

# Teen Handout

Week 12- January 23, 2022

## Cultivating Moral Intelligence



### Moral Intelligence

The components of a moral compass (comprised of principles, values and beliefs), goals (including purpose and wants) and behavior (through thoughts, emotions and actions) interact together to form moral intelligence.

#### Key Terms for this discussion

##### Morality

- the way people choose to live their lives according to a set of guidelines or principles that govern their decisions about right versus wrong, and good versus evil
- one's capacity to choose good or evil

##### Christian Morality

- the application of God's laws regarding a person's private and public behavior
- following the example of Christ

##### Immoral

- not in conformity with accepted principles of right and wrong
- contrary to conscience or divine law

##### Amoral

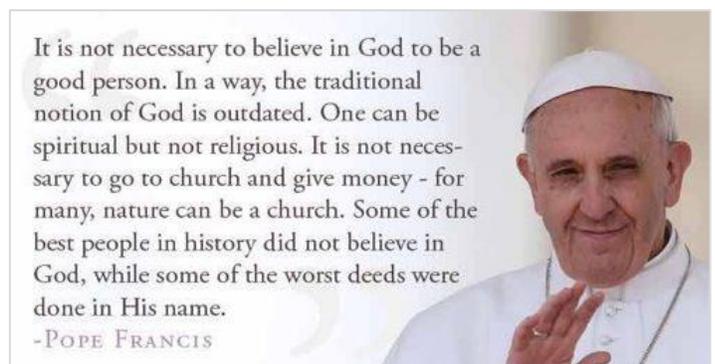
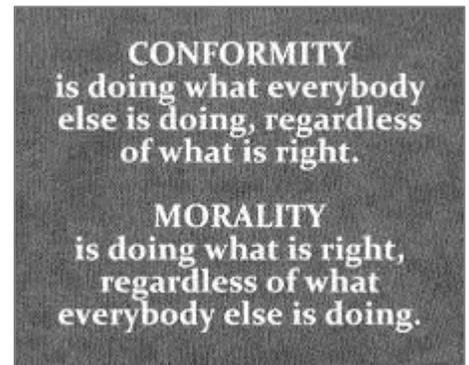
- being neither moral nor immoral; lacking a moral sense
- not knowing the rightness or wrongness of something
- does wrong but doesn't understand that it is wrong

##### Conscience

- a built-in sense of what's right and what's wrong;
- God's voice in the soul

##### Values

- Qualities, principles or possessions an individual considers to be of worth or significance, irrespective of them being either moral or immoral.
- Significant dimensions of life which provide meaning to a person or group



# Values Clarification Activity

Your values define what is most important to you. They guide each of your choices in life.

As we mature/evolve our values can shift - what was once very important can become less important and vice versa. The more we experience, know, feel, think new values might emerge. This is why it is always a good think to reflect on our values throughout our lives.

## Directions for doing the exercise are as follows:

1. Start by crossing off the items that are not important to you.
2. Then, go through the list again, circling as many of the items that are very important to you.
3. The remainder of the list items will essentially be the things that are important but not very important.
4. Next, review the very important items. Consider whether there is a value missing that matters a lot to you and has not been listed—add that one in. From this group, select the seven things that are most important to you.
5. Then, rank these seven most important values, with number one being your most important value.

Achievement	Adventure	Community
Arts & culture	Belonging	Friendship
Change	Decisiveness	Freedom
Cooperation	Wisdom	Helping others
Curiosity	Justice	Independence
Environmental responsibility	Effectiveness	Loyalty
Excitement	Health	Love
Family	Humor	Intelligence
Honesty	Thankfulness/Gratitude	Security
Integrity	Stability	Nature
Innovation	Recognition	Serenity
Involvement	Respect	Religion
Leisure	Truth	Learning
Openness	Hopefulness	Having influence
Power	Privacy	Joy
Ethical behavior	Diversity	Success
Reputation	Relationships	Personal Satisfaction
Self-Awareness	Responsibility	Meaningfulness
Sophistication	Status	Beauty
Wealth	Spirituality	Diversity
Merit	Challenge	Equality
Teamwork	Creativity	Other_____
Personal Expression	Prestige	Other_____

