

### 1: Download [PDF] Moral Theology Of John Paul II Free Online | New Books in Politics

*Moral Absolutes and Thomas Aquinas by John C. Milhaven The Principle of Double Effect by Cornelius Van Der Poel Consummation and the Indissolubility of Marriage by Dennis Doherty.*

To achieve this goal I will do the following: Finally 4 , since many proportionalists, among them McCormick, frequently appeal to the teaching of St. Thomas to support their contention that their moral methodology is compatible with the Catholic tradition I will conclude by briefly examining a critically important text of St. Thomas to which proportionalists appeal. There he first distinguishes between what he calls "teleology" and "teleologisms. For some concrete behavior would be right or wrong according to whether or not it is capable of producing a better state of affairs for all concerned. They conclude that the foreseen proportions of "pre-moral" goods to evils in the alternatives available can at times justify exceptions to precepts traditionally regarded as absolute cf. In a very important passage he then shows what is meant by the "object" rationally chosen by the deliberate will. The object of the act of willing is in fact a freely chosen kind of behavior. To the extent that it is in conformity with the order of reason, it is the cause of the goodness of the will; it perfects us morally By the object of a given moral act, then, one cannot mean a process or an event of the merely physical order, to be assessed on the basis of its ability to bring about a given state of affairs in the outside world. Rather, that object is the proximate end of a deliberate decision which determines the act of willing on the part of the acting person" n. I will not here consider this matter insofar as its significance has already been emphasized by Germain Grisez. The Teaching of Proportionalist Theologians The proportionalist methodology has its roots, in contemporary Catholic thought, in the reasoning used by the authors among them Joseph Fuchs of the celebrated "Majority" papers of the Papal Commission for the Study of the Problems of the Family, Population, and Birth Rate to justify the practice of contraception by married couples. In one of their papers the authors of the majority opinion say: It is licit to sacrifice a life for the good of the community. I call this the "Caiaphas principle," although proportionalist theologians now refer to it, as will be seen below in more detail, as the "preference principle" or "principle of proportionate good. Then he unites the material finality toward fecundity which exists in intercourse with the final formality of the person and renders the entire process human Conjugal acts which by intention are infertile [the authors consider it contraceptive to limit the marital act to the infertile period] or which are rendered infertile [by artificial contraceptives], are ordered to the expression of the union of love; that love, moreover, reaches its culmination in fertility responsibly accepted. The argument of the "Majority" admitted that there is a "material privation" or what later came to be called a "pre-moral," "non-moral," or "ontic" evil in contraceptive activity because it deprives a conjugal act of its procreative potential. This too had to fit into the calculation. Other proportionalists, chiefly Fuchs, have developed the "totality" argument found in the Majority papers. Fuchs has insisted that it is impossible to make a moral judgment about the intending and doing of what he calls "pre-moral" evils as such, because we cannot judge an act in its "materiality" without referring to the "intention" of the agent, understanding by "intention" the end for whose sake the agent acts. Proportionalists sharply distinguish between these so-called "material" norms and what they call "transcendental" and "formal" norms. Proportionalists admit that there are moral absolutes in the sense of "transcendental principles" that direct us to those elements of our existence whereby we transcend or surpass the rest of material creation. Thus they acknowledge the absoluteness of such principles as "One must always act in conformity with love of God and neighbor" and "One must always act in accordance with, right reason. It is thus always true that we should be just, brave, chaste, and so on. Proportionalists like Fuchs and McCormick call these norms "paranetic," and they simply serve to remind us of what we already know and exhort us to avoid acting immorally. These are the so-called "material" or "behavioral" norms to which I have referred already. No norms of this kind are "absolute" or "exceptionless," and the acts proscribed by them are not "intrinsically evil. As Fuchs says, and as other proportionalists concur, "a strict behavioral norm, stated as a universal, contains unexpressed conditions and qualifications which as such limit its universality. What Conclusions Can be Made? The encyclical, he says, "repeatedly states of proportionalism that it attempts to justify morally wrong actions by a good

intention" and that this is a "misrepresentation. But the proportionalist, it is asserted, does not and cannot say this since he or she insists on looking at all dimensions of the act before saying it is morally wrong. According to McCormick, however, this objection "misses the point of what proportionalists are saying. This is precisely what the tradition has done. Yet John Paul II explicitly says: Obviously the Holy Father is not guilty of this error that McCormick attributes to opponents of proportionalism. And, as we have seen in our review of proportionalist thought, proportionalists themselves refer to the disputed moral absolutes as "material norms," concerned with the act in its materiality. But in his critique McCormick cleverly adds that opponents of proportionalism at times render moral judgment by focusing attention on the "object in a very narrow and restricted sense. Let us take contraception and contraceptive sterilization as examples. As we have seen proportionalists, like McCormick, say that the "object" of the contraception they approve is determined by looking at the act in its totality, and that if we look at it this way we will see that the object of the act is "to foster love responsibly toward a generous fecundity," obviously something good. Moreover, if a couple resorts to contraceptive sterilization to avoid a serious threat that a pregnancy might pose to the wife, the object chosen, if the act is viewed in its totality, is to stabilize the marriage, again, obviously something good. McCormick, as we have seen, calls it a "marriage-stabilizing act. They choose to impede procreation to effect what proportionalists term a "non-moral" or "pre-moral" disvalue or evil to achieve some good purpose e. The Pope knew what he was talking about. Thomas Finally, it is necessary to show how proportionalists misrepresent the thought of St. Thomas in order to lend credibility to their claims. Both Janssens and McCormick, for instance, explicitly appeal to a text from St. Either this passage escaped the notice of Janssens and McCormick or they chose not to inform their readers of it, because in it Aquinas explicitly affirms what they deny: I will now conclude by noting that the Janssen-McCormick misinterpretation of this text of St. Thomas has been pointed out by several writers during the past decade. Endnotes 1 Richard A. Among other proportionalists who immediately rejected the encyclical as flawed, claiming that the Pope had been poorly advised, are: See also the comments of Lawrence Cunningham, Charles E. The National Catholic Reporter, , p. Curran and Richard A. In this volume Curran and McCormick gather together from various theological journals articles of Fuchs, Janssens, Schuller, Scholz and other representatives of proportionalist thought. The editors also include essays, by John Connery, S. Other important sources for this movement are: University Press of America, , pp. The position has been developed at length in several textbooks in moral theology designed for use in seminaries and universities, particularly by Timothy E. Georgetown University Press, , p. Seabury, , pp. Paulist, , pp. Sullivan, who agrees with this whole line of thought, lists Curran, Bockle, Fuchs, Schuller, Haring, and others as agreeing that this is the proper way to express the matter. McCormick goes on to say "in certain categories e. Marquette University Press, , pp. Our Sunday Visitor, See also the very excellent essay offering a detailed analysis of this text of St.

