WHY AM I AND WHY DO I EXIST?

Answering the Tough Questions

Catholic Moral Teaching Resource
TOPICS

1. Does God exist?
2. Why does God allow suffering?
3. Abortion
4. Assisted Suicide
5. Chastity
6. Pornography
7. Same-Sex Attraction
Does God Exist?

“The existence of God the Creator can be known with certainty through his works, by the light of human reason, even if this knowledge is often obscured and disfigured by error. This is why faith comes to confirm and enlighten reason in the correct understanding of this truth: ‘By faith we understand that the world was created by the word of God, so that what is seen was made out of things which do not appear.’”

– Catechism of the Catholic Church, 286

The starting point for all discussions of morality is the existence of God who created us out of love and has a plan for our flourishing. As creatures of God, we are called to learn and follow His plan for our lives and our love. God has given us the commandments in order that we may truly thrive. Authentic happiness can only be found in His plan for us.

Resources:

Click on the titles below to be linked to resources

Credible Catholic: Evidence of God’s Existence
Bishop Barron: Why Do We Believe in God?
Why does God allow suffering?

"For we have not a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but one who in every respect has been tempted as we are, yet without sin. Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and find grace to help in time of need."

– Hebrews 4:15-16

If God is all-good and all-loving, why does suffering exist? This is a question that touches upon deep places in our own hearts and life experiences. The truth is God never directly wills suffering. Suffering is a result of the Fall and entered our world through sin. But God, in His infinite mercy, has not left us alone in our suffering and sinfulness. He became man and chose to suffer for our sake to transform suffering into a means of redemption. In Him, our suffering has meaning. We know that earth is not our ultimate fulfillment and, so, we look forward to hope to our heavenly home where "He will wipe every tear from their eyes. There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain" (Revelations 21:4).

Resources:

Click on the titles below to be linked to resources

Credible Catholic: Why would an all-loving God allow suffering?

Peter Kreeft: Would a Loving God Allow Evil and Suffering?
Abortion

"Human life, as a gift of God, is sacred and inviolable. For this reason procured abortion and euthanasia are absolutely unacceptable. Not only must human life not be taken, but it must be protected with loving concern."
– John Paul II, Gospel of Life

Every human life has dignity and infinite worth. We are called to protect and care for every human person, especially the most hidden, weak and vulnerable. Today, unborn children in particular need to be protected. Many times, a woman who becomes pregnant in difficult circumstances will be tempted to end the life of her child through abortion. Abortion falls under the 5th commandment: Thou shalt not kill. It is always gravely wrong and hurts women. Most often, these women are facing many fears: fears that they won't be able to take care of the child, fear of disappointing the one's they love, fear of not being able to finish school. What women experiencing this need is someone to believe in them – that they can be a good mother - and to support them as a friend, giving them the courage to love their child and give them life.

Resources:

Click on the titles below to be linked to resources

“The Unexpected Gift” video
“Pro-Life” video by Chris Stefanick
Abby Johnson’s (former Planned Parenthood director) website
“Life and Dignity of the Human Person” video
Students for Life of America
Archdiocese of New York Respect Life Office
Assisted Suicide

“True compassion leads to sharing another's pain; it does not kill the person whose suffering we cannot bear.”
– John Paul II, Gospel of Life

Every life matters, regardless of age or ability. Our worth comes from the fact that we are created by God who loves us infinitely. God alone is the author of our life and our lives are in His hands from conception until the moment of natural death. As people age or become sick, it is important for them to be accompanied in their suffering and shown unconditional love. Euthanasia and assisted suicide offer a false “compassion.” In reality, they heighten in the one who is sick or elderly a sense of being an unwanted burden. Authentic love seeks to eliminate suffering not the sufferer. Euthanasia and assisted suicide undermine the medical profession which exists to heal, not to kill.

Resources:

Click on the titles below to be linked to resources

Respect Life Office of New York
Patients’ Rights Action Fund
“Now and at the Hour of our Death” video
Every human person is created to make a gift of themselves in love. Our bodies were given to us in order to communicate love and our bodies speak a language. In sexual intimacy, our bodies say, “I give myself to you alone, completely and faithfully for the rest of my life.” If we engage in sexual activity without intending to be faithful or without giving ourselves fully (including our fertility), we are lying with our bodies. We are called, instead, to authentic love. Chastity protects our love. Chastity is recognizing my own dignity and the dignity of others. It is treating others as persons to be loved and not as objects to be used for my pleasure. Every person is called to chastity, according to their state in life.

Resources:

Click on the titles below to be linked to resources

The Chastity Project
The Culture Project
“Why God Gave us Bodies” – Fr. Mike Schmitz
“The Sacrament of Marriage” – Bishop Barron
Pornography

“Pornography objectifies people and brings hurt and pain. It is an illusory substitute for real relationships and intimacy, which in the end bring true joy.”
– USCCB, Create a Clean Heart in Me

Pornography use is, unfortunately, becoming more and more common among young people today. Pornography separates sexuality from the self-gift of love it is intended to be in marriage. It is a grave sin and also highly addictive. Young people need to know the true goodness and beauty of God’s plan for their love and be filled with hope that this authentic, self-giving love is possible for them. Those who have already fallen into the use of pornography need to hear the message of God’s mercy and that they can be freed from pornography addiction.

Resources:

Click on the titles below to be linked to resources

Fight the New Drug
The Porn Effect
Covenant Eyes
RECLAiM God’s Plan for Sexual Health
“Delivered: True Stories of Men and Women who Turned from Porn to Purity” by Matt Fradd
“Create in Me a Clean Heart” – A Pastoral Response to Pornography (USCCB)
"Homosexual persons are called to chastity. By the virtues of self-mastery that teach them inner freedom, at times by the support of disinterested friendship, by prayer and sacramental grace, they can and should gradually and resolutely approach Christian perfection."
- Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2359

Sexual intimacy is intended to be both unitive and procreative within the Sacrament of Marriage between a man and a woman. Therefore, all sexual acts between persons of the same sex are sinful. Persons who experience same-sex attraction are called to chastity and to discover ever more deeply the life-giving love of Jesus, the desire of every human heart.

Resources:

Click on the titles below to be linked to resources

Courage
The Third Way: Homosexuality and the Catholic Church
Desire of the Everlasting Hills
Why I Don't Call Myself Gay: How I Reclaimed My Sexual Reality and Found Peace by Daniel C. Mattson
Made for Love: Same-Sex Attraction and the Catholic Church by Fr. Michael Schmitz
Eden Invitation