have another cigarette becomes less of a free choice and more of a compulsion. In the end, the smoker becomes a slave to the addiction, almost powerless to do anything but give in to their cravings.

It is the same with all sin. The more we choose to sin, the more enslaved we become and the less able to freely choose not to sin. Sinful attitudes and behaviours can be as compulsive as smoking and other addictions. Yet there is always hope. Just as smokers are able to “kick” the habit after many years, people caught up in sin can experience a change of heart and turn back to God.

Task Four

Choose one of the following statements about freedom and sin which you identify with. Explain in your own words what the statement means and give some examples of situations that show the statement to be true.

Evil actions or situations originate in choices people make.

The more people misuse freedom the less free they become.

Sinful attitudes and behaviours can become as compulsive as smoking and other addictions.

Task Five

People do not always choose what is morally good for themselves or others because various circumstances limit their freedom.

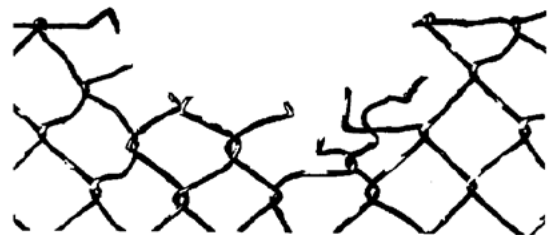
How might the following factors limit a person's freedom and prevent them from doing what is right?

ignorance	fear	pressure from others
habit	mental illness	immaturity
lack of thought		

Review Your Understanding

Which of the following statements accurately present the Catholic understanding of the human condition and morality? You should be able to explain your decisions.

1. God's image is present in all people regardless of the circumstances of their lives.
2. True happiness is found in riches, fame, beauty or power.
3. The presence of sin and evil in the world means that people cannot find true happiness in God.
4. People are able to use their human freedom to make moral choices that bring them closer to God.
5. By choosing moral evil people grow in freedom.
6. When moral choices are genuinely free, we accept responsibility for them and their consequences.
7. The purpose of morality is to bring us into more loving relationships with God, others and self.
8. Through human reason people are able to learn of the need to do good and avoid evil.
9. The natural law recognises that certain universal values and ways of behaving are essential to being genuinely human.
10. People become genuinely human by developing loving relationships with God, each other, and the rest of creation.
11. People receive their dignity from God only if they respect and love themselves first.
12. Prayerful participation in the celebration of the sacraments helps Christians become the people God intends them to be.
13. The spread of evil in the world is linked to the abuse of human freedom.
14. Addictions greatly weaken and limit genuine freedom.
15. It is easy to become free of sinful compulsions.



Part Two:

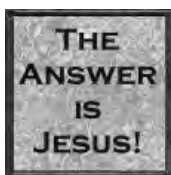
Jesus Christ – Source of Christian Morality

Focus:

- Christians believe that the answers to life's fundamental questions are found in *Hehu Karaiti*.
- Jesus Christ – fully God and fully human – reveals that we are called to experience the fullness of God's life and *aroha*.
- Christian morality shows us how to respond to God's love in our relationships with *Te Atua*, self and others.

Finding Answers

The following statements once appeared side by side on a wall:



But What's the Question?

Down the centuries, believers have found answers to life's deepest questions in Jesus Christ:

- What is God like?
- What am I called to become?
- What is the meaning of my life?
- What is a really free person like?
- How can I grow to become my true self?
- What can I do to make the world a better place?
- What values do I live by so that my relationships with others are life-giving for me and them?



Many of life's most important questions are about ways of relating – to God, to one's own self, to others and to the world. Such questions are moral questions because morality is primarily about relationships.

Something to Do

- **Add some questions of your own to the list of important questions about the deeper aspects of human life.**
- **Which of the questions on your list would you consider to be moral questions? Why?**

Who is Jesus Christ?

Christians recognise that *Hehu Karaiti* makes a difference to people's lives, to the world and to human relationships. Yet the explanations given by individual Christians as to who Jesus is and what difference he makes to their lives, to their world and to their relationships vary from person to person,



often according to circumstances such as age and background. For example, a young person of sixteen or seventeen years is likely to give a different response to the question "Who is Jesus for me?" than someone aged eleven, or another person of eighty-five. A particular individual's response to the question will also change as they move through life and grow in maturity both psychologically and spiritually.

When Christians want to find out who Jesus really is they turn to sacred revelation – the Scriptures and the teachings of the Church. These sources tell us that *Hehu Karaiti* is truly God and assure us that in Jesus we are able to see what *Te Atua* is really like. They also reveal that Jesus is truly human, one of us.

Task Six

What does each of the following passages tell us about the identity of Jesus Christ?

A. *He said to them, 'But who do you say that I am?' Simon Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.'* (Matthew 16:15-16)

B. *The beginning of the Good News of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.* (Mark 1:1)

C. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God... And the Word became flesh and lived among us...* (Matthew 16:15-16)

D. *By his incarnation, the Son of God has united himself in some fashion with every one. He worked with human hands, he thought with a human mind, acted by human choice and loved with a human heart.* (Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World 22)

Something to Do

Write a paragraph or illustrate a poster or role-play a dialogue of your own in response to Jesus' question to Simon Peter in Matthew 16:15:

"But who do you say that I am?"

Becoming Like God

Jesus showed through his life, death and *Te Aranga* (resurrection) that God's love is for all people. In Jesus Christ, we see not only what God is like, but what each person is called to become. As Saint Athanasius (c. 296-373) said:

The Son of God became human so that we might become God.

Because Jesus is completely without sin, God's image shines perfectly and without distortion in him. Jesus shows us how to live in total harmony with God's intentions.



Anointed by the Holy Spirit, Jesus was able to respond freely to his Father in heaven. Through this intimate and loving relationship with the Father, Jesus was able to make *Te Rangatiratanga* (the reign of God) present in the world. Jesus' total reliance on God can be seen in the way he prayed and in the *karakia* he taught his disciples – the Lord's Prayer.

Jesus' total response to God's *aroha* was expressed through acts of love and compassion. He reached out to people in all circumstances and states of life, but especially to the poor and the outcast. He transformed people's lives by driving out evil spirits, healing illnesses and disabilities, and forgiving sins. He showed people a new way to live. Although Jesus paid a heavy price for his faithfulness to his mission of love – death on a cross – *Te Atua* raised him to glory in the resurrection.

Matthew's Gospel gives Jesus the title of Emmanuel – a name which means "God-is-with-us". In Jesus, God has come among us. In Jesus, we see what God is like – loving, compassionate, merciful, and especially close to those in need. We can also see in Jesus what we are called to become – sons and daughters of God, fully human, fully free, and destined for happiness and the fullness of God's life and love.

Something to Discuss

Suggest ways in which Jesus shows us how to live in total harmony with God's intentions.

Task Seven

Select three or four of the following Scripture passages. Explain what each of the passages shows us about how we become more like God.

- Matthew 5:23-24
- Matthew 5:43-48
- Matthew 9:35
- Matthew 16:24-25
- Matthew 26:36-39
- Luke 6:36-38
- Luke 7:36-50
- Luke 19:1-10
- Luke 23:33-34
- Mark 12:41-44
- John 13:12-15



Life to the Full

Jesus calls everyone to fullness of life and offers all people salvation and freedom from sin – the moral evil that limits and burdens all of us:

I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly. (John 10:10)

Christians believe that we need not be trapped by our own human limitations. By following Jesus' example and giving ourselves in *aroha* to and for others we are on the way to becoming the people God calls us to be – free of sin!

Through their gift of self to others, many people are able to achieve a high degree of freedom.

For example:

- Those who risk their lives to save others
- Those who willingly go without the necessities of life in order to help their children or their parents
- Those who show patience and courage in the face of obstacles and difficulties
- Those who care for those about them in word and deed

The motivation for these acts of courage and heroism is love – love that comes from God and grows in response to *Te Atua*.



Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love. (1 John 4:7-8)

The Christian is able to love others because God first loved him or her. Christian morality is concerned with how each person responds to God's love.

Jesus reveals God's love for us and shows us how to love others. He insists that we love one another as he has loved us.

Christians believe that it is only by following Jesus – a discipleship made possible by the *Mana* (power) of *Te Wairua Tapu* (the Holy Spirit) – that we are able to resist the power of sin and live moral and holy lives.

Something to Think About

Christian morality is concerned with how each person responds to God's love.

Jot down all the different ways you respond to God's love in your life.

Something to Discuss

Share with a partner or in a small group about someone you know who gives himself / herself as a gift to others. In what sense is this person free?

Part Three: The Radical Call of the Gospel

Focus:

- **Jesus' sense of morality is expressed in his announcement of the coming of *Te Rangatiratanga*.**
- **Jesus made the reign of God a reality by healing the sick and disabled, forgiving sins, and raising the dead to life.**
- **The reign of God is good news for all people, especially those who are poor or in need.**
- **Repentance and conversion are necessary in order to enter into eternal life.**

Announcing *Te Rongopai* (the Gospel)



Wherever Jesus went he announced God's kingdom or reign.

The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news. (Mark 1:15)

Matthew's Gospel describes the reign of God in the following words:

...the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. (Matthew 11:5)

In Jesus' day, many Jews awaited the reign of God. There was an expectation that God was about to change the course of Jewish history by making Israel a powerful nation again either under the leadership of a great king like David or a remarkable prophet who would successfully challenge the people to be faithful to God. Many Jews believed that God's plan for creation was about to be fulfilled. They were not surprised by Jesus' powerful announcement that the expected time had arrived. What Jesus was proclaiming was not unusual.

Repentance was a common theme in Jewish history. Around the time Jesus began his own public ministry, John the Baptist preached about the need for people to turn away from sin and turn back to God. Many among the crowd listened to John and decided to change their lives because of John's urgent call to conversion and holiness. Jesus also spoke of the need for conversion in order to enter into God's reign.

Jesus communicated his own deep understanding of the reign of God in a number of ways:

- As the fulfilment of Scripture (Luke 4:16-19)
- In apocalyptic parables about the end of time (Matthew 22:1-14 and 25:31-46)
- With images from the natural world (Mark 4:30-32 and Luke 13:20-21)

Jesus spoke of the kingdom of God, in joyous terms of weddings and banquets, but also demonstrated its reality in his own person, especially through his miracles of healing, his close friendships with those on the edges of his society, and his lifting of the burden of sin.

While the values of God's kingdom (love, justice, forgiveness, peace etc) are present in everything Jesus says and does, they are most clearly summarised in the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12 and Luke 6:20-23) and in the Commandment of Love (Mark 12:28-34; Matthew 22:34-40; Luke 10:25-28).

Jesus' announcement of *Te Rangatiratanga* upset people's expectations. The Beatitudes make it clear that it is not the rich, the powerful, the well-fed, the respected or the self-satisfied who are most open to God's invitation to eternal life. Rather, it is the poor, the gentle, the hungry, the compassionate, and those who mourn the death of others or risk persecution themselves, who will be the first to be welcomed into God's kingdom. Clearly, the demands of the reign of God are so great that those who want to be part of it must completely redirect their lives towards God and others.

When John gives his reasons for writing his account of the Gospel he says:

...these things are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name. (John 20:31)



The fullness of life – the reign of God – comes through *Hehu Karaiti*.

Task Eight

When Jesus preached the Gospel or Good News he spoke about a number of important themes. Explain in your own words what you understand by each of these themes:

the reign or kingdom of God
the call to conversion and repentance

the expected time is now
the upsetting of expectations

Task Nine

The following passages from Scripture tell what the reign or kingdom of God is like. Briefly describe the message each passage communicates about God's reign and suggest a suitable headline to go with it.