### 2: Catholic Morality: A Primer

*The purpose of this inquiry is to examine the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas and a select group of exceptionally important theologians—Duns Scotus, Suarez, Alphonsus Liguori—and representatives of the "Dominican," "Jesuit," and "Redemptorist" manualist traditions from the time of St. Thomas until Vatican Council II on the existence of moral absolutes.*

Additional Information In lieu of an abstract, here is a brief excerpt of the content: A renewal of moral theology has been called for for years. Books and essays and studies of all colors and kinds abound on the subject. Long before the Second Vatican Council theologians had been at pains to revitalize the moral teaching of Christianity. Since the Council of aggiornamento cries for a renewal of moral teaching have become even louder, and writers on the matter, whether lay or clerical, have become more vociferous. One of the most recent contributions toward a solution, in fact towards a radical solution, of the problem is this collection of essays edited by Charles Curran. Last year a similar attempt was made in Germany by Prof. Griindel in his very fine and penetrating study, *Wandelbares und Unwandelbares in der Moraltheologie*, which came out in the well-known Patmos paperbacks series. The scope of this present volume is somewhat more restricted than the work of Griindel. The editor is careful to point out the exact limits of the problem discussed by the various contributors when he tells us in his introduction that they "are addressing themselves to a comparatively minor, although still important question—the existence of negative, absolute norms of morality. Is it true to say that a lie is always sinful and bad in itself? Is it true that masturbation is always and in every case an abuse, a disruption of order, a disordered action, sinful? Is the practice of contraception through artificial means always and in every case evil? Is adultery always a sin or may it not at times be even demanded by Christian love and charity? In a word, it is a question of the absolute and universal binding character of the six negative commandments of the Decalogue as interpreted and applied down the centuries in and through the magisterium of the Church. Approaching the question from many different angles the contributors are of the opinion that, in view of the changed and changing situation of mankind, one may no longer maintain that negative moral norms have an absolute and universal binding force. It is suggested, somewhat euphemistically one may be allowed to think, that the doctor may "positively assist and accelerate the process of dying. In the same way masturbation, adultery, fornication or suicide are no longer to be regarded as always and in every case disordered and sinful. Artificial birth-control, which must be considered in the context of either the fifth preservation of and reverence for the mystery of human life or sixth mutual masturbation commandment, is, it is maintained, another obvious case where no absolute moral prohibitions can apply. With regard to marriage Christ said categorically and absolutely: The character of this prohibition is relativized by maintaining that marriage is not You are not currently authenticated. View freely available titles:

### 3: Prudential Judgment A Theological Roundtable | Catholic Moral Theology

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Slice 1 Everyone is talking about the dubia , and so I will too, not that there is much need, given the already excellent and authoritative commentary that has come from a variety of sources, as, for example the scholar monk Dom Hugh Somerville-Knapman and the much respected Bishop Athanasius Schneider , the prelate who works at the very margins of the Church in Kazakhstan. Indeed, what need is there for commentary at all, when one of the authors of the dubia is Cardinal Caffarra, perhaps the greatest of our theologians, and another is Cardinal Burke, the best of our canonists? One of the dubia is as follows: After the publication of the post-synodal exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* cf. I have not made an in-depth study of *Amoris Laetitia*, but I do know something about the teaching contained in *Veritatis Splendor*, which was foundational for my studies in moral theology. There are, as the Church has always recognised, absolute moral norms that are binding in all circumstances, and there are some acts, evil in themselves, which cannot be justified or sanitised by any circumstance of motivation. To take an example, it is never right to procure a direct abortion, even when you think you have grave or pressing reasons for doing so. If you decide to abandon belief in absolute moral norms “ and St John Paul II recognised this danger, hence the need for the encyclical “ then several catastrophic things will undoubtedly follow. The first is that you no longer set a high bar for the Christian soul when it comes to morality. In so doing you admit to yourself that absolute norms are too hard for the Christian soul to live with; in other words you deny the power of the grace of God, won for us on the Cross by the Lord and Saviour of Mankind, which can transform a person and make them capable of living by these norms. But by abandoning the absoluteness of moral norms, you do exactly that. Second, you undermine the whole concept of Law, and the whole idea of God as a Lawgiver. We weak human beings crave absolutes, and the absolutes given us by God are exactly what we need for human flourishing. To abandon absolutes is to abandon a coherent vision of God, and a coherent vision of humanity. Third, to undermine the concept of the absolute moral norm, and the relative importance of circumstances and motivations, to move the focus from act-in-itself to the murky world of the often deluded self, and the desires of the self, is to open the way to moral chaos and the narcissism of seeing personal choice as paramount, indeed the only source of morality. Choice is only good when it is a choice exercised to choose what is good and right. Personal choices, even when they are deeply meditated and chosen for what seem sincerely held reasons, can be catastrophic, both for the choosing person and for those around him or her. To abandon the objectivity of absolutes is to leave the sources of moral guidance reduced to our purely subjective likes and dislikes. That this has already happened as we were warned by Alasdair MacIntyre in *After Virtue* should all give us great cause for alarm, for the results are plain to see. That the Church should be infected with this way of thinking should, were it not for our faith, lead us to despair. Finally, if the Church were to abandon its belief in the absoluteness of certain moral norms, and the doctrine of intrinsic evil, it would, to put it mildly, make the Magisterium look incoherent. But it goes much further than that. A Church that reneges on its former teaching, based on Scripture and Tradition, is a Church that no longer holds to the Truth, indeed a Church that has lost sight of its primary vocation to hold to the Truth and to be a witness to it to the world, indeed a Church that has ceased to be the Church. We owe Cardinal Caffarra and three brethren a debt of gratitude for their timely intervention, reminding us of our shared Christian vocation to be witnesses to the Truth. Now is the time for Catholics everywhere to make their gratitude plain.

