

## Some Useful Readings and Websites

### Introduction Video

[Justice: An Introduction.](#)

### Some Words to Understand

**Dignity** - respectful behaviour that expresses honour and goodness

**Finite** - limited and having an ending

**Foundational Value** - the underlying value from which all others stem

**Human Condition** - the state of being human

**Infinite** - unlimited and endless

**Intelligibility** - able to be known, understood, interpreted, analysed

**Non-Religious** - having nothing to do with religion

**Reality** - the state of being real; that which exists

**Secular** - concerned only with the material world, having nothing to do with the supernatural

**Stewardship** - notion that humans have a co-creative responsibility in relation to the gift of the natural world

**Transcendent** - that which is beyond the natural world

### Ethics and Religion

This comes from the [REsource](#) site.

- If God has ordered creation in a particular way towards a particular end it makes sense to try to discover what this order is.
- If Jesus Christ is the fullness of God's revelation to humankind, attending to the teaching of Christ and, at an even deeper level, attending to the mystery of his death and resurrection are crucial in understanding the Christian ethical approach.
- If we believe in the continuing action of the Spirit of God in the world we are moved to respond in a particular way to ethical issues.

Finally, as *Catholics*, we take into consideration the living Tradition of the Church - the wisdom of centuries of Christian belief and practice handed down through the years, and alive and active in our own time.

## Euthanasia

*'...human life, even when weak and fragile, has a dignity which will not tolerate the decision of others to terminate it on the grounds that it is not 'fully human' or 'authentic.' (Note that euthanasia is very different from the decision not to use extraordinary means to preserve life, when the 'life' in question is merely vegetative and no longer recognisably human .... The decision not to employ extraordinary means to preserve or prolong life has a completely different moral character from the decision to take positive action to terminate life by administering a drug which has as its direct and immediate purpose the termination of life.)' - Dwyer, 1987, p.117.*

### From the Catechism of the Catholic Church

**2277** *Whatever its motives and means, direct euthanasia consists in putting an end to the lives of handicapped, sick, or dying persons. It is morally unacceptable.*

*Thus an act or omission which, of itself or by intention, causes death in order to eliminate suffering, constitutes a murder gravely contrary to the dignity of the human person and to the respect due to the living God, his Creator.*

*The error of judgment into which one can fall in good faith does not change the nature of this murderous act, which must always be forbidden and excluded.*

**2278** *Discontinuing medical procedures that are burdensome, dangerous, extraordinary, or disproportionate to the expected outcome can be legitimate; it is the refusal of "over-zealous" treatment. Here one does not will to cause death; one's inability to impede it is merely accepted.*

*The decisions should be made by the patient if he is competent and able or, if not, by those legally entitled to act for the patient, whose reasonable will and legitimate interests must always be respected.*

**2279** *Even if death is thought imminent, the ordinary care owed to a sick person cannot be legitimately interrupted. The use of painkillers to alleviate the sufferings of the dying, even at the risk of shortening their days, can be morally in conformity with human dignity if death is not willed as either an end or a means, but only foreseen and tolerated as inevitable.*

Palliative care is a special form of disinterested charity. As such it should be encouraged.