RCIA Homework for January 19, 2023

Moral Decision-Making

Understanding and complying with the Natural Law is integral to who we are as humans, as Christians seeking God, because He is seeking us.

According to St. Thomas Aquinas:

Natural Law – God’s law is written on our hearts so that we may learn to love. It illuminates our reason in order to know good and evil. It helps us attain our intended goal of Heaven (Summa I-II, Q, xciv, a. 2).

In the Declaration of Independence, [Thomas Jefferson](https://legal-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Jefferson,+Thomas), borrowing from Locke, wrote that

"all men are created equal …  are endowed by their creator  with certain inalienable rights … [including] life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness."

The Natural Law is

* Stamped on our nature by a loving Father
* Universal and unchanging
* The supreme principle, from which all the other principles and are derived, that good is to be done, and evil avoided. (St. Thomas Aquinas)
* Morality presupposes reason
* All, even infants and those unable to reason due to brain damage, have the same rights under natural law
* All must obey the natural law except those who cannot reason
* The natural law is the basis of civil law, but superior to it
* The Natural Law, planted in us by God, helps us define INTRINSIC EVILS
  + Intrinsic evil: those acts that are always and everywhere evil and cannot be performed under any circumstances without engaging in profound mortal sin
  + Example: five non-negotiables (there are others): abortion, euthanasia, cloning, embryonic stem cell research, homosexual “marriage”
  + The reason there are non-negotiables is that they are intrinsically evil, are opposed to the dignity of the human person, and are against the natural law

Your assignment this week is to do some research on the Natural Law (not to be confused with the laws of nature).

1. As a start, read paragraphs 1954-1960 in the Catechism of the Catholic Church.
2. Then go to www.catholic.com and search for “natural law” and see what you find.
3. Read at least the following:

<https://www.catholic.com/magazine/online-edition/want-catholic-children-teach-them-the-natural-law>

<https://www.catholic.com/magazine/print-edition/natural-law>

1. Be prepared to give some examples of the natural law.