### 4: Veritatis splendor - Wikipedia

*Yes, moral absolutes are a part of the teaching and doctrine contained in the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the ten commandments 'which no one can dispense from' and which has been the teaching and doctrine of the Church for millennia.*

Endnotes The purpose of this inquiry is to examine the teaching of St. Thomas until Vatican Council II on the existence of moral absolutes. Thomas Aquinas St. Among the sorts of human acts wicked in this sense and opposed to natural law precepts are theft<sup>1</sup>, lying<sup>2</sup>, fornicating<sup>3</sup>, committing adultery<sup>4</sup>, killing the innocent<sup>5</sup>. This list is illustrative, not taxative. It thus seems that Aquinas does hold that there are moral absolutes in the sense in which these are understood here. Since the will is a rational appetite, inclining toward objects presented to it by reason, it follows that "goodness of the will depends on reason, in the same way that it depends on its object. For the natural law consists of an ordered series of "precepts" or propositions of practical reason. They are goods perfective of human persons, and human persons are meant to flourish in them. Thus, among the "first and common principles" of the natural law are the precepts that human life itself, its handing on in marriage and education, knowledge of the truth about God, life in fellowship with others and "other goods of this kind" are to be pursued and their opposites avoided. The human person, through his will and human acts, must therefore respect these goods. They are indeed the "ends" toward which we are rightly disposed by the moral virtues. Thomas also includes, among the primary precepts or principles of natural law, such precepts as "evil must be done to no one"<sup>21</sup> and "you are to love your God and your neighbor. Such non-demonstrable and per se nota principles belong, Thomas insists, to the "primus gradus" or first set of the natural law. Their "absoluteness" will shortly be our principal concern. But, before examining them more closely, some brief words about the third set or "gradus" of natural law precepts recognized by St. This third set is made up of those truths about human action that are known only "by a more subtle consideration of reason. To know these precepts "much consideration of different circumstances" is required, and diligently to consider these is something that pertains to the wise. Those not perfected in virtue need to be instructed in them by the wise. Thomas responded to such problems in these texts by simply saying that God could grant dispensations from the relevant precepts the fifth, seventh, and sixth commandments respectively. In other texts, in which the issue formally under consideration is that of dispensations from the Decalogue, Thomas says that even God cannot dispense from any of them, including those of the second table, for if he were to do so he would be contradicting himself, as he would were he to make a man without a soul. In these texts, in response to the objections that God had commanded the Israelites to despoil the Egyptians and Hosea to take to himself a wife of fornication, Aquinas distinguished between the precept and the conditions required for an act to be against the precept. But if the item taken belongs, not to another, but to the one taking or receiving it, then the human act in question is not the kind of act prohibited by the precept: When Abraham consented to kill his son, he did not consent to homicide, because it was due to him [his son] to be killed through the command of God, who is the Lord of life and death. For it is He who inflicts the penalty of death on all men, the just and the unjust, for the sin of our first parents; if a man is the executor of this sentence by divine authority, he will not be a murderer, just as God is no murderer. God did not dispense Abraham from killing an innocent person, a kind of act that Thomas elsewhere declares to be "secundum se malum"<sup>39</sup> and the kind of act forbidden by the fifth commandment. Second, note that Thomas says that Abraham was no more a murderer or a killer than was God. Thus even in punishing mankind with the evil of death, God does not intend that evil, though the punishment entails an evil. What God directly intends is the order of justice. Before doing this, however, I think it pertinent to note St. The objection held that since human lawgivers can dispense from the laws they make, so too can God. In response Thomas said: As the Apostle says 2 Tim. Hence the act of coition can be considered in two ways: Human acts precisely as human or moral are constituted in their moral species by "forms" determined by human reason: An evil end intended by the will vitiates the entire act. In addition, the "object" of the external act chosen and commanded by the will is also a primary source of the moral species of the whole human act, precisely because this object is the object of a