A. He also said, 'With what can we compare the kingdom of God, or what parable will we use for it? It is like a mustard seed, which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all shrubs, and puts forth large branches, so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade.' (Mark 4:30-32)



C. And again he said, 'To what should I compare the kingdom of God? It is like yeast that a woman took and mixed in with three measures of flour until all of it was leavened.' (Luke 13:20-21)



B. Once more Jesus spoke to them in parables, saying: 'The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who gave a wedding banquet for his son. He sent his slaves to call those who had been invited to the wedding banquet, but they would not come. Again he sent other slaves, saying, "Tell those who have been invited: Look, I have prepared my dinner, my oxen and my fat calves have been slaughtered, and everything is ready; come to the wedding banquet." But they made light of it and went away, one to his farm, another to his business, while the rest seized his slaves, mistreated them, and killed them. The king was enraged. He sent his troops, destroyed those murderers, and burned their city. Then he said to his slaves, "The wedding is ready, but those invited were not worthy. Go therefore into the main streets, and invite everyone you find to the wedding banquet." Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered all whom they found, both good and bad; so the wedding hall was filled with guests. 'But when the king came in to see the guests, he noticed a man there who was not wearing a wedding robe, and he said to him, "Friend, how did you get in here without a wedding robe?" And he was speechless. Then the king said to the attendants, "Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth." For many are called, but few are chosen.' (Matthew 22:1-14)

D. When he came to Nazareth, where he had been brought up, he went to the synagogue on the sabbath day, as was his custom. He stood up to read, and the scroll of the prophet Isaiah was given to him. He unrolled the scroll and found the place where it was written: 'The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he has anointed me to bring good news to the poor. He has sent me to proclaim release to the captives and recovery of sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favour.' (Luke 4:16-19)



E. *When the Son of Man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and he will put the sheep at his right hand and the goats at the left. Then the king will say to those at his right hand, "Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me, I was in prison and you visited me." Then the righteous will answer him, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?" And the king will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me." Then he will say to those at his left hand, "You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me." Then they also will answer, "Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?" Then he will answer them, "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.' (Matthew 25:31-46)*



Something to Do

Look up Jesus' Commandment of Love (Mark 12:28-34; Matthew 22:34-40; Luke 10:25-28) and the Beatitudes (Matthew 5:3-12 and Luke 6:20-23) in your Bible. What values of the reign of God are expressed there?

Interpreting the Gospel for the Twenty-First Century

The early Church's traditions and memories about Jesus Christ and the demands of discipleship are expressed in the New Testament. Throughout the centuries the Church has safeguarded these traditions and memories and has continued to interpret them for each age. The Church has the responsibility of remaining faithful to the radical call of the Gospel. It also has the on-going task of proclaiming the Gospel in ways that are appropriate to people in different times and places.



Something to Think About

- **Who are some of the people who work to build up the reign of God today in the communities you are a part of (family, school, parish, city etc)?**
- **What particular values of the reign of God do you recognise in their lives?**

Extension Activity

Use the ideas you have explored in this section of the topic to present a poster or role play on the theme of God's reign.

Part Four:

Some Norms for Making Moral Choices

Focus:

- **Morality enables people to make choices that are good for themselves and others.**
- **A just and healthy society supports the development of morality among its members.**
- **For Christians, Jesus Christ is the standard or norm for all moral choices.**
- **Various norms or standards – natural law, civil law, Scripture, Church teachings and conscience – guide Christians in their moral decision-making.**



Moral Choices and Self-Respect

The choices people make in life usually have positive or negative consequences, not only for those making them but also for others. A strong and healthy morality enables people to make choices that are good for themselves and for others.

The primary reason for doing good is good itself. People who freely choose morally good actions are reflecting their own dignity and self-respect as human beings. Whether or not their choices for good are recognised by others, such people are rewarded with the knowledge that they have done what is right. Their choices also help to make them better people. In Christian terms, a morally good action is one which helps a person become more just, more loving, more free, more hopeful, or more courageous.

Society and Morality

It is in society's interests for its members to live well-ordered and moral lives. In a just and healthy society various structures and institutions will support the development of morality among its members. Norms or standards will guide people in their moral decision-making.

For Christians, it is Jesus Christ who sets the standard against which all moral systems and judgements must be based.



The following norms or standards guide Christians in their moral choices and help them become more like Christ:

Natural Law

God has implanted a “natural law” within our hearts that enables people to know and choose what is good and avoid what is evil. Natural law has its source in our nature as human beings. The Church affirms the existence of natural moral law and develops many of its moral teachings from it.

Scripture

The sacred writings of the major world religions – among them Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, as well as Judaism and Christianity – all emphasise moral ways of living. The moral teachings of Judaism and Christianity are summed up in Jesus’ great commandment that we love God above all else and our neighbour as ourselves. The Ten Commandments in the Old Testament and the Beatitudes announced by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount establish what people need to do to live a moral life – and maintain a loving relationship with God and others.

Civil Law

Civil law is necessary for a society’s survival. Where the rule of law is absent or threatened – for example, during times of war – social order breaks down and many people suffer. Civil laws are intended to protect the rights and freedom of people who make up a society. Each society has its own way of establishing and enforcing laws. Those who break the law are punished – and perhaps rehabilitated. Those who keep the laws are rewarded. In a fundamentally just society, the rules and regulations will reflect natural law. In societies which are fundamentally unjust, many of the laws imposed by government will go against natural law.



The Teachings of the Church

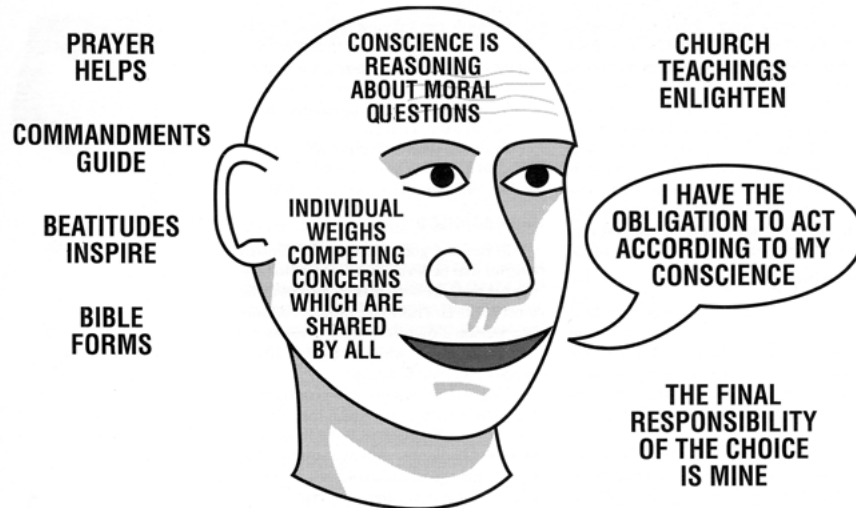
The Christian Church carries on Jesus’ mission and continues to spread his message of love. The Church’s moral teachings promote the dignity of every human person, made in God’s image and freed from the power of sin by Christ’s saving death and resurrection. The Church’s moral teachings enable Christians to share in God’s own life and to become the best people they can be by showing them how to use the gift of freedom to respond in love to God, self, others, and the whole of creation.

Conscience

Conscience is that inner guide which enables a person to know and do what is right. The *Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* describes conscience in these words: “Deep within their consciences men and women discover a law which they have not laid upon themselves and which they must obey. Its voice, ever calling them to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, tells them inwardly at the right moment: do this, shun that. For they have in their hearts a law inscribed by God” (16). A person has a moral obligation to always follow their conscience and must keep it well-informed by constant education. People also need to be alert to negative influences that tempt them to prefer their own judgements and to reject the Church’s moral teachings. Without proper care and attention a person’s conscience can become insensitive or defective.



Conscience



Conscience may become more or less sensitive. It needs constant education. Conscience can also become seriously insensitive!

Task Ten

Match the beginning of each statement in the left hand column with its correct ending in the right hand column.

A. A healthy morality enables people to	1. guide people in their moral decision-making
B. People who freely choose what is morally good	2. will go against natural law.
C. In a just society various structures and institutions	3. keep it well-informed by constant education.
D. Norms or standards exist to	4. show respect for themselves.
E. The natural law	5. allows us to know and do what is right.
F. In societies which are fundamentally unjust civil laws	6. make choices that are good for themselves and others.
G. The Christian Scriptures	7. has its source in our nature as human beings
H. The Church's moral teachings	8. emphasise love of God and love of neighbour as the basis of morality.
I. Conscience is an inner guide that	9. support the development of morality among its members
J. People must follow their conscience and	10. show us how to use our freedom to respond in love to God, self, others, and creation.

Something to Do

Use diagrams to show your understanding of the role of natural law, civil law, Scripture and the teachings of the Church in the moral decision making of Christians. Use the diagram of conscience as a model.



Honesty Pays and Pays and Pays

The New Zealand Herald of 6 March 1993, tells the story of a poor and homeless mother and her 11-year-old son living in California. Pauline and Jason Nichter would not have made the headlines if it weren't for the fact that the mother and son found a wallet containing nearly \$US 2,400 (\$NZ 4,800 approximately). Despite their poverty, however, the pair handed the money over to the police.

When the media got hold of the story, many more people soon came to know about the family's honesty — and their poverty. This proof that there is still some honesty in the world touched the hearts of many people. As a result, the family apparently were deluged with job offers, more than \$US 10,000 (\$NZ 20,000) in cash and even an apartment (flat) rent free for 6 months.

The caption to the story reads:
Honesty Pays and Pays and Pays.

The story of Pauline Nichter and son Jason, had a happy ending. In rewarding them for "doing what they ought", people were also affirming the value of honesty for society in general.



Something to Discuss

Work in pairs on the above story:

- Share your response to the story with your partner.**
- Select at least one point in the story which made an impact on you and give your reasons.**
- Why are the actions of Pauline and Jason good according to the Christian understanding of morality?**

Card Activity – Morality is...

Complete the card activity with a partner, using the set of cards that your teacher gives you.

- Re-arrange the cards in order, starting with the statement that you consider to be the best reason for acting in a moral way and ending with the statement which you consider to be the least satisfactory reason for behaving morally.**
- Be able to justify your decisions.**

Stages of Moral Development

A person's moral development is a long and complex process that begins in early childhood and continues throughout life. Various experts in the fields of psychology and moral education have outlined various stages in this growth towards maturity. Two of the best-known models of moral development are those of Kohlberg and Gilligan.



Kohlberg's Model of Moral Development

Through his research, Lawrence Kohlberg (born 1927) came to believe that people progressed in their moral reasoning through three levels – a series of six stages. Most people he studied were at level two of the process; very few reached stage six.

Kohlberg's Model of Moral Development

Level	Stage	Moral Motivation
Level One: (Pre-Conventional) People respond to pleasure and pain	Stage One	A person acts out of obedience to others and to avoid punishment.
	Stage Two	A person acts in their own best interests.
Level Two: (Conventional) People meet social expectations	Stage Three	A person acts in ways that will gain the approval of others.
	Stage Four	A person acts in order to abide by the law and in response to the obligations of duty.
Level Three: (Post-Conventional) People are motivated by principles and values	Stage Five	A person acts out of genuine commitment to the welfare of others.
	Stage Six	A person acts out of respect for universal principles and the demands of conscience.



