

Lesson objective

- The aim of this lesson is to use interviews, Bible passages and real life situations to find out and evaluate a Christian view on the topic of abortion and the sanctity of life.

Lesson outcomes

- ALL will be able to explain what Roman Catholics and Protestants believe about abortion through completion of the sheet.
- MOST will be able to interpret Christian beliefs on abortion in the light of real life situations.
- SOME will be able to evaluate for themselves a Christian view on abortion through responding to the words of the priest.

Starter...

Abortion Law - How much do you remember?

1. How many doctors must agree before a woman can have an abortion?
2. In what year was abortion made legal in the UK?
3. List 3 reasons the law will allow a woman to receive an abortion.
4. Why was the legalisation of abortion seen as so important?
5. What part of the law changed in 1990? - What did it change to?



All Christians believe...



All Christians believe that all life is sacred (holy), this is known as...

The Sanctity of Life

They believe...

- God is the giver of life
- God's creation should be protected
- All life has a purpose
- God decides when life begins or ends



All Christians believe that life is a gift from God, that humans are special as they are created in God's image and they have a spiritual capacity. This makes them different from other animals.

This is a key teaching which influences Christians' beliefs and actions on **ABORTION**



Task



- Complete the first box on the sheet

What would a priest say?

- Watch this short interview with a priest talking about his view on abortion.
- Do you agree or disagree with what he says? Try and give two reasons for your point of view.
- You may find you agree with some of the things he says and disagree with others.

Lesson outcomes

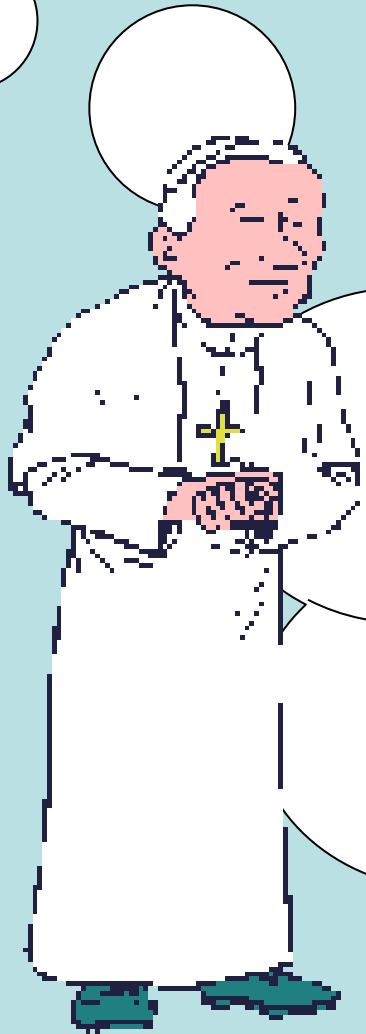
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Complete the Bible quotes sheet



- The priest was talking about the importance of the Sanctity of Life.
- For Christianity the source of this teaching is the Bible.
- *Remembering simple Bible passages is very important for students wanting to work at an A or A* level.*

The Roman Catholic view



- Abortion is **ALWAYS WRONG**
- All life is **SACRED** a **GIFT** from **GOD**
- Life begins at **CONCEPTION**
- Abortion, no matter what the circumstances, is **MURDER**
- The embryo/foetus right to life is the **SAME** as the mothers.
- Every sperm is **SACRED** (a possible life)
- The purpose of **SEX** is to **REPRODUCE** therefore **ARTIFICIAL CONTRACEPTION** is forbidden



Task



- Complete the second box on the sheet
- the sheet

Every sperm is SACRED...



The Church of England view



- Abortion is **WRONG**
- All life is **SACRED** and a **GIFT** from **GOD**

BUT...

They also believe in the **'QUALITY OF LIFE'**.

This means that if having the child would mean either the baby or mother would have a poor 'quality of life' then abortion would be the right thing to do (the lesser of two evils).

For the Church of England there are certain circumstances when a woman may seek an abortion and it **NOT** be deemed a **SINFUL** act.

These are...

- If her **LIFE** is at **RISK**
- If she has been the victim of **RAPE**
- If the foetus is at risk of being **SEVERELY HANDICAPPED**.