will act. That is, it is not the "material" species of the act, e. Rather, it is the "materia circa quam" the external act is concerned and as such "has in some way the meaning of a form, insofar as it gives the species to the act. Like the end for whose sake this object is chosen, it too must be judged good if the whole human act is to be morally such, for, as St. Thomas insists, "good is caused from an integral cause, evil from any individual defect. Both the end intended and the object willed must be judged by reason as morally good if the whole human act is to be morally good, and it is from these "forms" that the whole human act receives its species. It receives its more universal form or genus from the end, which is in this sense the "forma magis universalis," and it receives its specific difference from the object essentially ordered to that end: In addition to these essential factors end and object that put a human act into its moral species, the circumstances in which the entire act is willed must also be taken into account before a final judgment of its moral goodness or badness can be made. These "circumstances" are like the accidents that modify a substance, and they too must be good if the whole human act is to be such. The criteria used by human reason to judge whether the end and objects of the whole human act are morally good or morally bad are precisely the precepts of the natural law, whereby human acts are to be ruled and measured. The precepts of the Decalogue, although divinely revealed and thus pertaining to divine positive law, are, St. Thomas insists, proximate conclusions of the primary precepts of the natural law, and hence they pertain to the natural law too. So proximate are they that they are known by all men save those perverted by sin and bad habits, as we have seen, "immediately, with little consideration. These precepts, moreover, are absolutely binding. Not even God can dispense from them. Apparent exceptions raised by some Old Testament events are not, in reality, exceptions. What occurred was a change in the moral species of the acts commanded by God. At times some contemporary theologians<sup>54</sup> appeal to the texts in which St. Thomas says that "the natural law. In these texts, the usual example given by St. Thomas is that of returning something one has borrowed to its rightful owner. Aquinas notes that one is not obliged, for instance, to return what one has borrowed if the one seeking its return wants to use it to attack his country or something of this kind. But this claim cannot stand. Thomas clearly taught, as the exposition and analysis of his thought provided here show, that there are some specific moral precepts that are absolutely and universally true, with no exceptions e. It is true that not all specific moral precepts are indispensable or absolute in the sense understood here. It is right and just to do so because this is what is required by the "common and first principles" of the natural law from which such specific norms are derived. We are required to keep our promises and to return what we have borrowed because of the principle of fairness or the Golden Rule, which is one of the "common and first principles" of the natural law. But this same principle can at times require us not to keep our promises or not, here and now as in the case used by St. Thomas , to restore things we have borrowed to their rightful owners. Thomas, the indispensable precepts of the Decalogue specific moral precepts, all of them are absolute, and they follow "immediately, with little consideration"<sup>56</sup> from the first and common precepts of natural law. Conclusion Thus, in the thought of St. Thomas, there are natural law precepts proscribing acts morally bad by reason of their objects. Some of these precepts, e. Thomas teaches, and teaches firmly, that there are moral absolutes in the sense in which this expression is used here. Duns Scotus Scotus clearly taught that, in one real and significant way, there are moral absolutes in the sense understood here. He insisted that "all who are subject to the divine law act inordinately if they do not act in accordance with it. Scotus maintained that these precepts must be observed in every stage of human existence, even in the stage of innocence. The Meaning of Dispensation Scotus is very clear what he means by "dispensation. For there is a twofold kind of dispensation, namely, the revoking of a law and the declaration of a law. Thus, for example, to ask whether God can grant a dispensation for an act of killing is to ask: Whether, with all the circumstances staying the same in the act of killing a man, with only the circumstance of prohibition and non-prohibition changing, could God make that act, which is prohibited at one time with such other circumstances, be licit and not prohibited on another occasion? If so, he can dispense absolutely. Scotus believes that God did in fact dispense from the precept against killing the innocent when he commanded Abraham to sacrifice Isaac. He clearly recognized the difference between dispensing in a true and unconditional sense and changing a condition of the human act in question so that it is no longer the kind of act prohibited by the precept. He clearly understood this difference because he explicitly said, in speaking of

the spoliation of the Egyptians by the Israelites, that "it can be said that. God so changed things that the Israelites were not taking what belonged to others but rather were receiving what was rightfully theirs. Nonetheless, God could have dispensed from the precept not to steal. According to Scotus, "some things can be said to be of the natural law in two ways. Scotus says that the precepts of the first table of the Decalogue "immediately receive God for their object. Likewise, it follows that nothing else is to be worshiped as God, nor is irreverence to be done to God. And consequently, in these [precepts] God could not dispense, that someone might do what is opposed to them. This is the one practical principle that is necessarily true, because it is based on the nature of reality itself, prior to any will act that might command it. Here it should be noted that Scotus regarded the act of commanding or ordering to pertain to the will, not to the intellect as did St. But if this ought not to be called a law or a practical principle of law, it is at least a practical truth preceding every determination of the divine will. Such precepts, and such alone, pertain strictly and essentially to the natural law, and from them no one, not even God, can dispense. Scotus acknowledges that in another way "some things are said to be of natural law because they are very consonant with that law, although they do not necessarily follow from first practical principles. Scotus distinguishes, following Anselm, two "affections" or "inclinations" in the will. One is its natural inclination or "affectio commodi" toward its own perfection and fulfillment and includes a love for God as something that is good for itself. The latter must regulate and rectify the former: These affections are nothing other than the will itself, insofar as it is a naked intellective appetite, and insofar as above this it is free. Scotus teaches that the "moral goodness of an act is its fittingness, judged according to the right reason of the agent himself," and the first, generic moral specification of the act derives from its object, i. This act cannot be morally bad, because no one can love him too excessively with a love of friendship and for his own sake; and the only act evil of its kind is the act opposite to that act and with respect to the same object, that is, to hate God; this act can in no way be so circumstanced that it should become good; therefore every other act which is in respect of any other object is indifferent, and can be so circumstanced that it is either good or bad. All actions having good objects other than God himself can, in other words, be so "circumstanced" that they can become morally wicked acts; and all actions having evil objects other than hatred of God can be so circumstanced that they can become morally good acts.

### 5: Catholics everywhere should be grateful for the four cardinal's™ appeal | Catholic Herald

*A moral conscience allows us to weigh the circumstances in a given situation to determine what is the right thing to do, using our knowledge of moral absolutes to make the judgment. As an example, an absolute moral is that it is wrong to steal.*