**Write your top seven choices in the box on TH p. 5**

# Foundations of Catholic Moral Teaching

**Love of God and love of neighbor** are the source & summary of Catholic Morality

**We find the law of love spelled out in the Scriptures in the**

1. The Ten Commandments
2. The teachings of the Prophets
3. The Beatitudes
4. The Pastoral epistles



**What love requires** is the essence of all moral rules. The only things needed are those things which love itself makes necessary.

## **love sets the highest bar**

The goal of Christian morality is to love without limit

**Sounds like an impossible goal you say?**

**You are right!**

Even Christ's closest disciples couldn't believe that the demands of discipleship far exceeded human ability:

*"When the disciples heard this, they were greatly astounded and said, 'Then who can be saved?'" (Mt 19:25)*

Therefore, Christ reassured them and us saying

*"With men [and women] this is impossible, but with God all things are possible" (Mt 19:26).*

**God gives you/us the strength and ability to do more than you/we can believe is possible.** And the more you give, the more help God will give you.



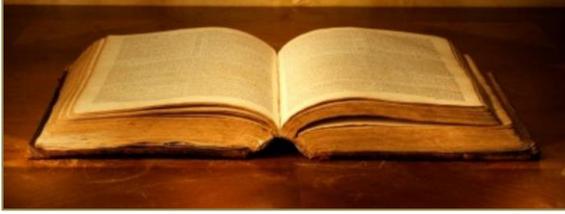
**We call this grace.** →



**It is the Holy Spirit who gives us the gift of grace.**

The Spirit not only calls us to holiness, but sanctifies us (makes us holy) and gives us the grace we need to respond to gospel call to love.

## One Biblical Perspective



## Galatians 5:16-26

My counsel is this: Live freely, animated and motivated by God's Spirit. Then you won't feed the compulsions of selfishness. For there is a root of sinful self-interest in us that is at odds with a free spirit, just as the free spirit is incompatible with selfishness. These two ways of life are antithetical, so that you cannot live at times one way and at times another way according to how you feel on any given day. Why don't you choose to be led by the Spirit and so escape the erratic

compulsions of a law-dominated existence?

It is obvious what kind of life develops out of trying to get your own way all the time: repetitive, loveless, cheap sex; a stinking accumulation of mental and emotional garbage; frenzied and joyless grabs for happiness; trinket gods; magic-show religion; paranoid loneliness; cutthroat competition; all-consuming-yet-never-satisfied wants; a brutal temper; an impotence to love or be loved; divided homes and divided lives; small-minded and lopsided pursuits; the vicious habit of depersonalizing everyone into a rival; uncontrolled and uncontrollable addictions; ugly parodies of community. I could go on.

This isn't the first time I have warned you, you know. If you use your freedom this way, you will not inherit God's kingdom.

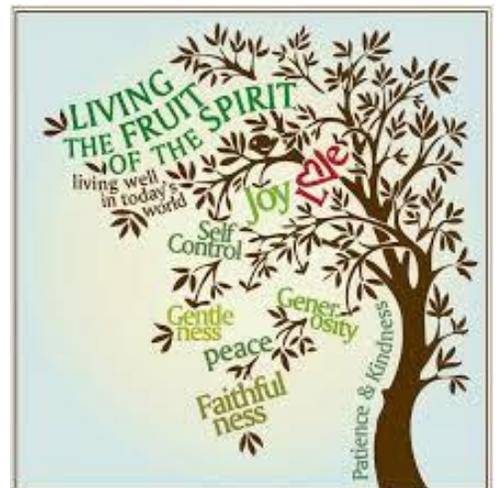
But what happens when we live God's way? He brings gifts into our lives, much the same way that fruit appears in an orchard—things like affection for others, exuberance about life, serenity. We develop a willingness to stick with things, a sense of compassion in the heart, and a conviction that a basic holiness permeates things and people. We find ourselves involved in loyal commitments, not needing to force our way in life, able to marshal and direct our energies wisely.

