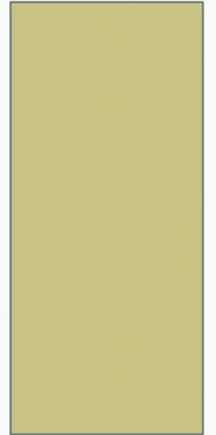


FAMILY FAITH FORMATION – 2025/2026

SAINT PATRICK'S & SAINT LUKE'S



THE PURPOSE OF FAMILY FAITH FORMATION

- To help you learn more about God so that you can deepen your own personal relationship with Him.
- To give you the confidence to speak about your Catholic faith with others.
- To help you as you guide your children in their own personal relationship with God.
- To provide you with an opportunity to spend more time with your immediate family and also with our parish family.
- To provide you with a short time for prayer and an opportunity to use the Sacrament of Reconciliation.

THE PURPOSE OF FAMILY FAITH FORMATION

- The Catechism of the Catholic Church is divided into 4 sections. They are:
 - The Creed – What we believe
 - The Sacraments – How we are sanctified
 - The Commandments – How we are to live
 - Prayer – How we relate and interact with God
- This year we will be studying Prayer

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- In 1995, Saint John Paul wrote an encyclical letter entitled, “Evangelium Vitae” which means “The Gospel of Life.”
- In the Letter he calls on us and all people of good will to be “Unconditionally Pro-Life.”

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

WHAT

DOES

THAT

MEAN?

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- To answer this question, we first have to define what we mean by "life."
- This does not refer to the planet.
- This does not refer to plant life.
- This does not refer to animal life.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- This statement refers only to human life.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Next, what constitutes human life?
- When does human life begin?
- When does human life end?
- Is there a time between beginning and end where it ceases to be human life, where one can become “a vegetable”?

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- First let us consider when human life begins ...
- By way of introduction, let me begin with the recent Supreme Court hearing and Oral Arguments.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- In 2018, the State of Mississippi passed a law prohibiting most abortions after 15 weeks.
- This law was challenged by the Jackson Women's Health Organization.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor questioned the Mississippi Solicitor General, Scott G. Stewart on December 1st, 2021 in the case Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Justice Sotomayor said this to the Mississippi Solicitor General,
- “How is your interest anything but a religious view? The issue of when life begins has been hotly debated by philosophers since the beginning of time. It’s still debated in religions. So when you say this is the only right that takes away from the state the ability to protect a life, that’s a religious view isn’t it? Because it assumes that a fetus is a life at ... when?”

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- When life begins is not a religious question. It is a question of biology.
- The criterion for distinguishing cells includes two things:
 - Different behavior
 - Different characteristics
- The new embryo (zygote), although one cell, has different behavior and characteristics from the sperm and egg cells.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- The zygote is the first stage of life of the new individual organism. All the genetic material with the instructions on how to form the body and its parts are contained in this one cell.
- Embryo is the term given to humans up to nine weeks. After that the term is fetus .

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Incorrect terminology:
 - Zygote is not a “fertilized egg” – it’s not an egg. The two are very different kinds of cells.
 - Zygote is not the “first stage in the process of fertilization.” It is the first stage of development of the new organism.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- The Zygote is a new individual organism.
- As further evidence we are dealing with a new individual organism (in mammals separate from the mother) even when in utero consider ...

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- In vitro fertilization.
- Scientists are perhaps ten years away from making an artificial womb.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- So, again, this is not a religious question. This is not a Roman Catholic position. This is simply biology.
- For Justice Sotomayor to make the statement she did indicates she is woefully ignorant with regard to the science of biology.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- In her remarks, referring to a previous ruling of the Court, Sotomayor also said,
- “The Court said that there is inherent in our structure, that there are certain personal decisions that belong to individuals and the states can’t intrude on them.”
- With regard to a pregnant woman, biology informs us that there are two individuals to consider and not just one as the Court decided in Roe v. Wade.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Now, if we are going to “follow the science” it means we have two human beings with competing rights:
 - The right of the mother
 - The rights of the unborn child

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- As we shall see in a moment,
- The right to life is the greatest and most fundamental of rights and supersedes all other rights such as liberty, the right to private property and so on.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Let's now turn to when human life ends.
- Life ends with death.
- This question has a philosophical answer.
- Death comes about when the soul (the principal of life) leaves the body in the case of human beings, or ceases to exist in the case of plants and animals.
- We cannot say with exact certainty when that happens.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Death is not:
 - The cessation of consciousness.
 - The lack of respiration.
 - The cessation of heartbeat
 - Brain death.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Death is inevitable.
- We cannot withhold from people what is necessary for life, food, water, hygiene, oxygen.
- We can refuse treatments which may prolong the dying process or suspend it.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- We can use things that have more than one effect when the negative effect is foreseen but not intended. Painkilling drugs for example.
- We cannot do things to cause the death of some or intentionally hasten death.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Let's turn now to the question of why we should be unconditionally pro-life.
- First, let's look at philosophical reasons.
- Then we will look at religious reasons.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Utilitarianism is the position or view that something is good when it is useful.
- When it is no longer useful, it can be discarded.
- This works for things. Does it also work for people?

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Problem #1:
 - How do you decide when someone is useful and when they are not?
- Problem #2:
 - Who gets to decide when someone is useful and when they are not?

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Then there is another question ...
- What do we do with the worthless people and unwanted people (those who are too small or too old or too sick or too handicapped or too injured)?

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- The bottom line is this:
- Unless we protect everyone's life, no one's life (except for the strongest individual's life) would be safe.
- This is a philosophical argument for protecting all human life.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Religious reasons for being unconditionally pro-life:
- First, we are made in God's image and likeness.
- Second, we were purchased for a price (1 Cor 6:20).

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- This means our life, along with every other human life, has an intrinsic value or worth that cannot be taken away, sold, eliminated, given away or in any way alienated from the individual.
- The right to life is also guaranteed in our Declaration of Independence.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Finally, there is the 5th Commandment:

You shall not kill.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Does this refer to **ALL** human life?
- No. There is one obvious exception and that is self-defense.
- We are permitted to use the amount of force necessary to prevent an unjust aggressor from doing us or others serious bodily harm.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Conclusion:
- We must respect and defend all innocent human life without exception.

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE

- Therefore, none of the following are morally permissible:
 - Abortion
 - Hormonal Contraceptives
 - Morning after pills
 - Euthanasia
 - Doctor assisted suicide
 - Murder
 - Suicide

THE GOSPEL OF LIFE



THE GOSPEL OF LIFE



THE GOSPEL OF LIFE



THE GOSPEL OF LIFE



THE GOSPEL OF LIFE



HOMEWORK

- Parents at Home:
 - Discuss with your children why we should protect and defend all innocent human life.
 - Discuss the reasons why some people do not believe this and why we should try to help them understand why every human life has an intrinsic value.

HOMework

- Parents at Home:
 - See that your children complete their homework assignments.
 - Watch the two videos.
 - Read from the Catechism 2270 – 2279.

FAMILY PRAYER