Gilligan's Model of Moral Development

According to Carol Gilligan (born 1936), men tend to think in terms of rules and justice while women are more inclined to think in terms of caring and relationships. Her model of moral development emphasises the latter. For Gilligan, the transition from one level of morality to another comes about because of a change in the sense of self.



Gilligan's Model of Moral Development	
Level	Moral Motivation
Level One: (Pre-Conventional)	The goal is personal survival – a person learns to care for self.
Transition from selfishness to responsibility to others	
Level Two: (Conventional)	A person learns to care for others but tends to neglect the self.
Transition from goodness to truth that she / he is a person too	
Level Three: (Post-Conventional)	A person learns to balance caring for self with caring for others.

Something to Discuss

- What are the similarities and differences between Kohlberg's model of moral development and Gilligan's?
- Which model seems to you to be the better one? Be able to give reasons for your judgement.

Something to Think About

Think back on the card activity "Morality is ...".

- Does your knowledge of Kohlberg's or Gilligan's model of moral development reveal anything about your rankings of the cards?
- Would you change your rankings in the light of Kohlberg's or Gilligan's model of moral development?



Part Five:

A Method for Making Moral Choices

Focus:

- **Each day, people are called upon to make many decisions – some of these decisions involve moral choices.**
- **By following a process of moral decision-making based on Christian principles, people are able to make good moral decisions.**

Making Decisions

In the course of a day, each of us makes a great number of choices. Many are concerned with simple matters of personal preference – for example whether to go swimming or to play tennis, or whether to wear red socks or black ones. Other issues involve moral choice and are matters of conscience. Moral decisions require people to decide between right and wrong – for example, whether to be honest in an assessment, or whether to speak up for a friend who is being bullied.

Because the consequences of moral decisions can affect a person's integrity as well as have an impact on others, such matters of conscience need to be weighed up carefully before action is taken. This is especially true when the issues involved are complex ones or where the best course of action is far from clear.



Task Eleven

List ten choices or decisions you have made today.

- **Which of them do you regard as moral decisions, which do you not?**
- **How are the moral decisions different from your other choices?**

Something to Discuss

Work in a pair or small group. Share an important moral decision which you or someone you know, made recently. Alternatively, you could use an example of moral decision-making from a film, video or magazine.

- Explain the issue that required the decision.**
- Outline the steps taken to reach the decision.**
- Explain any advice that was sought – if any was.**
- Explain who was involved in the issue / decision and why.**
- Identify the consequences of the decision for the person making the decision and for others.**
- Briefly explain some alternative solutions that could have been considered, and their likely consequences.**
- Share what you think the person making the decision felt about the decision afterwards. Why did they feel this way?**



Extension Activity

In your pair or small group, make up some guidelines for moral decision-making based on the issue(s) you have just discussed. Present your findings to the rest of the class for comparison.

A Process of Christian Moral Decision-Making

When making decisions about difficult moral issues, Christians look for guidance outside themselves, as well as searching their own hearts. The following process of moral decision-making outlines five steps which can assist Christians in making good moral choices.

A Process of Christian Moral Decision-Making

Step 1 – Define the Issue

What exactly is the issue under consideration? What is happening? When? Where? Some issues are more easily understood than others. Some are also more serious than others.

Step 2 – Seek Advice

After defining the issue, look for information and guidance from outside sources. For Christians these include:

- The Ten Commandments
- The values and teachings of Jesus as revealed in the New Testament (for example, the Beatitudes and the Great Commandment)
- Natural law and the teachings of the Church
- The advice of respected people who possess deep faith and obvious goodwill

Seeking information from a relevant authority may also be necessary or helpful.

Step 3 – Reflect Honestly on the Action itself and on its Consequences

Reflect on the morality of the action, decision, attitude in itself. Also reflect on the morality of the action, decision or attitude in the light of the results it is likely to cause.

Who is involved? What are the motives? What is the goal being sought? What other options are there and what are the alternative consequences? Test out the options.

Step 4 – Pray for God's Guidance

In prayer, weigh up the results of the reflection suggested by the previous steps. Pray to the Holy Spirit for the gift of right judgement.

Step 5 – Decide and Act

After reaching a decision in the light of the previous steps and guidelines, go ahead and act with confidence.



Melissa's Magic Moments – Story by Christine Sayers

Below is a true story about a young person who, with the help of her family, took some steps to change her life for the better.

Courage

Melissa Kahi may have been hooked on drugs by now if she had not had the courage to take control of her life.

The 15-year-old Glen Eden girl leads a healthy life and is doing well academically. But things were not always this way.

Help

Melissa and her mother Pat spoke to Waitakere News this week in the hope that her story might help other teenagers.

Melissa comes from a family of eight children. She suffers from scoliosis which is a slight curvature of the spine.

Her family is struggling to survive on one income.

Melissa is what her mother describes as an "at risk child", and a few years ago the worst happened.

"I got in with a really bad crowd," Melissa says. "They drank alcohol, smoked and did drugs at school.

I just used to lie around the house and to be a pain to everyone else.

There just didn't seem to be anything to do, life was boring."

Her mother says she was scared about the people Melissa was mixing with, and her mood swings.

Hobby

"Clinton (her husband) and I decided to get her out of the school she was going to and get her interested in a hobby.

At first she resented what we had done."

Melissa could not even swim when she went along to the Waterhole Swimming Club in Glen Eden two years ago for the first time, but last weekend she finished a 1.5 kilometre ocean swim at Mairangi Bay.

"It was scary," she says with a smile.

"But I did it."

Pool

And tomorrow she has been chosen as one of just six girls to swim an opening length of the new Kelston Girls' High School (her new school) swimming pool. At her club she is now the fastest 100 metres freestyler in the junior squad and she has just reached her long time goal of breaking one minute ten seconds.

Social

Melissa trains six times a week, including two 5.30am sessions.

"I love it. I can't wait to get up there," she says.

"There is also a great social life."

Both Melissa and her mother are convinced that having a sport changed her life.

"I can see how my former friends changed me now," Melissa says.

"When I look back they weren't really my friends either, just people I hung out with," she says.



Control

Melissa is convinced that she would not have passed school certificate last year if she had not learnt to take control of her life.

"She has learnt to set goals and the determination she gets through swimming has made her a stronger person and taught her to believe in herself," says Mrs Kahi.

Physics

"She wanted to do well in physics because she wants to be a pilot in the air force – and she did. She's more open with us all, more outgoing, more confident in herself. She doesn't mind what others think anymore. She sets goals for herself and she's happy.

I am just so relieved and so proud of her," she says.

Mrs Kahi says swimming has also been good for the whole family.

"We all have to go without things to pay for the swimming but it's an investment in my children," she says.

"When I see them come out of the water grinning from ear to ear I think 'I didn't need those new shoes anyway'."

Waitakere News, Thursday, March 18, 1993

Task Twelve

Read the story
Melissa's Magic
Moments.

- Identify and list the issue or issues involved in the story.
- List any guidance, information or advice Melissa could have called on if she herself had recognised what was happening to her life before her parents took action.
- Put yourself in Melissa's position and reflect on the actions you would want to take, in view of the likely consequences. Record what these could be.
- Also put yourself in the position of Melissa's mother. Explain briefly how you think the mother might have felt at the beginning of the story and at the end.



- Record some of the actions Melissa took in order to 'take control of her life'.

Task Thirteen

Together with a partner, make up a case study of your own or find one in a newspaper or magazine.

- Analyse the steps for decision-making. Reflect on the alternative solutions and consequences.
- Present your case study either in written form, or on a poster, or by diagrams, or with a role-play.

Something to Discuss

Discuss or debate the following quotation:

"The world has achieved brilliance without conscience. Ours is a world of nuclear giants and ethical infants."

(Omar N. Bradley – U.S. General during World War II)



Part Six:

Society and Morality I

Focus:

- Christian morality teaches that society exists for the welfare of its individual members and for the progress of the common good.
- Society protects the common good by respecting the rights of the individual, by looking after the well-being of the different groups within it, and by ensuring peace and security.
- A healthy society expects its members to take moral responsibility for their decisions.

The Common Good

A just and healthy society protects the dignity of the human person. Such a society does its best to meet the essential needs of its members and to get the best out of life for them. It seeks to ensure that its citizens are safe and that their rights are protected. Above all, a just society makes sure that each person has what is needed to live a truly human life – food, clothing, health, work, education and culture, suitable information, the right to establish a family, and so on.



Common Good

But in order to do what is right for its individual members, society must also advance the common good. For this reason, every society has its rules and laws, its customs and conventions that it expects its citizens to live by. These both protect the individual and advance the good of all. At times, a society may make demands on its individual members on behalf of the common good. Examples of this include:

- The collection of taxes to pay for the building of schools and hospitals
- The searching of travellers at airports to protect them from the threat of terrorism
- The placing of restrictions on certain types of *kai moana* (seafood) in order to conserve endangered fisheries.

In many cases, society punishes its members who fail to observe laws and regulations. Those people who fail to observe long-established social or cultural conventions may be made to feel uncomfortable or unwelcome.

Being a member of society carries social obligations because society as a whole – or some aspect of it – is always affected to some extent by what individuals do or fail to do. When people decide upon a course of action which seems right, for themselves or for the common good, they also choose its consequences, unpleasant as well as pleasant. Being responsible sometimes includes the acceptance of criticism, dislike or even punishment, just as it often does the acceptance of approval, praise and reward.

Conflicting Demands

At times, the demands that a society makes on its members may appear to be in conflict with the rights of its citizens. In such situations, individuals must evaluate their own responsibilities to society and its institutions. They need to ask themselves whether the interests of the common good require them to place its needs ahead of their own personal wishes or preferences.

Societies, through their governments, sometimes impose laws and restrictions on their citizens that are morally wrong – for example, laws prohibiting freedom of speech, of association, or of the press, or those restricting religious worship. Such was the case with the anti-Semitic laws established by Nazi Germany. When societies do make unjust demands of their citizens, people are under no moral obligation to follow the immoral laws or directions and should do what they can to resist them.

The dignity of the human person requires the pursuit of the common good. Everyone should be concerned to create and support institutions that improve the conditions of human life. (Catechism of the Catholic Church n.1926).

Task Fourteen

List all the different ways that society builds up and provides for the common good.

Something to Discuss

It can be difficult for a society to achieve a balance between the rights of individuals and the need to provide for the common good.

What are some issues / situations in Aotearoa New Zealand that reflect this tension?

Taking Responsibility

In a healthy society individuals are expected to take responsibility for their actions. Having made their decisions and acted on them, people are then required to accept the consequences.

Levels of responsibility will vary from situation to situation and from person to person, as the following case studies show.



Task Fifteen

Read through the following case studies:

- For each case, make a list of all those involved whom you consider to have some moral responsibility for the person's death / injuries. Rank them in order from the most responsible to the least responsible. Explain the reasons for your rankings.
- What would you have done if you had come upon the scene?
- Share any experiences you have had or are aware of where people were affected by others' lack of responsibility. Where possible, collect examples from the media.

Case Study One

The motorcyclist lost control of her bike on a corner and crashed through a fence, throwing off both herself and her pillion passenger, a male of about sixteen. Although she had seen a speed limit sign further down the road, she had taken the bend too fast.

The bend had a bad reputation for accidents – there were pieces of metal and parts of vehicles from previous accidents lying around on the ground. People living locally had often complained about the state of the road but the local council had done nothing to improve it.

The motorcyclist was unhurt. However, it was obvious that the pillion passenger had severe head injuries. The spare helmet was still attached to the wrecked bike – he had not been wearing it.

