



The Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Washington

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Civil Dialogue Training Forum: Catechetical Resources

Thank you for participating in the Civil Dialogue Training Forum! Our program aims to educate young people in civil dialogue, introducing you to new ways of addressing challenging Church teachings through open conversation. In particular, we hope that you will gain experience in dialogue with one another, even when you might disagree about these controversial topics. Because we are working with Catholic teachings, we will also need to ensure that we are all starting from the same place, and that each of us is equipped with the tools we need to interpret Church teaching.

Prior to each of these conversations, please review the required resources. You may also consider reading the optional sources if you find a topic particularly challenging. These optional sources may help to clarify certain topics because they provide more contextual information.

After you have reviewed these resources, please take some time to pray about your own reaction to these teachings. Are they particularly challenging to you? Do you find yourself disagreeing with one or more points? Think back to your own experience and try to imagine where those feelings might be coming from.

It might be helpful to pray an **Examination of Conscience**. Here is a sample Examen from the USCCB's [Civilize It](#) program.

Speaking Up for Human Dignity: Sample Catechetical Resources

Option 1: Introduction to Catholic Social Teaching

- Please review this Catholic Social Teaching Resource from [Catholic Relief Services](#)
- Please watch this short video overview of the principle of [Human Life and Dignity](#)

Option 2: Catholic Teaching on Human Life and Dignity

- Please review the following video from Dr. Kristin Collier, MD. This video was created by the McGrath Institute for Church Life and describes the relationship between mother and child during fetal development: [“5 Things You Need to Know About Fetal Development and Pregnancy”](#)
- Please review the following article from Cardinal Dolan, [“The Dignity of a Human Person: A Catholic Doctrine.”](#) This article offers strong insights on Catholic teaching and the ways that each of us is called to action to defend the dignity of the most vulnerable.
- **Additional Resource:** [“Human Dignity was a Rarity Before Christianity”](#) (David Bentley Hart)
- **Additional Reading:** [Evangelium Vitae: The Gospel of Life](#) – If you are interested in learning more about the Church’s teaching on human life and dignity, you might consider reading Pope John Paul II’s encyclical. The Introduction and Chapter 1 offer a comprehensive overview of this topic.

Option 3: Advocating for Life and Dignity

- The March for Life is one of the most important anti-abortion events of the year, and many of you will join this event in-person in 2022! Here is a short video from Scott Boyle of the McGrath Institute on [5 Things You Need to Know Before the March for Life](#).
- Rehumanize International is an organization that is dedicated to anti-abortion initiatives and a consistent life ethic. The following articles offer useful advice on the many ways we can advocate for human life and dignity: [Everyday Advocacy](#), [Four Ways to Support Pregnant and Parenting Students](#), [7 Ways to Support Life After the Virtual March for Life](#). Please read all three articles and reflect on at least one concrete way that you can stand up for human life and dignity in your own life.