Summary[ edit ] Veritatis splendor responds to questions of moral theology that had been raised during the postconciliar period of the Church events after the Vatican II ecumenical council of Veritatis splendor consists of three chapters: Response to moral relativism[ edit ] Veritatis splendor begins by asserting that there are indeed absolute truths accessible to all persons. Contrary to the philosophy of moral relativism , the encyclical says that moral law is universal across people in varying cultures, and is in fact rooted in the human condition. Pope John Paul teaches that no matter how separated someone is from God, "in the depths of his heart there always remains a yearning for absolute truth and a thirst to attain full knowledge of it. The true end of human freedom is growth as a mature person into how each is created by God. Merely deciding for oneself that one may do something is not at all a true substitute for determining whether something is in fact good or bad. Because God is the true author of good, it remains of critical importance to understand how the divine Law, as expressed by the authoritative magisterium of the Church, considers an issue before determining absolutely for oneself. Natural law[ edit ] The pope welcomes and supports the role of human reason in discovering and applying the natural law those aspects of the moral law that may be discovered without divine revelation. Nevertheless, because God remains the true author of moral law, he states that human reason will not properly supersede the elements of the moral law that are of divine origin"the encyclical states that this "would be the death of true freedom. The judgment of conscience[ edit ] John Paul reiterates the longstanding Catholic teaching that people are obliged to follow their conscience , and that if they do not, they are condemned by their own conscience. John Paul depicts conscience as a form of inner dialogue. However, he says, it is not merely a dialogue of a man with himself, but it is very much a dialogue between man and God. Following Bonaventure , John Paul likens conscience to a herald from God who proclaims the divine law. In opposition to how it is often represented elsewhere, John Paul says that conscience is emphatically not a replacement for the divine law. Rather, it is the process by which a person may apply the divinely revealed law to the concrete situation at hand. Veritatis splendor states that because conscience may err in its judgment, a person is obliged to do his best to inform his conscience. Hence, it remains crucial for a person to make an effort to understand what the divine law on a matter is, as expressed by the Church, and the reasons behind it. Even if a person is not condemned by his conscience for a morally wrong act, committing that act nevertheless causes damage in other ways, and if done habitually it can progressively make it harder for a person to perceive the truth. Furthermore, habitual sin enslaves us, so following a wrong judgment of conscience is in the end a step away from freedom. The "fundamental option," sin, and salvation[ edit ] The encyclical also responds to the idea of the "fundamental option. It is a question of the decision of faith, of the obedience of faith cf. He also opposes it on philosophical grounds, writing, "To separate the fundamental option from concrete kinds of behaviour means to contradict the substantial integrity or personal unity of the moral agent in his body and in his soul. The person turns away from God and loses charity. In the language of Catholic moral theology, this means that certain acts are always wrong, and that there are never circumstances in which they may be permitted if done knowingly and intentionally. Stated another way, this is a strong support for the long-held doctrine of Catholic moral theology that "the ends do not justify the means. As an example, John Paul specifically mentions the teaching of Pope Paul VI on contraception, which stipulates that although it is permissible to tolerate a lesser evil to prevent a greater one, or to promote a greater good, it is never permissible, even in the gravest of circumstances to intentionally do an evil so that good may come of it. Or in other words it is never permissible to intend directly something which contradicts a moral order. Possibility of obeying the commandments[ edit ] John Paul teaches that man can and must respect the norm of morality even in the most difficult situations:

### 6: William E. May - Wikipedia

*A renewal of moral theology has been called for for years. Books and essays and studies of all colors and kinds abound on the subject. Long before the Second Vatican Council theologians had been at pains to revitalize the moral teaching of Christianity.*

Select Page Prudential Judgment This roundtable will include posts by multiple Catholicmoraltheology bloggers. Please check back for additions to the body of the text. Recent discussions of issues like capital punishment have raised what has become a vexed point in Catholic moral theology debates in recent years: Finally, in order to serve the People of God as well as possible, in particular, by warning them of dangerous opinions which could lead to error, the Magisterium can intervene in questions under discussion which involve, in addition to solid principles, certain contingent and conjectural elements. It often only becomes possible with the passage of time to distinguish between what is necessary and what is contingent. The willingness to submit loyally to the teaching of the Magisterium on matters per se not irreformable must be the rule. It can happen, however, that a theologian may, according to the case, raise questions regarding the timeliness, the form, or even the contents of magisterial interventions. Bishops and their advisors have not always taken into immediate consideration every aspect or the entire complexity of a question. In fact, the theologian, who cannot pursue his discipline well without a certain competence in history, is aware of the filtering which occurs with the passage of time. This is not to be understood in the sense of a relativization of the tenets of the faith. The theologian knows that some judgments of the Magisterium could be justified at the time in which they were made, because while the pronouncements contained true assertions and others which were not sure, both types were inextricably connected. Only time has permitted discernment and, after deeper study, the attainment of true doctrinal progress. The US Bishops, in their guide to Faithful Citizenship offer a more detailed description of this process in politics: Sometimes morally flawed laws already exist. Prudential judgment is also needed in applying moral principles to specific policy choices in areas such as the war in Iraq, housing, health care, immigration, and others. This does not mean that all choices are equally valid, or that our guidance and that of other Church leaders is just another political opinion or policy preference among many others. The judgments and recommendations that we make as bishops on specific issues do not carry the same moral authority as statements of universal moral teachings. It seems to me we might begin by noting two important things about prudential judgments. Thus, prudential judgments are in fact moral judgments “but they are not judgments that can be made without refer to, say, circumstances. Thank you, David, for getting this conversation started. You rightly point out that prudential judgments are in fact moral judgments and that the invocation of prudence is not an excuse to disregard the teaching and authoritative statements of the Magisterium. Gaudium et Spes quite beautifully explains: Always summoning us to love good and avoid evil, the voice of conscience when necessary speaks to our heart: In fidelity to conscience, Christian are joined with the rest of humanity in the search for truth and for the genuine solution to the numerous problems which arise in the life of individuals from social relationships. First, Gaudium et Spes begins that we detect a law which calls us to obedience, a response first to the good. Envisioning the formation of conscience as the development of Christian lives in virtue, Keenan links the development of conscience with prudence and reminds the modern reader that while we are bound to follow our conscience, this is not a capitulation to moral relativism. That I must follow a judgment of conscience, which ultimately a true prudential judgment should be, assumes that I am going through a rigorous process of forming my conscience and judgments. Even still, that judgment can be wrong. Upholding both the primacy of conscience and moral truth, Cardinal Ratzinger states, No one may act against his convictions, as Saint Paul had already said Rom But the fact that the conviction a person has come to certainly binds in the moment of acting, does not signify a canonization of subjectivity. It is never wrong to follow the convictions one has arrived at “in fact, one must do so. But it can very well be wrong to have come to such askew convictions in the first place, by having stifled the protest of the anamnesis of being. The guilt lies then in a different place, much deeper “not in the present act, not in the present judgment of conscience but in the neglect of my being which made me deaf to the internal promptings of truth. All of our