A couple from a nearby house summoned the emergency services, but the boy died before the ambulance arrived. Later the motorcyclist admitted that she had borrowed the bike and that it was more powerful than she was used to.

Case Study Two

Two painters were working on a house roof, when they heard a child scream. They looked down and saw a small girl being attacked by a large dog. It was trailing a broken lead and seemed to have escaped from its owner who was nowhere in sight.

Because they realised it would take them a couple of minutes to climb down off the roof and help the girl, the painters called out to a man who was cutting his hedge not far from where the girl was. But the man took no notice, even though the dog was barking and snarling, and the little girl was clearly distressed.

By the time the painters reached the scene and beat off the dog, the girl was very seriously hurt and had lost consciousness. The painters spoke angrily to the man cutting his hedge. He said that he did know what was happening but supposed that the dog and child were only playing.

A police officer arrived and told the painters that this dog had attacked people before and the owner was already facing charges concerning it.

Something to Discuss

As a member of the class what would you do in the following circumstances? Explain your answer.

What Would You Do?

Because the new experiment involves inflammable materials, the teacher decides that he will give a demonstration lesson only. Halfway through, one of the students becomes ill and the teacher takes her to the sick bay. Before he leaves, he warns the class not to touch the experiment and tells them to start writing up their notes until he returns. As soon as he leaves the lab, some students go to the teacher's work bench and start to act the fool.



Part Seven:

Society and Morality II

Focus:

- **Some moral choices, because they destroy or threaten human life and dignity, are always seriously wrong irrespective of the circumstances in which they are made.**
- **Other moral choices can be either right or wrong depending on the particular situation.**
- **It is morally acceptable to drink alcohol but its abuse is morally wrong.**

Objective Good and Evil

Sometimes moral choices are good or evil in themselves, quite independently of a person's circumstances in life or their reasons for choosing them. Murder, abortion, euthanasia, and sexual abuse are examples of actions that are always seriously morally wrong. Such actions are said to be objectively evil because they destroy or seriously threaten human life and the dignity of the human person.

Context and Moral Choice

Other moral choices can be right or wrong depending on the context or circumstances in which they are made. For example, breaking the speed limit with the intention of annoying or distracting other motorists is clearly wrong. However, driving above the speed limit – but with due care and attention – in order to get a pregnant woman to hospital in time for the birth of her baby may be the best choice open to the driver given the urgency of the situation. The morality of some decisions depends not only on the action chosen. The person's motivation and the consequences of their decision help determine whether the action is morally right or wrong.



Task Sixteen

Answer the following questions:

- 1. Why are some actions always objectively evil?**
- 2. Give some examples of such actions.**
- 3. Why can other actions be morally right or wrong depending on the circumstances?**

Something to Discuss

Study the following situations. Can you see that the context of an action helps determine whether it is morally right or wrong?

It may be morally acceptable to place a \$100 bet on a horse at the races if you are a millionaire, but not if you are out of work and have five children to feed.

It may be morally acceptable for a farmer to drain a swamp to create a new paddock for her cows, but not if it destroys the habitat of an endangered bird.

It may be morally acceptable to give a friend a rifle to hunt rabbits with, but it would be morally wrong to give it to him if you know he intends to shoot himself.

It may be morally acceptable to tell a lie in order to stop a gunman from shooting your family, but it would be morally wrong to tell the same lie just to damage a person's reputation.

Give some examples of your own of actions that may be either morally right or wrong depending on the circumstances.

To Drink or Not to Drink?

Whether it is morally acceptable or not to drink alcohol depends on a number of factors – for example, the amount that is consumed and the circumstances in which the drinking takes place.

In moderation, alcohol can be a relaxing and sociable drink. Taken to excess, however, it limits and destroys people's ability to make sound judgements and rational choices. It also affects people's memory. Alcohol can become addictive and may threaten the health and well-being of the user as well as family and friends. Heavy drinking may increase the risk for certain cancers and can cause liver cirrhosis, immune system problems, brain damage, and harm to the foetus during pregnancy. Drinking increases the risk of death from automobile crashes as well as recreational and on-the-job injuries.



While it is morally acceptable for someone to consume alcohol for social purposes and in moderation, it is clearly wrong for a person to drink to excess and then drive a vehicle while intoxicated, thereby endangering their own life and the lives of others. It is also morally wrong for a person to drink themselves into a state where their loss of judgement leads them into risky behaviours that they would normally avoid – fighting, damaging property, sexual activity etc.

Alcoholism

Some people who misuse alcohol are alcohol dependent and are in the grip of a very serious disease. Alcoholism includes four symptoms:

- **Craving:** A strong need, or compulsion, to drink.
- **Loss of control:** The inability to limit one's drinking on any given occasion.
- **Physical dependence:** Withdrawal symptoms, such as nausea, sweating, shakiness, and anxiety, occur when alcohol use is stopped after a period of heavy drinking.
- **Tolerance:** The need to drink greater amounts of alcohol in order to "get high."

People who are not alcoholic sometimes do not understand why an alcoholic can't just "use a little willpower" to stop drinking. However, alcoholism has little to do with willpower. Alcoholics are in the grip of a powerful "craving," or uncontrollable need for alcohol that overrides their ability to stop drinking.

Many people wonder why some individuals can use alcohol without problems but others cannot. One important reason has to do with genetics. Scientists have discovered that if a person has an alcoholic family member it is more likely that they will develop alcoholism if they choose to drink. Genes, however, are not the whole story. Scientific research indicates that certain environmental factors influence whether a person with a genetic risk for alcoholism ever develops the disease. The risk for developing alcoholism can increase depending on where and how people live; their family, friends, and culture; peer pressure; and even how easy it is for them to get alcohol.

A cure for alcoholism is not yet available, but with treatment and support, many individuals are able to stop drinking and rebuild their lives. Even if an alcoholic has been sober for a long time and has regained health, they remain susceptible to relapse and must continue to avoid all alcoholic drinks. "Cutting down" on drinking doesn't work; cutting out alcohol is necessary for a successful recovery.

There are various treatment programmes available to alcoholics and those affected by their drinking. The best known of these is Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), a worldwide fellowship of men and women who help each other to stay sober. People who are helped by AA usually find that AA works best in combination with other forms of treatment, including counselling and medical care.



Something to Think About

- a) Which situations over the last twelve months can you recall where too much drinking has had a negative effect on you personally or on those close to you?
- b) List some of the bad things that have happened as a result of alcohol.

Task Seventeen

Choose one of the following moral issues related to the use of alcohol – or another issue that you and your teacher agree upon.

Interview five or six people of different ages and backgrounds about the alcohol-related issue you have chosen.

Ask them some of the following questions and others of your own.

Record your findings.

Present what you have learned about the moral aspects of the issue in the form of a poster, speech, essay or powerpoint presentation.



Suggested Interview Questions

- Do you think is a problem in our society?
- What evidence do you have that is a problem?
- Should this issue be regarded as a moral one?
- Why do you think this issue has become a problem in our society?
- How aware are people about this issue and its consequences?
- Have you been affected personally by this issue or do you know of anyone who has?
- What solutions do you see to this problem?
- Who is responsible for taking action in this matter?

Drink Driving	Vandalism	Sexual Activity
Violence	Theft	Dishonesty
Pregnancy	Rape/Sexual Abuse	
Addiction/Alcoholism		

Part Eight: Euthanasia

Focus:

- Life and death are gifts from *Te Atua* – we do not have the right to end human life.
- For the Christian, the approach of death is an opportunity to grow closer to God through the suffering, death and resurrection of *Hehu Karaiti*.
- Euthanasia – the intentional causing of a person's death in order to end their suffering – is morally wrong.
- All ordinary measures must be taken to preserve human life, but there is no obligation to keep a person alive by extra-ordinary means.



Life and Death

God brought us from non-being into existence. Life is the first and greatest of God's gifts to us. Catholics recognise that while *Te Atua* has given us the freedom to make the most of our lives and to develop our human potential, we do not have the right to end human life. Our continued existence is not for us to decide.

We must always honour the gift of human life by accepting, respecting and promoting it with every means available, and by defending it from every threat from conception up until the moment of natural death. For each of us, death marks an inevitable end to our journey on earth. Passing through death into eternal life is also God's gift to us.

As death draws near, people can no longer rely on their own physical powers or mental strength. A person close to death must be treated with special

love and respect. The hope that they will soon meet *Te Atua* for all eternity means that a dying person's spiritual well-being, not just their physical comfort should be provided for.

For Christians, the helplessness experienced by those who are dying and the people close to them becomes an opportunity to grow in *whakapono* (faith), *tūmanako* (hope) and *aroha*. While the approach of death may bring intense suffering, especially if the process of dying is long or difficult, if a dying person trusts in God and joins their suffering with that of Jesus on the Cross, what seems senseless acquires meaning and value. Just as Jesus rose from the dead, those who have faith in him will also be raised to new life.

At times, terminally ill people feel very anxious and are tempted to despair. It is in these circumstances that the sick person, their loved ones or care-givers may consider euthanasia as an option.

Something to Discuss

- **In what way is death a gift?**
- **How is dying an opportunity for Christians?**

What is Euthanasia?

The word euthanasia comes from a Greek term commonly translated as “easy death”¹. It involves a deliberate action – or a deliberate refusal to act – in order to bring an end to the life of a suffering person. Because euthanasia is usually motivated by compassion, it is sometimes referred to as “mercy killing”.



There are different types of euthanasia:

- Voluntary – when a suffering person has requested it for himself / herself.
- Non-voluntary – when there has been no request or consent from the suffering person.
- Involuntary – when it is carried out against the suffering person’s wishes.

The Church’s Teachings on Euthanasia

Euthanasia, whatever its motives and means, is always morally wrong. Intentionally putting an end to the lives of handicapped, sick or dying persons is a form of murder and an offence against the dignity of the human person. It is also a failure to show due respect to the Creator.

The Church teaches that all ordinary means must be taken to maintain the life and provide for the needs of a terminally ill person. Medicines, treatments and surgical procedures that benefit the person must be used. A patient’s need for nutrition and water must always be met. Sometimes, this will mean that people incapable of taking food or liquid by mouth are fed through a tube.

However, the Church also recognises that there is no moral obligation to use extra-ordinary means to keep a terminally ill person alive. Discontinuing medical procedures that are burdensome or dangerous, or where there is clearly little or no likelihood of benefit, is morally allowable. To refuse to take extra-ordinary means to keep a patient alive is not the equivalent of suicide or euthanasia; it expresses acceptance of the human condition in the face of death.

Rapid medical and technological advances have made it increasingly possible to prolong life in patients where there is no hope of recovery. By using highly sophisticated systems and equipment, science and medical practice are able not only to reduce or eliminate pain, but also to keep people alive even when they are very frail.

Deciding what are “ordinary” and “extra-ordinary” means of keeping a person alive is not always easy. This is especially so in situations where a patient’s brain functions have been so severely damaged that intravenous feeding and mechanical respirators or kidney machines are needed to preserve life. Wise judgement is often required in order to figure out whether the burdens of a particular treatment outweigh its benefits.