Task



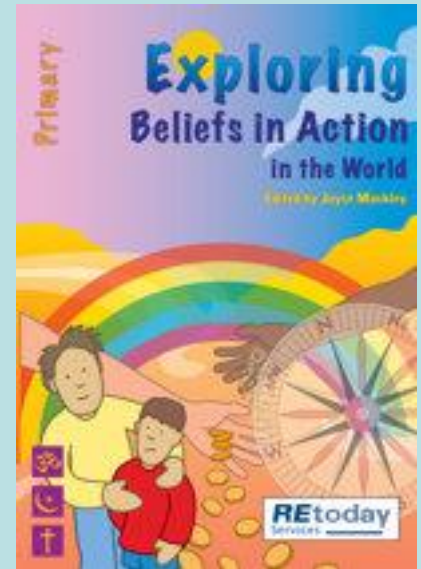
- Complete the third box on the sheet

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Beliefs in action

- It is easy to discuss beliefs in isolation, but harder to apply those beliefs to real life situations.
- For each of the following scenarios, decide what a Christian would advise in each case, bearing in mind what you have learned today.



Scenario One



- Lucy is 15 years old. She has been going out with her boyfriend, Tom, for 8 months and they are sure that they love each other. They have been having sex for quite a while now and they have always used condoms. Unfortunately, something has gone wrong and Lucy is horrified to find out that she is pregnant.
- Lucy is very worried about telling her parents who are Protestant Christians. She is sure that they will not understand. They have warned her against having a sexual relationship because they believe she is too young.
- Lucy is just starting year 11 and is on target to get mostly A and B grades; she wants to go to university and eventually become a teacher. Tom, who is a year older, has just got into college and is doing a plumbing course. He will support Lucy in whatever she wants to do, although he thinks that they are too young to have children.

Scenario Two



- Mary is 48 and she has 3 grown-up children. Her marriage has just broken up and in all the upset she had not noticed that her periods had stopped. She has now found out that she is 17 weeks pregnant. Her husband has a new girlfriend and is not prepared to go back to Mary; he has also made it clear that he cannot help her financially.
- Mary is a committed Protestant Christian and has always been sure that abortion is wrong. However, she is worried that she may have a child who is disabled and she is concerned about what will happen to it should anything happen to her.
- Mary's children have mixed views about what she should do. Her eldest daughter lives abroad and travels around for her work. Her younger daughter has always been sure that she does not want children as she wants to concentrate on her career and her son already has 3 small children of his own.

Scenario Three



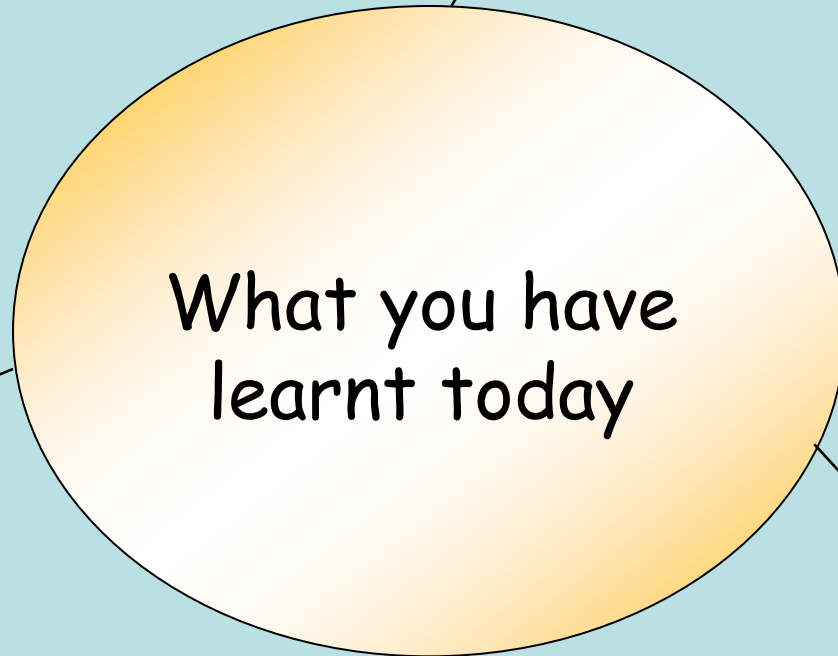
- Mrs X is 19 weeks pregnant with triplets. She and her husband had undergone fertility treatment so that they could have children. However, they had made it very clear to the doctors that they did not want more than 2 children and they were dismayed to find that Mrs X was actually pregnant with 3 babies.
- The doctors have said it might be possible for Mrs X to have an operation which would remove one of the foetuses and leave two behind. There are some dangers associated with the operation - it is possible that something might go wrong and the operation might cause Mrs X to miscarry all 3 children. Mr X is concerned that Mrs X will regret the decision to have the operation however; he firmly thinks that they can only cope with 2 children. Mrs X worries that she will feel very guilty and does not know how she could explain her decision to her family and friends, all of whom are very excited for her. Her family are Roman Catholic Christians.

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Plenary - Brainstorm



What you have
learnt today