Legalism is helpless in bringing this about; it only gets in the way. Among those who belong to Christ, everything connected with getting our own way and mindlessly responding to what everyone else calls necessities is killed off for good—crucified.

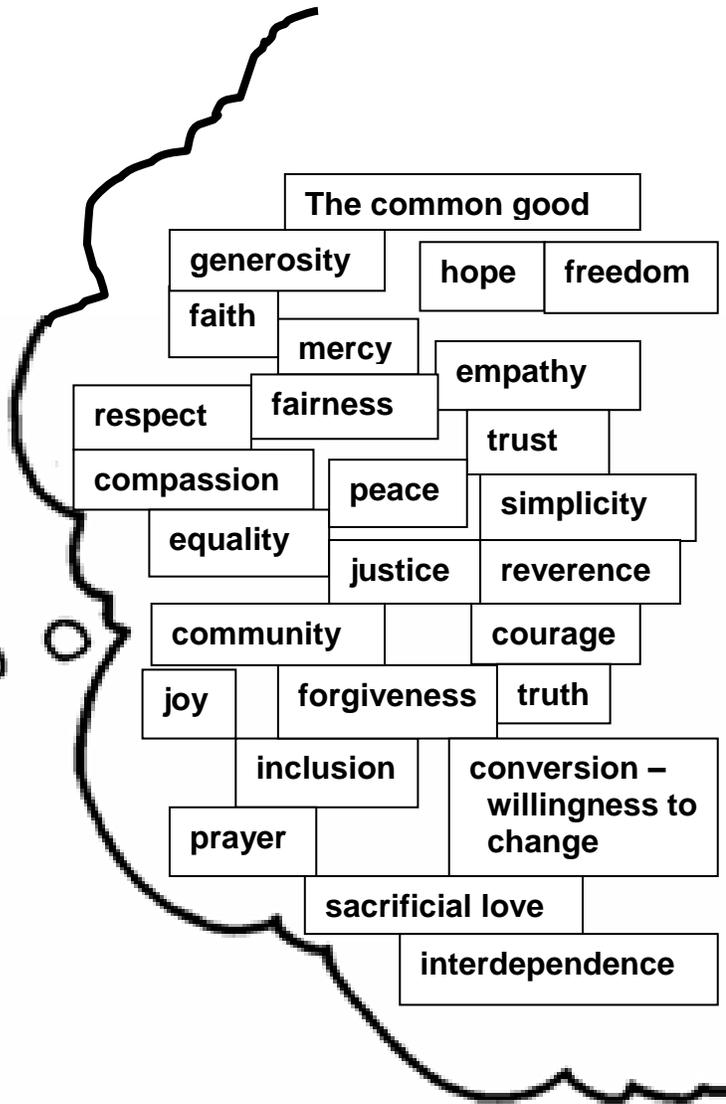
Since this is the kind of life we have chosen, the life of the Spirit, let us make sure that we do not just hold it as an idea in our heads or a sentiment in our hearts, but work out its implications in every detail of our lives. That means we will not compare ourselves with each other as if one of us were better and another worse. We have far more interesting things to do with our lives. Each of us is an original.