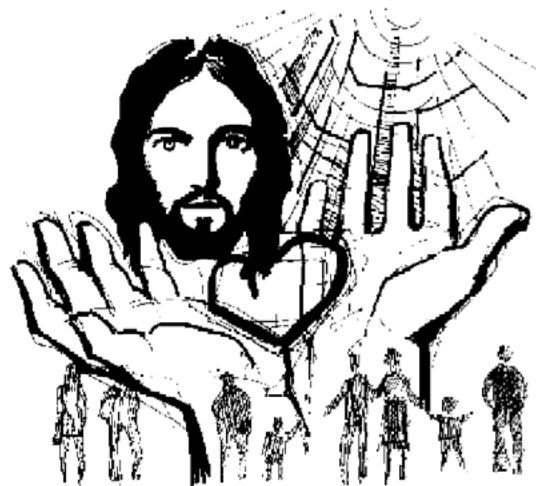
Sometimes, in order to control a dying person’s pain, various painkillers and sedatives, such as morphine, are given. This action may have the side-effect of shortening the patient’s life. Such a death is not considered to be euthanasia as long as the intention is to relieve the patient’s suffering rather than to end their life.

Physician-Assisted Suicide

To co-operate with another person to bring about that person’s death – for example, by providing them with medication or other equipment they can use to kill themselves – is wrong. Even more serious is the killing of a person who has neither requested it nor consented to it. When doctors or care-givers take it upon themselves to decide who ought to live and die they are not only “playing God” but also undermining the sense of justice and trust that is the basis of healthy human relationships.

Task Eighteen

- **What is euthanasia and why is the Catholic Church opposed to it?**
- **What are the differences between ordinary and extra-ordinary means of keeping a person alive? Why does the Church make this distinction?**



¹ Assisted suicide occurs when one person, sometimes a doctor, supplies the means of self-killing to another.

Task Nineteen

Study each of the following cases. Decide which involve euthanasia and which do not. Give reasons for your decisions.

Case One

Tom is in a coma following a car accident. He is on a respirator because his breathing has stopped. Tests indicate that Tom's brain has stopped functioning and that he is in a vegetative state. There is no possibility that Tom will recover. His body functions only keep going because of the respirator. After a lot of anguish, Tom's parents ask that the respirator be turned off. Shortly after the doctor does this Tom dies.

Case Two

Alice is close to death after a two-year battle with cancer. She is in great pain and does not recognise her family. Throughout her long illness, Alice had made it clear to her family and to her doctor that she wanted to be put out of her misery if things got too bad. Reluctantly, the family asks the doctor to do whatever is needed to end their mother's life. The doctor gives Alice an injection that ends her life painlessly.

Case Three

Nana Julie is totally dependent on her family because of Alzheimer's disease, a progressive and incurable brain condition that causes loss of memory, intellectual and physical functioning, and eventually death. Caring for Nana Julie has already placed a great strain on family members who have been told by specialists that she could go on living for another three years. One day, Julie develops a high fever and a terrible cough – signs of pneumonia. Rather than take Julie to the doctor who will treat her with antibiotics, the family keep Julie at home in bed. Within two days Julie dies of pneumonia.

Case Four

Henry is in the last stages of cancer. He is in a lot of pain which his doctor has, up to this point, been successfully controlling with morphine. However, as Henry's condition worsens his pain becomes more intense, which upsets his family. The doctor realises that she will need to increase the amount of morphine she gives to Henry if he is to be comfortable in his final days. The doctor is also aware that the higher dosage of morphine may slow Henry's breathing and hasten his death. The doctor gives Henry the amount of morphine needed to manage his pain. The next day Henry dies peacefully.

The Catholic Church and those people who support the cause of life see the legalisation of voluntary euthanasia as a great threat, not just to the weakest members of our society, but to all of us. The elderly and those with disabilities or terminal illness are especially vulnerable. Many sick and elderly people are worried that they will be pressured by others to exercise their 'freedom' to be killed.

The Pressure for Euthanasia

In many countries around the world, including Aotearoa New Zealand, people are campaigning for the "Right to Die". Campaigns such as "Exit" and "Death with Dignity" are putting increasing pressure on governments to introduce legislation that will legalise voluntary euthanasia.

There are a number of reasons why people are motivated to campaign for the legalisation of voluntary euthanasia. Some supporters are genuinely motivated by compassion for the suffering of others. Many believe that people should have the right to control every aspect of their existence, including the right to decide the moment and manner of their own deaths. Others view the growing number of elderly and disabled people with concern – believing they are non-productive and without value, they see them as an intolerable burden on society. A common argument put forward by those who support euthanasia is that some people's quality of life is so reduced by physical handicap, serious illness, or the ailments of old age, that they are better off dead. These people sometimes speak about the "cost effectiveness" of keeping a person whose life is deemed to be "not worth living".

The legalisation of euthanasia would place great pressure on healthcare professionals who would be required to apply this legislation. It also has the potential to divide families where some members might wish to see their loved ones cared for while others might want them killed. Overseas studies suggest that in those countries where voluntary euthanasia has been legalised, there is also a dramatic increase in the number of cases of involuntary and non-voluntary "mercy killing" performed by family members, caregivers and health professionals.

Task Twenty

You have been asked to write a letter to your local Member of Parliament to protest against moves to legalise voluntary euthanasia. List the main points you would want to make in your letter.

Part Nine:

The Care of the Dying

Focus:

- Today, for most people, the process of dying takes a much longer time than it did in the past.
- The modern hospice movement and palliative care have developed to meet the particular needs of dying people, especially the relief of physical, emotional, and spiritual pain.
- Providing quality care for the dying helps limit the spread of euthanasia.
- The Church cares for and strengthens its dying members with Viaticum – Holy Communion as food for the journey through death to eternal life.

Dying Today

Past generations grew up in a world that recognised dying as part of living. Pneumonia, polio, tuberculosis and other “killer” diseases were widespread. It was common to lose friends or loved ones by the age of puberty. Most people died at home surrounded by their families in mutual support, helping the dying and themselves face the unknown.

Today, many of the most serious diseases that affected earlier generations have been all but eliminated, at least in the developed world. Many people are well into middle age when they lose their own parents. Fewer children experience the death of a friend. Our generation has been protected, if not isolated, from the dying. Death is an uncomfortable topic for many in our culture.



In the past, death came quickly for most people. Illnesses including typhoid fever or cholera ran a very swift course, killing people within ten days. However, with the discovery of antibiotics, especially penicillin in 1928, and the increasing availability of vaccines, illnesses could for the first time be truly prevented, treated and cured. The baby boomers of the 1950s became the first generation to grow up not surrounded by early deaths from anything other than war or accident. They also grew up believing that medicine could cure anything.

Today, most people in the developed world no longer die suddenly. Kidney dialysis, bypass surgeries and organ transplants are commonplace. CAT scans, MRIs and mammograms have all brought about a revolution in how we die. We survive infections that once killed us in a matter of days, even hours, only to live long enough for the body to slowly wear out. Now our major killers are degenerative conditions – cancer, stroke or cardiovascular disease, Alzheimer’s and lung disease.

The fact that most people now take a much longer time to die has changed our experience and understanding of the dying process. There is once again an acceptance on the part of many that dying is an integral, dignified part of the life process. More people are dying at home. The hospice movement has helped bring about this change.

Something to Discuss

Compare people’s experience of death and dying today with that of past generations.

Early Hospice

Hospices were originally places where travellers on a journey would stay. As far back as the fourth century AD, the Roman noblewoman, Fabiola, opened her home to pilgrims, the sick and the poor. She chose the word “hospice” – from the Latin *hospes* meaning a host or a guest – to describe the relationship of hospitality that developed in her home.



During the Middle Ages hospices or resting places were established by religious orders. They provided places of shelter for Crusaders, pilgrims and other travellers, and for those in need of recovery, pregnant women and the infirm. Travellers who were ill and couldn't afford other accommodation often died there.

Modern Hospice

Modern hospices provide care for people who are very ill and drawing close to death. They do everything they can to make sure that the patient is in as little pain as possible. Medication is given when patients need it and in the dosages required for the successful management of their pain.



Hospices also provide companionship and comfort during a person's last months or weeks. A central theme of hospice care is the belief that, wherever possible, the dying should have the dignity and support of home and family.

Until the 1980s hospice care was not common. People who were very ill and could not be cared for at home usually died in hospitals, surrounded by doctors and nurses often too overworked to provide individualised attention for each patient. A hospice is set up to be more comfortable. The focus is on easing the patient's last days rather than attempting to cure the disease or illness.

The hospice movement marks a return to natural dying in much the same way that the homebirth movement marked a return to natural childbirth. Because of hospice people are learning to talk about death, to hold loved ones' hands, to kiss them, and to say good-bye.

Hospices help remove the barriers that make it difficult for the dying person and their loved ones to sort out any unresolved emotional business. They also calm people's fears that they will be left to die alone. When the sadness of dying and the permanent goodbye of leaving home, family and friends are addressed, a person usually has less difficulty dying.

Task Twenty-One

List all the different ways hospices meet the needs of dying people and their loved ones.



Cicely Saunders and Elisabeth Kubler-Ross

Two outstanding women, Cicely Saunders and Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, each in their own way, helped bring the subject of dying into the open and change attitudes towards dying people.



Cicely Saunders – founder of the modern hospice movement

The modern hospice movement owes its existence to Cicely Saunders (born 1918), a British doctor who first began working with dying patients in the 1940s. At that time, the medical profession was intent on curing those who were ill but did little to meet the special needs of the dying. Many doctors saw death as failure. Cancer was the most feared diagnosis and physical pain afflicted at least three quarters of cancer sufferers. Appropriate painkillers were rarely used – morphine was considered addictive and too dangerous.

Inspired by a dying patient who, at the end of life, requested words of comfort and acts of kindness and friendship, Dr Saunders came to believe, "We do not have to cure to heal". In 1967, Dr Saunders opened St Christopher's Hospice near London to provide for the physical, emotional, and spiritual care of the dying. Since that time hospice care has spread to countries all around the world, including many parts of New Zealand.

Dr Saunders recognised that the control of physical pain is essential to the well-being of a dying person.

The greatest fear of the dying and their families is the fear of pain. Sadly, this fear has often been justified. Terminal pain is frequently treated ineptly and the public myth that death from cancer involves unremitting distress is perpetuated. The statement 'I'm waiting for the pain to start' continues to be heard.

There are many reasons why terminal pain has been so poorly controlled. Until recently, the care of the dying has rarely been included in the training of doctors and nurses. With a few notable exceptions, medical and surgical textbooks have ignored the problems of pain control.²

Cicely Saunders believed that a hospice's first priority had to be the control of pain. Only then could it help the terminally ill do their own work of dying. In Dr Saunders' view this meant coming to terms with, "who you are, what the world is about and what your place in it somehow is – the search for meaning." She saw dying as being almost like a birthing.

² Dr Saunders recognised that the control of physical pain is essential to the well-being of a dying person.

Around this same time, Dr Elisabeth Kubler-Ross (1926–2004) also did much to change people's way of thinking about death. In 1969, in her landmark book *On Death and Dying*, she described death as a metamorphosis of the human spirit – a transformation which she compared to a butterfly breaking free of its cocoon.

Dr Kubler-Ross identified five stages which many terminally ill patients go through as they come to terms with their approaching death – denial / isolation, anger, bargaining, depression and acceptance. These five phases have also been used to identify the stages of grief that follow any serious loss – the death of a loved one, the collapse of a marriage, the loss of a limb, even intense disappointment.

Cicely Saunders and Elisabeth Kubler-Ross greatly improved the quality of life for dying people and raised awareness of their needs during this important passage. Above all, they emphasised that people who are dying are unique human beings with their own rights and deserving of respect. Both helped change the medical profession's approach to end-of-life-care and humanised the experience of dying for patients and their families.



Task Twenty-Two

In what ways did Cicely Saunders and Elisabeth Kubler-Ross improve the quality of life for dying people and raise awareness of their special needs?