judgments require a rigorous process of conscience formation in which we gather all relevant information, examine in detail the context, learn and consider the applicable Christian tradition and teachings before we can make a prudential judgment. Prudential judgment should not be understood in a modern voluntaristic way; it should be understood within this framework of the good, truth, and formation of conscience. It often appears in conservative-leaning folks who contest particular applications in areas such as economic policy and war remember Weigel on this when the current Iraq War began. This is no surprise. Yet warfare can be just though often is not, and so some such judgment is required. All this is true. Yet that does not mean the judgment is unassailable. Does anyone see a relevant difference between making prudential judgments about whether our legal and social situation permits laws against the death penalty and about whether our legal and social situation permits laws banning abortion? Another way of asking it: This is a genuine question. I want to know what people think. The example given by the bishops is laws restricting, but not banning, abortion. No such prudential judgment can be made. The prudential judgment is not about abortion, but about what is possible at the present time. In this way, it seems to me that a pro-LIFE politician could suggest that it is most urgent to craft laws that, for example, assist those with a crisis pregnancy. On the other hand, the tradition appears to argue quite unanimously that abortion, given what it is, must be prohibited by civil law. David, do you think toleration of a less-than-just law could also imply supporting something like Roe against those who would try to overturn it because one has prudentially judged that banning abortion would actually make things worse for both prenatals and women? After all, those who are arguing against the position in the CMT. To make the question more concrete: The main thought I want to add here is related to the quote from the Ecclesial Vocation of the Theologian that Dave cites above, which is also one I highlight in my post on abortion and the death penalty: The rightful understanding of prudential judgement, as I think both Dave and Meghan have emphasized, is that it be in context of the whole life of faith. The virtue of prudence, and the practice of prudential judgement, does not refer to an overarching view of an entire issue, but rather is a judgement made in relation to specific cases. Events in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries should show that states are often wrong – whether it is a totalitarian, socialist or democratic government. States often do good things – but they should not be allowed to operate in a supposed morality free zone, especially where innocent human lives hang in the balance and I am thinking here about prudential laws about war, the death penalty and economic justice. So any argument using prudential judgement needs to take into account specific cases, and be prepared to defend their argument for why the prudential action in a specific given case is the one that they advocate. One is to think about the US as a whole, as a specific case: The burden of proof will be to those who want to say that the US should use the death penalty, since the principle, based on Evangelium Vitae and the Catechism, is that the death penalty ought to be rare, if not non-existent. It is, again, concerned about innocent people being murdered at the hands of the state, even though in these instances most of the people being murdered are adults. On this, of course, the appeals system system serves to do some kind of prudential reflection. Presuming that one has already assumed that it is prudent for the US to have the death penalty at all, it is then important, in this kind of case, to allow the justice system to do its job, but here too, we would want to be very careful to help all of us in this democratic society to reflect on whether we see rightly about this. Is our prudential judgement working well?

### 7: Project MUSE - Christ, Moral Absolutes, and the Good: Recent Moral Theology

*Moral Absolutes sets forth a vigorous but careful critique of much recent work in moral theology. It is illustrated with examples from the most controversial aspects of Christian moral doctrine, and a frank account is given of the roots of the upheaval in Roman Catholic moral theology in and after the s.*

Life in Christ Catholic morality is about life: That life involves far more than simply following a set of rules. This article provides an overview of basic principles of Catholic morality. It is essential to know these principles: The Catholic Catechism starts its section on Catholic morality with St. Remember who is your head and of whose body you are a member. Never forget that you have been rescued from the power of darkness and brought into the light of the Kingdom of God. Catechism, Morality is a call to recognize our dignity as men and women who have received a free gift of new life in Christ. We must live accordingly. This is the great and first commandment. And a second is like it, You shall love your neighbor as yourself. On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets. This means that what love requires is the essence of all moral rules, all of the Ten Commandments, and all aspects of morality spoken of by the prophets and even by Christ himself. The only things needed are those things which love makes necessary. It is also important to say that love does, indeed, require many things! In fact, it takes only a few simple steps of logic to deduce the Ten Commandments and most of the rest of Catholic morality from this starting point. Those moral precepts describe the minimum that love requires. If we fall below that level, then the life of Christ cannot live within us. Again, Jesus provides the answer: A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; even as I have loved you, that you also love one another. By this all men will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another. To put it more simply: So how do we ever live up to this demand? Grace to the rescue! The demand to love without limit is very demanding. It is not you who will save yourself, it is God who saves you! If you let him, God will give you the strength and ability to do more than you 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 himself who gives us the gift of grace. He not only calls us to holiness, but he sanctifies us makes us holy and gives us the grace we need to respond to his own call. There are seven specific Gifts of the Holy Spirit. For the beginning Catholic, they are particularly important: The Holy Spirit will develop many excellent qualities in your life. These fruits are countless, but following St. Paul, the Church lists twelve specific Fruits of the Spirit. More than anything, though, the Holy Spirit gradually moves us toward the ultimate goal of virtue: They are not just a set of nice ideals: They are a radical call to live according to a new set of standards. The Beatitudes are a self-portrait of Christ. If you aspire to live in Christ, you will strive to make the Beatitudes your own. There is a lot of confusion in the Church about these basics right now. See the importance of orthodoxy for more. These are basic concepts in Catholic moral theology:

*A Critique of Revisionist Denial of Moral Absolutes The 'Preference' Principle or Principle of 'Proportionate Good' The Nature of a Human Act as a Whole or Totality.*