## The Fruits of the Holy Spirit

**Love**  
**Joy**  
**Peace**  
**Patience**  
**Kindness**  
**Goodness**  
**Forbearance**  
**Gentleness**  
**Faith**  
**Humility,**  
**Self-control**  
**Responsible use sexuality**



# GOSPEL VALUES



Values driving my moral vision

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_
6. \_\_\_\_\_
7. \_\_\_\_\_

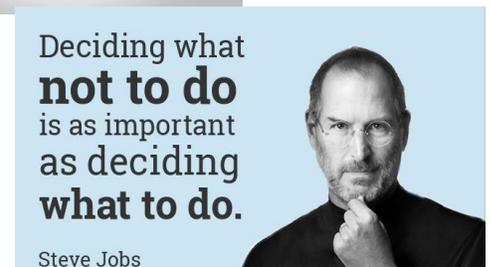
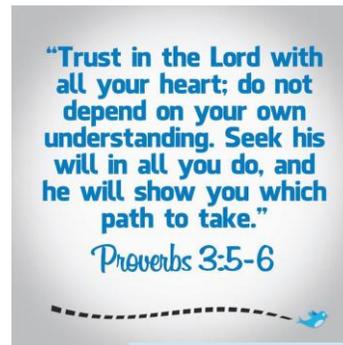
## MORALITY QUOTES

Choose your favorite!

- "When I give food to the poor, they call me a saint. When I ask why the poor have no food, they call me a communist." - Dom Helder Camara
- "An eye for an eye makes the whole world blind" - Gandhi
- **God Bless Everyone, No Exceptions!**
- God wants Spiritual Fruits, Not Religious Nuts
- **Do Justice, Love Kindness, Walk humbly with your God. Micah 6:8**
- The Death Penalty is a Hate Crime
- **I support the separation of Church and Hate**
- Lord, help me be the person my dog thinks I am.

## Christian Moral Decision Making Model

1. What is the issue/problem/concern?
2. Seek an Informed Conscience (seeking knowledge toward the truth rather than what we want to think/hear)
3. Check with . . .
  - a. My family  
What do my parents say?
  - b. The Church  
What does the Church teach?  
What would Jesus do?
  - c. My heart  
What is my heart telling me?  
Am I listening to the law deep within my heart?
  - d. Respected Adults  
What do adults whom I respect say?
  - e. Peers  
What do friends whom I respect say?
4. What do I believe?
5. What do **I** think I should do?
6. Make the decision.



## Think of a situation in your life right now that you have to make a decision about

Who should I vote for as sports captain?

Should I audition for a solo in band?

Is this person in my life really a good influence?

If I go to that party, is it going to be a decision I'll regret?

If I knew that what I text, post, tweet would follow me forever would I do it?

And so many others! We make decisions every day!

Look at the chart on the previous page, and try to apply it to your life right now. What decision do you have in your life that you need to use Christian decision making? How can you invite God into your decision?

# PRAY OVER YOUR DECISIONS

## *A Prayer in Times of Decision-Making*

Lord, grant us a spirit of wisdom and  
discernment  
As we stand strong in all our decisions  
To put You First before all things  
And our desires to follow behind  
Your will

Help us keep close to You in spirit  
With every word and thought in us  
inspired  
Your Word and Will ever be our guide  
In every decision we make in life,  
AMEN!

## Eight Tests for Decision Making

1. **Scriptural Test**—“Has God already spoken about it in His Word?” (2 Timothy 3:16)
2. **Secrecy Test**—“Would it bother me if everyone knew this was my choice?” (Proverbs 11:3)
3. **Survey Test**—“What if everyone followed my example?” (1 Timothy 4:12)
4. **Spiritual Test**—“Am I being people-pressured or Spirit-led?” (Galatians 1:10)
5. **Stumbling Test**—“Could this cause another person to stumble?” (Romans 14:21)
6. **Serenity Test**—“Have I prayed and received peace about this decision?” (Philippians 4:6-7)
7. **Sanctification Test**—“Will this keep me from growing in the character of Christ?” (2 Corinthians 3:18)
8. **Supreme Test**—“Does this glorify God?” (1 Corinthians 10:31)

*“Walk as children of light. . . and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.”  
(Ephesians 5:8, 10)*

## I Learned Statements – complete at least two of the sentences below

I learned...

I discovered...

I was reminded that...

I was surprised by...

The question I have is..