Something to Research

Find out more details about the contribution of Cicely Saunders or Elisabeth Kubler-Ross to our understanding of the dying process and the needs of dying people.

**“We must not give up fighting for what is right. We must concern ourselves with giving patients what they want and deserve – a good death.”
(Cicely Saunders)**

Palliative Care

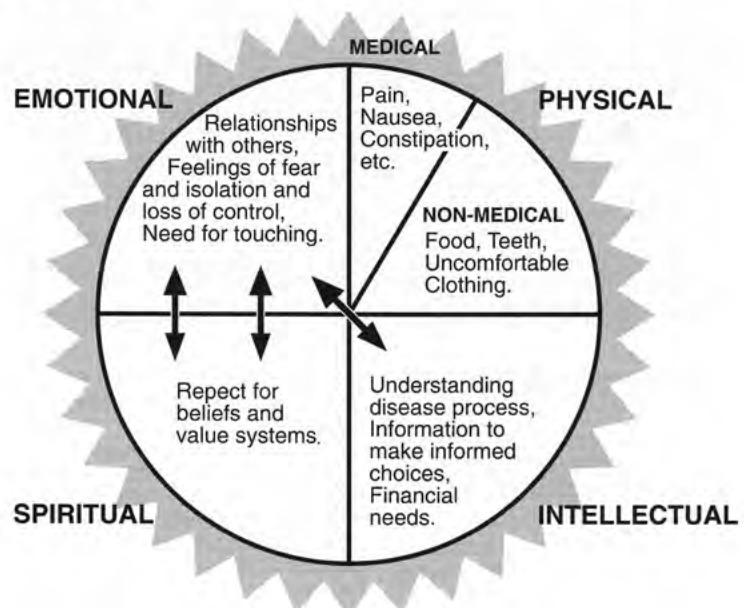
Pallium is the Latin word for “shield” or “cloak” – a protecting cover or barrier. Palliative care seeks to protect a patient from their illness by lessening their suffering. It is the care given to those who are in the final stages of life and for whom death is close.

Palliative care affirms life and regards dying as a normal process. It neither hurries nor postpones death, but provides relief from pain and other distressing symptoms. As well as dealing with the patient's physical needs, palliative care focuses on their emotional, intellectual and spiritual needs.

As a patient moves closer to death the emphasis in treatment shifts from cure to care. Any suffering caused by intolerable pain, coughing, shortness of breath and anxiety may need to be controlled by drugs, such as morphine, even if very high dosages are required.

The dying person should be given water and nutrition, by feeding tube or intravenously if necessary. These are not extra-ordinary measures but an aspect of ordinary humane treatment. Water and nutrition allow the body's organs to function normally for as long as possible and prevent symptoms such as hunger and thirst. They are also an important way of expressing loving concern and solidarity with the dying person.

NEEDS



Source: Dr Libby Smales — Cranford Hospice

At the very end of life, medically assisted feeding, or even intravenous fluids, may no longer be possible or effective because the patient has entered the final stage of terminal condition. At this point, the patient should be kept comfortable by providing nursing care, ice chips and water, proper hygiene, and companionship.

The dying person's spiritual and psychological welfare must be provided for. Spiritual support such as prayer and the sacraments, prepare and strengthen dying Catholics for the moment when they pass through death to eternal life. The presence of *whānau* (family) and friends who will accompany the dying person and pray with them are very important.

"...the administration of water and food, even when provided by artificial means, always represents a natural means of preserving life, not a medical act." (Pope John Paul II)

Task Twenty-Three

Explain the role of pain-controlling drugs and the provision of water and nutrition in palliative care. Mention the moral requirements of their use.

Something to Discuss

How might the provision of quality care for the dying help limit the spread of euthanasia?

Viaticum – Food for the Journey



Viaticum – from the Latin word meaning “food for the journey” – is the reception of Holy Communion by a person close to death. It is given so that the Eucharist can be a source of strength and promise for the dying person who makes the final journey, in union with Christ, from death to eternal life. The rite of Viaticum should be celebrated before the dying person loses the ability to receive Holy Communion. It may take place within Mass or can be separate from it.

The full celebration of the rite of Viaticum either within the Mass or outside it is a beautiful and powerful liturgy. In addition to the reception of Holy Communion by the dying person, the full rite includes specially chosen readings from Scripture, the renewal of baptismal promises, and the exchange of the sign of peace by the dying person with the minister and others who are present. However, because people often do not ask for Viaticum until it is too late, an “exceptional” or “emergency” rite is more usually celebrated.

During the rite of Viaticum, a special form of invitation to Holy Communion may be given:

“Jesus Christ is the food for our journey; he calls us to his heavenly table.”

As Holy Communion is offered to the dying person the words of Viaticum are said:

“May the Lord Jesus Christ protect you and lead you to eternal life.”

In the absence of a priest, any duly appointed lay person can administer Viaticum and lead the prayers for the dying and, after death, those around the body of the person just deceased.



Task Twenty-Four

Describe how the Church shows its care for the dying Christian through the rite of Viaticum.

Part Ten:

Moral Issues Related to Sexuality

Focus:

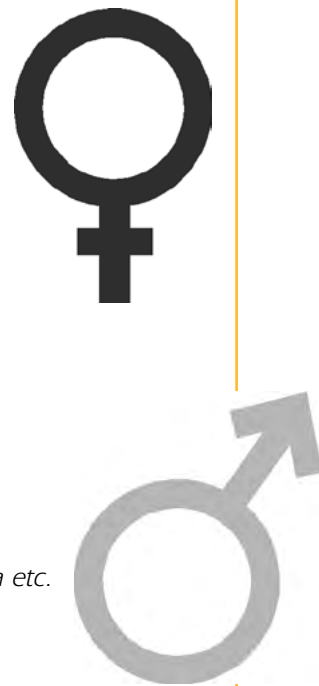
- **Human sexuality has the potential to be both love-giving and life-giving – it is both a gift to be enjoyed and an awesome responsibility.**
- **Marriage provides the stable environment in which physical sexual expression finds its true meaning and fulfilment – the loving union of a man and a woman and the procreation of children.**
- **The misunderstanding and misuse of sexuality lead to various forms of exploitation – sexism, pornography, rape, sexual abuse etc. – that damage human dignity.**

What is Sexuality?

Sexuality is more than sex and much more than what we do with our genitals. It is in us and around us and a huge aspect of our everyday living. Most living things are sexual and we are sexual beings.

Sexuality...

- ...is at the core of our God-given identity*
- ...enables us to relate to ourselves as male or female*
- ...is about accepting ourselves as sexual beings and people with bodies*
- ...has to do with self-image and self-worth*
- ...involves people not just sex organs*
- ...allows people to show feelings for each other*
- ...leads people to build relationships of love, friendship and trust*
- ...has physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual aspects*
- ...is a creative and life-giving force*
- ...expresses itself in varying ways and at different stages of life*
- ...is shaped by our culture – family, peers, religion, education, law, media etc.*
- ...is about self-determination and self-control.*
- ...presents us with a whole range of options and choices*



Something to Think About

Which of the above statements about sexuality do you most agree with / least agree with? Why?

Task Twenty-Five

Write your own definition of sexuality. Use some of the statements provided to help you.

The Media and Sexuality

With television, movies, the internet, magazines, CDs etc playing such an important role in our lives today, it is no wonder that many of the messages we receive about sexuality come directly from the media.

Although the various media can be great sources of knowledge and helpful educational tools, they also spread many myths about sex and sexuality which reflect popularly held attitudes and beliefs within our culture. For example:

- Everyone is doing it.
- Sex brings happiness.
- Life without sex is no life at all.
- Sex is for fun and recreation.
- Any negative consequences of sex can be easily fixed.

Primetime television, once considered “family time”, is now a target for material with sexual themes. More than half of all television programmes, excluding news, sporting events, and children’s programming, contain sexual content or references – on average more than three instances per hour.

Studies show that the media are an important influence on people’s sexual decisions. In a recent survey, three out of four fifteen to seventeen year olds believe that the sexual content on TV influences their peers to participate in sexual activity “somewhat” or “a lot”.

The media also influences people’s attitudes through what it doesn’t present. Because the media rarely show people practising chastity or sexual abstinence and fail to present the decision to abstain in a positive or “cool” way, many people dismiss abstinence as a serious option.

Sexuality is an especially important aspect of advertising. Messages and images that appeal to powerful human drives and fantasies are often used to capture our attention for the purpose of making money. These images, many of them strongly sexual in their content, surround us wherever we go – on billboards and on television, in magazines, music videos and films.

- They get our attention by tapping into powerful emotions
- They show us a fantasy that we then desire for ourselves
- They lead us to buy the product / service

The power of the media to shape attitudes towards sexuality must not be underestimated. As one young person said:

Sex is everywhere you go – you’re bombarded by so many ideas. There’s a strong emphasis that if you’re not having sex you’re the odd one out. (Jenny, aged 15)



Something to Do

Choose an item from the media – a television programme, a film, a video clip, a magazine article, an album, or a series of advertisements etc – and explore the ideas that it presents about various aspects of sexuality. You may wish to comment on the messages that your chosen media item communicates about some of the following:

- the purpose of sexuality
- male / female roles
- sexism
- heterosexuality
- sexual responsibility
- sexual faithfulness
- sex and money
- sexual abstinence
- sex and peer pressure
- sexual abuse
- sexual health
- sexually transmitted diseases
- the consequences of sex



- sexual identity
- gender stereotyping
- sexual orientation
- homosexuality and lesbianism
- marriage
- sex and love
- sexual pleasure
- pregnancy
- sex before / outside marriage
- pornography
- unsafe sex
- contraception



Something to Discuss

- **How do the media shape people's views of sex and sexuality?**
- **Are the media a more powerful influence in shaping opinions about sex and sexuality than friends, whānau, school or Church?**

Something to Think About

- **What accurate messages do the media give about sex and sexuality?**
- **What myths about sex and sexuality do the media present?**

Task Twenty-Six

What challenges about sexuality does Pope John Paul II present to the media in the following statement?

An important and serious responsibility belongs to those involved in the mass media, who are called to ensure that the messages which they so effectively transmit will support the culture of life. They need to present noble models of life and make room for instances of people's positive and sometimes heroic love for others. With great respect they should also present the positive values of sexuality and human love, and not insist on what defiles and cheapens human dignity.
(Pope John Paul II – The Gospel of Life 98)

Culture and Sexuality

Human cultures can be compared to the roots of a tree. If the tree's roots are healthy, the rest of the tree will flourish and grow strong. But if the tree is cut off at the roots the whole organism will weaken and die. If a culture is healthy it will be life-giving and enhance the quality of its people's lives. But if a culture is life-denying, it will threaten or destroy its people's lives and well-being.

Myths which distort sexuality's true meaning and importance de-value human dignity and undermine society. Very high rates of relationship breakdown, sexually transmitted diseases, pregnancy outside marriage, abortion, and sexual abuse are a sign that many of our culture's attitudes towards sex and sexuality are both unhealthy and life-denying. These negative features of contemporary life can be linked to "a culture of death" that many people believe is threatening civilisation.

Pope John Paul II has often spoken of the urgent need for all people to work together to rebuild "a culture of life" that will counteract destructive trends within society. To do this we need to recover an understanding of the true meaning of sexuality:

It is an illusion to think that we can build a true culture of human life if we do not...experience sexuality and love and the whole of life according to their true meaning and in their close interconnection.
(The Gospel of Life 97)



Something to Think About
What does the following passage reveal about young people's understanding of the meaning and value of sexuality?