This article argues that there has been conflict in Roman Catholic moral theology since the s. This has overshadowed, but not prevented, ecumenical dialogue between the Roman Catholic and Anglican Communion, especially in ethics. Theologians from the Anglican tradition can help both the debate in Roman Catholic moral theology and the ecumenical impasse. The article examines the contributions of Richard Hooker, Jeremy Taylor, and Kenneth Kirk from the 17th century, in the area of fundamental moral theology. The first is that Roman Catholic moral theology has been in a state of sustained engagement, and sometimes outright conflict, on the nature of moral theology, and the place of the human agent, since the s. It is this book which was honoured by a conference at Heythrop College, London, in January 2000, both for its own sake and as a way of exploring what the future direction of Catholic theological ethics or moral theology might be. I write as an Anglican moral theologian who has long been deeply influenced by Catholic moral theology. It gives me great pleasure to be included in this collection of essays, and to reflect on the ecumenical dialogue in moral theology. The nature of theological method in ethics remains strongly disputed inside the Catholic moral community. There has been little, or almost no, discussion between the two communions on matters of gender and sexuality. What there has been is extensive discussions on social ethics, especially on the trafficking of peoples and global development. Thirdly, there are contributions which Anglican ethics can bring both to the Catholic debate, and to ecumenism, in the area of moral norms and the nature of a moral absolute. I will explore this contribution at length in this article. It is generally accepted that the publication in of the Papal encyclical *Veritatis Splendor* was designed to end the dominance of a particular style of moral theology within the Roman Catholic Church. A Papal encyclical clearly has intrinsic authority, but the question is whether it has formulated the issue correctly, and also whether it reflects the guidance of the Spirit. Joseph Selling challenged the centrality of *Veritatis Splendor* for the very understanding of the nature of moral theology. He wrote in an article in the *Heythrop Journal* in 1998: "Ever since *Veritatis Splendor* laid claim to the idea that the principle factor in determining the morality of human activity was the choice of the object of a human act, I have been intrigued by the challenge that this presents to anyone who is persuaded by the idea that human activity can only be morally evaluated after all the relevant factors have been taken into account." It is plausible because the entire tradition of the manuals of moral theology maintained that it is primarily the object of human activity, that behaviour which a person performs, that can be sufficient for determining whether or not a sin has been committed. It is a narrow view of moral discernment because, expressed in this manner, it focuses exclusively upon behaviour without any consideration of the human person as committed to a life project. Selling *Veritatis Splendor* itself is clear on the centrality of the place of the object for a proper construal of moral discernment and moral judgement: "If the object of the concrete action is not in harmony with the true good of the person, the choice of that action makes our will and ourselves morally evil, thus putting us in conflict with our ultimate end, the supreme good, God himself." The primary and decisive element for moral judgment is the object of the human act, which establishes whether it is capable of being ordered to the good and to the ultimate end, which is God. It showed how Catholic moral theology was changing, at least on the continent of Europe. Truth is defined primarily as ontological, the basic intelligibility of all things, with God as the first truth. Further, God is held to be knowable but incomprehensible, while man is understood to be a being created in order to know and love God, who finds therefore his true self in being blessed by God and giving himself to God. The main task of an ethics of truth is then to remain as absolutely open for the truth in whatever guise man encounters it, and to unconditionally follow out the known truth in action. The ethics of truth will mainly take the form of an ethics of the disposition, insisting on the formal attitude. Molinski This understanding of the relationship of the person and truth underlies the foundational shift in 20th century Catholic theology, from the s onwards. It can be analysed into its different parts. How does one measure moral truth? What is meant by the right realisation of the human person? How is this call

related to becoming a member of the church that is the community of those who are disciples of Jesus Christ? The questions mentioned above were to preoccupy those who became known as the revisionist moral theologians, and who were most prominent in the 1970s. In turn these theologians mentored others, such as James Keenan. The development of moral theology in this direction also provoked a strong reaction, especially from traditional Thomists. The debate between the followers of what came to be known as the revisionist school, or those who defined themselves as creating an autonomous ethics, and their critics dominated the second half of the 20th century within Catholic moral theology. So, let me move to the second point of this article. One might have thought that ethics, or moral theology, would have been on the agenda for two reasons. First, as I have mentioned, there was a fundamental change in the nature of Catholic moral theology in the 1970s. Well before the issues of gender or of sexuality, which tended to rise to prominence in the 1970s and 80s, there was no agreement between the two communions on the nature of marriage, divorce, or most controversially, contraception within marriage. Its publication was preceded by *Veritatis Splendor*, which completely overshadowed it. This was for two reasons. Secondly, *Veritatis Splendor* was directly aimed at the long-running dispute between revisionist moral theologians and their critics within the Roman Catholic Church. *Life in Christ* does discuss absolute moral norms: For example, a notable feature of established Roman Catholic moral teaching is its emphasis on the absoluteness of some demands of the moral law and the existence of certain prohibitions to which there are no exceptions. In these instances, what is prohibited is intrinsically disordered and therefore objectively wrong. Anglicans, on the other hand, while acknowledging the same ultimate values, are not persuaded that the laws as we apprehend them are necessarily absolute. In certain circumstances, they would argue, it might be right to incorporate contextual and pastoral considerations in the formulation of a moral law, on the grounds that fundamental moral values are better served if the law sometimes takes into account certain contingencies of nature and history and certain disorders of the human condition. *Veritatis Splendor* states clearly: However, the General Synod of the Church of England did finally debate it in 1991. There was an interesting contribution to the debate by the Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, under his own name which is highly unusual for a Synod debate, which sets out some fairly far-reaching criticisms of *Life in Christ*, but also sees it as a document which could be built on. In particular, Rowan Williams looks back to the Anglican, and Protestant, tradition of the 16th and 17th century, beginning with Richard Hooker, but also extending into the 18th century, with Joseph Butler. I will come back to this. It may well be that *Life in Christ* argued its case better than Archbishop Rowan had appreciated. It is clear that there are some actions which are always wrong for any human being let alone a Christian to commit, but the issue is how that moral judgement on the absolute wrongness of an action is formulated. I will return to this point in the final part of this article. One is the relationship of the local and universal church. The other is to look again at moral decision-making, within an ecclesial context. In the preparatory document of 1991, it drew specific attention to the disagreements within the Anglican Communion. The challenge was therefore issued as to whether there could be an agreement about how Anglican methodology worked in ethics, and whether the Roman Catholic members of ARCIC III could find a way of common ground between that position and their own. This article is, of course, only my personal opinion, and does not commit the Commission in any way. Now, let me move to the third point of this article. It was also, and this is relevant to this article, a work on moral theology, where he wrote extensively on the virtues which Christ embodied, and which Christians should follow. The consideration of moral absolutes by the 16th century Anglican theologian Richard Hooker is also instructive here. Hooker has his own conception of how human beings are able to reason, desire, and imagine. Hooker had a strong commitment to free will both in his discussion of the relationship of will and reason in his philosophy of mind, and in his discussion of sin and wrong action in his philosophy of action. Voak, p. Liberty of spontaneity concerns human wanting. We are free when we act only if we act because we wish to act in this way. That is compatible with determinism: God, who is perfect goodness, attracts human action. So we are free in our action, even if we may rebel against this attraction of desire. That in essence is the argument of Aquinas. The will for Aquinas was a passive power, and it is the intellect which compares possibilities. Will is therefore a rational appetite or desire in Aquinas. Hooker, however, is concerned first with the freedom of choice, before he relates will and reason. This is a voluntarist, or in this case Scotist,