In 1998 a survey was conducted among 810 students, aged between fifteen and twenty years, from four Auckland schools. Asked what aspects of sexuality they wanted covered better in class, the most popular topics were sexual negotiating skills, the emotions involved with sex, relationship choices and abstinence. Students wanted class discussion about values around sex and how to have a successful relationship.

The Catholic Approach to Human Sexuality

The Catholic Church's teachings on sexuality stand in sharp contrast to many of the attitudes that are widespread in our culture. The Church's position is counter-cultural because it rejects as mistaken many popular understandings about sex and sexuality.

Central to the Church's teaching is the understanding that sexuality is both love-giving and life-giving – a gift from God that enables men and women to share in God's work of creation and grow in human dignity.

Complementarity

At the heart of the Catholic Church's teachings about the relationship between the sexes is the idea that while women and men are equal in dignity, each gender reflects God's image in its own distinctive way. The Church uses the term complementarity – which originates from the Latin word *complere*, meaning "to fulfil" – to describe what it sees as the "truth" about male / female relationships:



- That each sex is created for the other and is meant to be a gift to the other.
- That each gender has its own distinctive capacities for giving and receiving *aroha*.
- That the love between men and women reflects the love within the Trinity.
- That the biological and psychological differences between the sexes enable new life to be brought into the world and cared for within the family.

Catholic Teachings on Sexuality

The following short statements each reflect some aspect of the Catholic understanding of sexuality:

A. The human body and human sexuality reflect the goodness of God.

B. Our sexuality is an essential aspect of our experience of relating to self and others.

C. Human beings, created in the image of a loving God as male and female, are called to love and to be loved.

D. Our sexuality enables us to live in the world and relate to it as male and female.

E. Sexuality expresses itself physically, emotionally and spiritually.

F. Sexuality is linked to our deep desire to move from isolation to encounter.

G. Healthy sexuality connects love-giving with life-giving.

H. Sexuality is much more than the physical drive to copulate and preserve the human species.

I. By its very nature, sexual intercourse is directed to produce new life.

J. Sexual intercourse expresses the loving union of a man and a woman.

K. Marriage provides the stable environment in which sexual expression finds its true meaning.

L. Sexual intercourse is an expression of total self-giving only when it occurs within marriage.

M. Human sexuality is a gift to be respected and used responsibly.

N. The Church upholds marriage as the natural, God-given context for living together and lovemaking.

O. Chastity is a force for good that enables us to express our sexuality responsibly.

P. Dealing responsibly and creatively with sexuality is a lifelong task for all people whatever their state – young or old, married or single, heterosexual or homosexual.

Q. The use of artificial contraceptives breaks the essential link between the love-giving and life-giving aspects of sexual intercourse.

R. Sexual abstinence is more than saying "no" to sex – it is a "yes" to the future.

S. Sometimes people do the wrong thing, but God is always ready to forgive. It is far worse to lose our values than to make a mistake.

Task Twenty-Seven

a) Which of the following statements express popular cultural understandings about sex and sexuality and which the teachings of the Catholic Church?

- 1. The best way to prevent AIDS and sexually transmitted infections is through safe sex.**
- 2. The goal of human sexuality is self-fulfilment and pleasure.**
- 3. All human beings, whatever their sexual orientation, are made in God's image.**
- 4. Sexual differences between males and females don't really matter.**
- 5. Love-making and life-giving are two essential aspects of sexuality that shouldn't be separated.**
- 6. Sexual abstinence can be a positive choice.**
- 7. Artificial contraception is okay because it stops the fear of pregnancy.**
- 8. What we do with our bodies doesn't need to affect our emotional or spiritual well-being.**
- 9. Chastity enables us to express our sexuality responsibly.**
- 10. The true meaning of sexual intercourse is found in marriage.**

b) Choose one of the teachings of the Catholic Church on sexuality that you think is especially positive. Explain in your own words why the teaching is important for people today.





Stereotyping

Gender stereotyping – making generalisations or assumptions that have little or no basis in fact about an entire sex – shows a lack of respect for the fundamental equality between men and women. It is a misunderstanding and distortion of complementarity.

Gender stereotyping, which can be positive or negative in its intent, ignores real differences between individual men and women. It confines people and limits their capacity to develop their human potential. It may lead to low self-esteem, prejudice, discrimination, and even violence. Those in power often use gender stereotyping to justify their own position. Others stereotype because they are afraid or insecure.

Some recently overheard examples of gender stereotyping...

Male nurses are no good.

Women are much better listeners than men.

Women should take primary responsibility for child care.

Men should be the breadwinners.

Women make hopeless politicians.

The company needs to appoint a male manager to restore lost confidence.

Something to Discuss

- **What examples of gender stereotyping have you heard about / experienced lately?**
- **How do these examples show a lack of respect for equality between the sexes?**
- **Why is it important to reject stereotypes?**

Something to Think About

Are you ever guilty of gender stereotyping? Often people do it unconsciously.

For Every Woman

For every woman who is tired of acting weak when she knows she is strong,
there is a man who is tired of appearing strong when he feels vulnerable.

For every woman who is tired of acting dumb,
there is a man who is burdened with the expectation of "knowing everything".

For every woman who is tired of being called "an emotional female",
there is a man who is denied the right to weep and be gentle.

For every woman who is called unfeminine when she competes,
there is a man for whom competition is the only way to prove his masculinity.

For every woman who is tired of being a sex object,
there is a man who must worry about his potency.

For every woman who feels "tied down" by her children,
there is a man who is denied the full pleasures of shared parenthood.

For every woman who is denied meaningful employment or equal pay,
there is a man who must bear full financial responsibility for another human being.

For every woman who was not taught the intricacies of an automobile,
there is a man who was not taught the satisfaction of cooking.

For every woman who takes a step toward her own liberation,
there is a man who finds the way to freedom has been made a little easier.

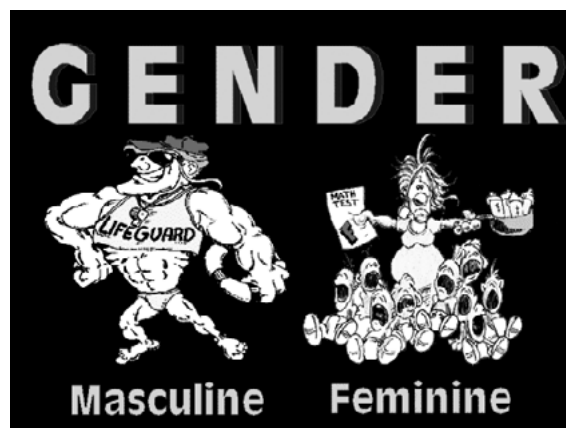
Nancy R. Smith

Extension Activity

Choose a verse from the poem "For Every Woman" that most speaks to you about the experience of stereotyping. Explain why it has meaning for you.

Sexism

Sexism is closely related to stereotyping. It involves unjust discrimination against people on the basis of their gender. Sexism particularly disadvantages women. The Catholic Church condemns sexism and its leaders speak out against it.



We can say at once that for women to feel themselves to be second-class citizens, or to be treated as such, is totally at variance with the teachings of the Church, which upholds the equal dignity of men and women. So whenever or wherever women are diminished, unjustly treated or not accorded the reverence which Jesus paid to every person, there the Church is diminished and individuals within it are failing in discipleship. (The New Zealand Catholic bishops in A Theological Reflection on the Report: *Made in God's Image* – 1991)

Sexism is the conscious or unconscious acceptance of the subservience of one sex to the other; the exploitation of one sex for the satisfaction of the other; the treatment of one sex as an object to be possessed, more than as a peer or full person. Where this evil is deliberate, it is sinful.
(The US Bishops' *Draft Pastoral on Women*)

Pornography, Prostitution, Rape and Sexual Abuse

Pornography, prostitution, rape and sexual abuse damage people's dignity and self-esteem – and sometimes threaten their lives. These forms of exploitation involve people using themselves and / or others for sexual pleasure or profit. People are treated as objects rather than as images of God; sexual activity is no longer love-giving or life-giving. More powerful people seek to control and manipulate those who are more vulnerable. Adults take advantage of children, men of women, rich people of those who are poor etc.

Something to Research

Research one of the above forms of sexual exploitation – pornography, prostitution, rape and sexual abuse. Explain how it:



- **Damages the dignity of all those involved.**
- **Uses sexuality in ways that are neither love-giving nor life-giving.**
- **Allows more powerful people to control and manipulate those who are vulnerable.**

Part Eleven:

Personal Integrity

Focus:

- **Personal integrity enables a person to have an honest and sincere relationship with *Te Atua*, self, and others.**
- **By developing the moral virtues, we are able to do what is right and become people of *pono* (integrity).**

Moral Integrity

A person with moral integrity is honest and sincere in their relationships with God, self and others. Integrity is at the heart of who the person is and how they act. It influences their moral decisions.

Integrity – The quality of being upright and honest in character.



People with *pono* can be trusted. Their words are reliable and their actions just. They are fair in any decisions they make affecting others – even when they don't like them.

From Old Testament times, integrity has been recognised as an essential quality for anyone who wishes to follow God's ways. It is an important scriptural value, celebrated in various passages from the Psalms and Proverbs.

The Lord judges the peoples; judge me, O Lord, according to my righteousness and according to the integrity that is in me. (Psalm 7:8)

May integrity and uprightness preserve me, for I wait for you. (Psalm 25:21)

Vindicate me, O Lord, for I have walked in my integrity, and I have trusted in the Lord without wavering. (Psalm 26:1)

But as for me, I walk in my integrity; redeem me, and be gracious to me. (Psalm 26:11)

Whoever walks in integrity walks securely, but whoever follows perverse ways will be found out. (Proverbs 10:9)

The integrity of the upright guides them, but the crookedness of the treacherous destroys them. (Proverbs 11:3)

The wicked are overthrown by their evildoing, but the righteous find a refuge in their integrity. (Proverbs 14:32)

Task Twenty-Eight

Reflect on the passages you have just read from the Psalms and Proverbs. In your own words describe what they say about integrity.



Something to Discuss

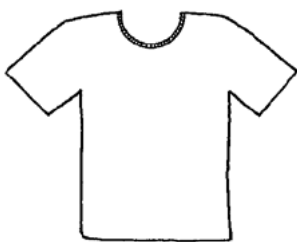
Each of the following situations involves decisions where personal integrity is at stake. Discuss the ways in which personal integrity is involved in the decisions made in each of the four situations.

A. Ten-year-old Meri accidentally breaks a neighbour's window while playing softball with her friends in a yard nearby. The friends encourage Meri to run for it. She decides to own up to the accident by telling the owners of the window what has happened.

B. Two teenage friends, Marie and Tom go to a clothes shop to buy jeans and T-shirts. Marie pays for the things she selects while Tom quietly slips a couple of T-shirts in his backpack without the knowledge of Marie or the shopkeeper, and walks out the door without paying for the articles.

C. John invites Jean to dinner at a restaurant. As they go out the door after dinner, John realises that he has been under-charged. In fact he has been billed for only one person instead of two. Despite protests from Jean to forget about it, John goes back and pays for the balance of the account.

D. A true story is told about a Nazi soldier during World War II who, together with his companions, is ordered by his commanding officer to shoot some innocent women and children simply because they are Jews. The soldier refuses to obey the orders. Consequently, he is shot dead along with the Jewish victims.



Task Twenty-Nine

Working in pairs, make up two cases of your own that feature decisions involving personal integrity. Your cases may show either the presence of integrity or lack of it. Make it clear which one you are portraying. Role-play your cases.

Overcoming Sin

For most of us, in most situations, we know what we ought to do in our day-to-day relationships with others. The problem is that we don't do it. Even when we know what is right we do not always choose what is good for ourselves or for others.

Our failure to freely choose a good or moral action is a result of sin. The good news is that through *Hehu Karaiti*, people are able to become free of the grip of sin – they can grow in the power to overcome the obstacles that prevent them from loving God, themselves and their neighbours. With God's help we can become people of great personal *pono*.



The Moral Effects of Actions, Decisions and Attitudes

Right or Moral	Wrong or Immoral
<p>Right or moral actions, decisions and attitudes tend to produce the following positive effects in those involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An increase in the ability to trust others ▪ Greater honesty in all relationships ▪ A lessening of the sense of separation ▪ An increase in an attitude of co-operation ▪ A greater sense of self-respect ▪ A stronger belief that people are caring ▪ A feeling of peace and joy in life 	<p>Wrong or immoral actions, decisions and attitudes tend to produce the following negative effects in those involved:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ An increase in suspicion ▪ A sense of falseness in relationships ▪ A feeling of isolation or loneliness ▪ An increase in useless competition ▪ Feelings of guilt and embarrassment ▪ A stronger belief that people are greedy and selfish ▪ A feeling that life is without meaning

The Moral Virtues

By their participation in the Church's sacraments – especially the Eucharist and Reconciliation – Christians grow closer to Christ. They are strengthened in faith, hope and love and better able to develop the habits characteristic of the Christian lifestyle: faithfulness, compassion, hospitality, forgiveness and thankfulness.

Traditionally, the good habits necessary for Christian living have been called the moral virtues. By developing these virtues, we are able to live as people of integrity who possess the genuine freedom of the children of God.



Wise Judgement / Prudence
 Courage / Fortitude
 Justice
 Wholeness / Temperance
 Honesty
 Respect for Persons
 Compassion
 Respect for Creation
 Reverence for Human Life
 Peacemaking

Task Thirty

Link each moral virtue in the left hand column with its matching definition in the right hand column.

Virtue	Description
1. Wise Judgement / Prudence	A. The ability to do what is right and good in the face of harm.
2. Justice	B. The ability to seek and uphold the truth.
3. Courage / Fortitude	C. The ability to try to resolve conflict in a creative, loving way.
4. Wholeness / Temperance	D. The ability to work out what is right in a particular situation and to act on it.
5. Honesty	E. The ability to respond to the suffering of others.
6. Respect for persons	F. The ability to see all of the natural world as a gift from God and deserving of special care.
7. Compassion	G. The balancing of the different aspects of the self to create a dynamic and harmonious order.
8. Respect for creation	H. The ability to regard human life as sacred and to treat it as a gift from God.
9. Reverence for human life	I. Seeking to ensure the good of others as well as ourselves.
10. Peacemaking	J. The ability to treat each person as worthy and loved by God.

Something to Think About

Choose someone you know whom you think is a person of integrity.

- What moral virtues or habits do you recognise in your chosen person?
- What attracts you to him / her?
- Why is it important to have people of integrity as role-models?

Summary

- **Human beings are made in the image and likeness of God to enjoy the fullness of God's life and love. They are able to develop their human potential and achieve genuine happiness by freely making moral choices that lead them to loving relationships with God, others, the rest of creation, and with themselves.**
- **Christian morality is focused on Jesus Christ who reveals the fullness of God's life and love, and provides the answers to life's fundamental questions.**
- **Jesus' morality is expressed in his announcement of the coming of the reign of God, which is good news for all people.**
- **A just and healthy society supports the development of morality among its members. Various norms or standards – natural law, civil law, Scripture, Church teachings and conscience – guide Christians in their moral decision-making.**
- **Each day, people are called upon to make many decisions – some of these decisions involve moral choices. By following a process of moral decision-making based on Christian principles, people are able to make good moral choices.**
- **Christian morality teaches that society exists for the welfare of its individual members and for the progress of the common good. A healthy society expects its members to take moral responsibility for their decisions.**
- **Some moral choices, because they destroy or threaten human life and dignity, are always seriously wrong. Other moral choices can be either right or wrong depending on the particular situation.**
- **Euthanasia – the intentional causing of a person's death in order to end their suffering – is always morally wrong. All ordinary measures must be taken to preserve human life, but there is no obligation to keep a person alive by extraordinary means. Providing for the physical, psychological and spiritual care of the dying is a requirement of human dignity.**
- **Sexual responsibility is a fundamental aspect of all healthy and whole human relationships. The misunderstanding and misuse of sexuality lead to various forms of exploitation that damage human dignity.**
- **Personal integrity enables a person to have an honest and sincere relationship with God, self, and others. By developing the moral virtues, we are able to do what is right and become people of integrity.**



GLOSSARY OF MĀORI TERMS

This glossary gives explanation of Māori terms which are italicised in the text. The first time a Māori term appears in the text, its English meaning appears in brackets after it.

Pronunciation – correct pronunciation of Māori comes only with practice in listening to and speaking the language. The English phonetic equivalents provided under each Māori word are intended to provide a reasonably accurate guide for students. If in doubt please seek assistance from someone practised in correct pronunciation of Te Reo Māori.

ˈ indicates stressed syllable

Aroha –
úh-raw-huh
In general, means love and/or compassion. Note that the word is used in two senses:
1. a joyful relationship involving the expression of goodwill and the doing of good, empathy.
2. sympathy, compassion towards those who are unhappy or suffering.

Atua –
úh-too-uh
The Māori word Atua has been used to describe God in the Christian sense since missionary times. Before the coming of Christianity, Māori used the word atua to describe many kinds of spiritual beings (in the way we now use the word "spirit") and also unusual events. Io was the name given to the Supreme Being before missionary times. Many, but not all, tribes had this belief in Io.

Hākarameta –
háh-kuh-ruh-meh-tuh
Sacrament.

He Tangata –
heh túh-nguh-tuh
Human beings, humankind.

Hehu Karaiti –
héh-hoo kuh-rúh-ee-tee
Jesus Christ.

Kai Moana –
kúh-ee máw-uh-nuh
Seafood.

Karakia –
kúh-ruh-kee-uh
Prayer, ritual.

Mana –
múh-nuh
Spiritual power and authority. Its sources are both divine and human, namely, God, one's ancestors and one's achievements in life. Mana comes to people in three ways: **mana tangata** from people, **mana whenua**, from the land, and **mana atua**, from the spiritual powers. Please note: when mana refers to Mana of God it is written as Mana.

Pono –
páw-naw
Integrity.

Rongopai –
ráw-ngaw-puh-ee
Gospel or Good News. Nga Rongopai (plural). Te Rongopai (singular).

Tapu –
túh-poo

This word is used in three senses:

1. restrictions or prohibitions which safeguard the dignity and survival of people and things.
2. the value, dignity, or worth of someone or something, eg the holiness of God, human dignity, the value of the environment.
3. the intrinsic being or essence of someone or something, eg Tapu i Te Atua is the intrinsic being of God, the divine nature.

Please note: when tapu refers to the Tapu of God it is written as Tapu.

Te Aranga –
teh úh-ruh-nguh

The Resurrection.

Te Rangatiratanga –
teh ruh-nguh-tée-ruh-tuh-nguh

The Kingdom or Reign of God.

Te Wairua Tapu –
teh wúh-ee-roo-uh túh-poo

The Holy Spirit.

Tika –
tée-kuh

Justice.

Tūmanako –
tóo-muh-nuh-kaw

Hope.

Whakapono –
fúh-kuh-paw-naw

Faith.

Whānau –
fáh-nuh-oo

Extended Family.



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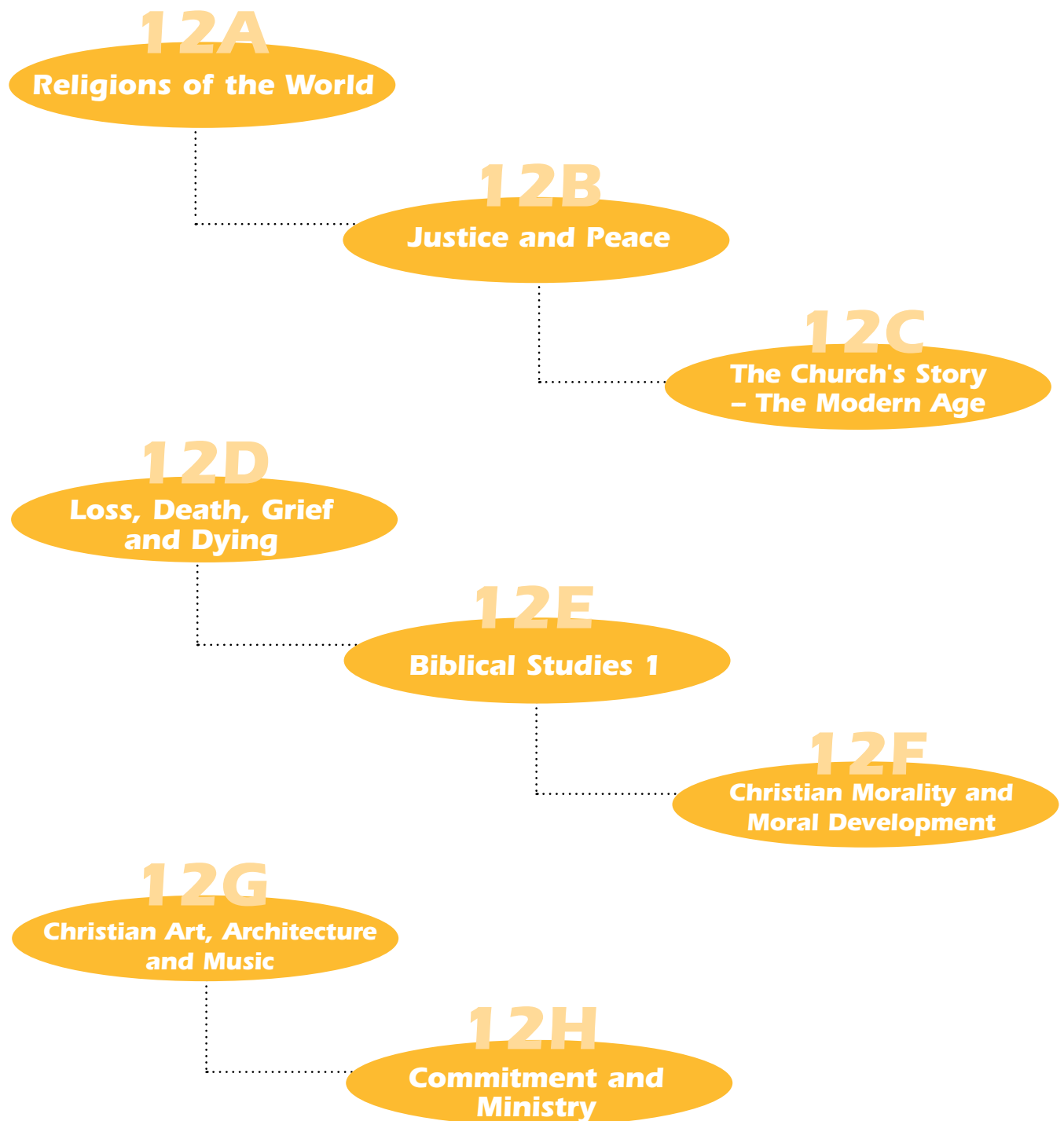
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Scripture and Tradition 12E

Church History 12C

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