understanding of the will as freedom of choice. It involves a commitment to liberty of indifference. We are free only if it is in our power not to do it. Hooker argued that the will is a faculty of intellectual desire and concentrates in Book 1, chapter 7 of the *Laws* on the freedom of this desire. Hooker begins his argument by discussing the practical reason, then moves on to desire, or the goodness which we conceive is best for us, and then finally asserts the complete freedom of this desire. Desire assumes that one thing is to be preferred before another, and since willing and choice are both acts of desire, then they are identical. The object of desire is that good which is apprehended by reason. Hooker thus has a libertarian definition of will, and contrasts humanity with the action of fire, which has no choice in its actions. Like Aquinas, Hooker felt that the study of scripture was something which required careful diligence and much training, but when interpreted appropriately could yield clear and normative guidance. However, this is not premised on the idea of an intrinsically evil act, but because of the absolute nature of the end chosen, which in Genesis 39 is the desire of one person to commit adultery with another. No doubt issues of power, control, and ethnic identity were also involved. For example, Joseph was a Hebrew servant. Hooker therefore accepts that there are moral absolutes, but and this is important he does not frame this discussion in terms of absolute moral law. Two points should be noted. First, a moral judgement must be made for there to be moral absolutes. Actions neither required nor forbidden by the moral law are called morally indifferent. That gives a freedom to consider the possibility of change in matters of order and polity. However, the conscience is always guided by the voice of the Church. Hooker is emphatically not a proto-liberal. Hooker is a conservative, and in most things he feels that longevity carries the benefit of presumption. But just as sins of malice can be caused by vicious customs, especially if they are long established, so too can customs become harmful, even if they were good when established. The crucial question is whether that law should remain in force. Some Jewish ceremonial laws were abolished by the priesthood of Christ; others may need to be changed. So Hooker himself displays his paradox. Yet many things he hath that have been changed and that for the better. That which succeeds as better now when change is required had been worse when that which now is changed was instituted.

### 9: Moral Absolutes, Matthew 25, and the "Core Constraint of Ethics" | Catholic Moral Theology

*Okay, so Catholic morality does have an actual moral code that you need to know! But just remember: this moral code doesn't represent the summit of Catholic morality. It is a description of the most basic requirements of the command to love God and love neighbor.*

Early life[ edit ] May was born the second of three children of Robert W. May and Katherine A. Armstrong on May 27, in St. His father was a Presbyterian who later converted to Catholicism , but May was raised a Catholic by his mother. He felt a call to the priesthood while in the fourth grade, and especially wanted to become a missionary to China. When old enough, he entered the seminary and was sent to study philosophy followed by theology at The Catholic University of America. He was tonsured and received the minor orders of porter and acolyte. However, in , because of a serious medical condition diagnosed as petit mal epilepsy , he took some time off from seminary studies to teach in DeAndreis High School in north St. After teaching for a year, he took his supposed epileptic condition as a sign from God that he should pursue another vocation. Although he had been told that he had petit mal epilepsy, and took medication and suffered seizures at times, he discovered in the late s that the problem was not epilepsy, but was psychological in nature, and he experienced no seizures after He married Patricia Ann Keck on October 4, Together they raised seven children and now have many grandchildren. Because of his educational foundation, he found work as a book editor with various publishers from to , until his teaching career began in He was also a member of the International Theological Commission from Selected Books[ edit ] Catholic Sexual Ethics: Our Sunday Visitor, Our Sunday Visitor Press Our Sunday Visitor Press, Franciscan Herald Press, Theology of the Body in Context: Genesis and Growth, Boston: Christ in Contemporary Thought, Dayton: An Invitation to Christian Ethics, Dayton: Human Existence, Medicine, and Ethics: Reflections on Human Life, Chicago: Sex, Marriage, and Chastity: Christendom College Press, Catholic Tradition, Current Trends, and the Truth. Marquette University Press,

The Vanishing Smuggler Interior design studio book Curbside Consultation of the ACL Mutual Funds, in Crisis? TOEFL Exam Success in Only 6 Steps (Skill Builders (Learningexpress)) Motorola talkabout t5100 manual Waters of Life from Conecuh Ridge From Shadows to Shekinah For Whom the Clock The giggle-wrecker Goal-focused interviewing A Fragile Mask (Mills Boon) Russia and Europe : reaching agreements, digging trenches Kjell Engelbrekt and Bertil Nygren Out of the saltbox Address delivered at the Birmingham and Midland Institute on the 27th September 1869 by Charles Dickens,E A Newspapermans Newspaperman By way of counterclaim The Church of England, where is it going? Introduction: the hidden side of everything Coping with asthma Flowering and Foliage House Plants Winning before trial: how to prepare cases for the best settlement or trial result Timber supply projections for the State of Idaho Learning to use your voice : recovering from the negative messages of girlhood Computability: Computable Functions, Logic, and the Foundations of Mathematics, with Computability Children of France, 1914-1940 Kalitan, Our Little Alaskan Cousin (Dodo Press) The washington post Data interpretation book for cat A Personal Financial Planning Decision Guide Christians and a land called holy International development issues and challenges kingsbury Oliver Newberry Chaffee, 1881-1944 Education, repression liberation All I Want for Christmas is a Vampire Proceedings of the Archibald MacLeish Symposium, May 7-8, 1982 Roles of occupational therapists in continuity of care Oasis wonderwall piano sheet Heroines of the crusades. The Red Book Eat Well In Wales