

Module 1 – Religion and Medical Ethics

Topic	Roman Catholic View	Protestant View	Key Quotes
Sanctity of Life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Talking about the sanctity of life is saying that life is special and holy Christians believe that human life is different from different kinds of life, because people share something of the nature of God – this is partly because in Genesis, God created man and then breathes life into him (hence Christians believe humans have souls while animals don't) Many Christians believe that God has given them life, so we have a responsibility to protect that life by taking care of themselves 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'So God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him; male and female he created them.' – Genesis 1: 27
Abortion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pro-life Life begins at conception (when the sperm meets the egg), so an abortion is seen as murder The only time when an abortion may be performed is if the mother's life is in danger by carrying the foetus Natural law – the purpose of sex is to have a baby, so you shouldn't go against what God has intended 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pro-choice Protestants aren't very keen on abortion, but they believe that people should have the option if the life of the mother is in danger, if the woman was raped or if the baby is likely to be severely handicapped Agape – an abortion might be the most loving thing to do to make sure that everyone is kept safe and happy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'You shall not murder' – Exodus 20: 13 'For you created my inmost being; you knit me together in my mother's womb.' – Psalm 139: 13 'Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, before you were born I set you apart.' – Jeremiah 1: 5
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Abortion is the artificial ending of a pregnancy Abortion has been legal in the UK since 1967, and can be performed up to 24 weeks of pregnancy 		
Fertility Treatment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Natural law – if someone can't have a baby then it's because God doesn't want them to have a baby If an egg or sperm donor is used then there is a question about adultery, which is a sin One of the biggest problems for Catholics is that more than one embryo is fertilised in IVF, and not all of the successful embryos are used – this means that some are 'killed' Catholics will allow couples to seek medical advice on general health which might affect fertility, but they won't allow any operations etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agape – God wants people to be happy, and sometimes having a baby is the way to allow this to happen Fertility treatment will bring about a new life, which is what God wants The Bible doesn't mention fertility treatment because it didn't exist when the Bible was written, but Jesus was a healer and this is a form of healing Protestants will allow couples to have IVF, using egg or sperm donors and surrogate wombs if necessary, but they won't allow cloning or genetic engineering as this is seen as 'playing God' 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Be fruitful and increase in number.' – Genesis 1: 28a 'You shall not murder' – Exodus 20:13 'Hannah had no children... because the Lord had closed her womb.' – 1 Samuel 1: 2, 6
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fertility treatment is medical treatment given to a couple who want to have a baby but are unable to do so naturally Inferility (inability to conceive) can be due to the man or woman, or both, and can be for natural and unnatural reasons The best known form of fertility treatment is IVF (in-vitro fertilisation) which can but doesn't have to involve sperm or egg donation/surrogacy 		
Euthanasia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pro-life Sanctity of life says that we do not have the power to make the decision about when life should end Natural law – everything exists and happens because God wants it to, so if someone is ill or in pain then it is part of God's plan for that person and we shouldn't interfere 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pro-choice Agape – God wants people to be happy and to treat others the way we would want to be treated, so everyone should have the option of euthanasia 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'You shall not murder' – Exodus 20: 13 '...all the days ordained for me were written in your book before one of them came to be.' – Psalm 139: 16 'Surely you know that you are God's temple where the Spirit of God lives. If anyone destroys God's temple, God will destroy him; for God's temple is sacred, and you are that temple.' – 1 Corinthians 3: 16-17
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Euthanasia means 'good death' or 'mercy killing', and it can also be known as 'assisted suicide'; it can be voluntary or involuntary Euthanasia is illegal in this country Its purpose is to end someone's life to stop them from suffering from an illness or disability – it's about the quality of life for someone There is a question over where euthanasia would lead – could someone be helped to commit suicide due to depression by 'tricking' doctors? What if a patient's family makes the wrong decision? There's always the option that a cure might be developed. Doctors have signed the Hippocratic Oath, where they promise to save life, not end it – euthanasia contradicts this 		
Hospices	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hospices are nursing homes for dying people so they can be looked after well, including receiving counselling and sometimes space for family to stay with them if necessary (the hospice movement was started by a Christian called Cicely Saunders) Hospices can also be visited for 'respite care' so that the people looking after a patient can have a break All Christians will prefer a hospice to euthanasia 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Love your neighbour as yourself' – Mark 12: 31
Animal Testing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Humans are superior to animals and are more important – it's better to test on animals than on humans Animal testing should be relevant and useful St. Francis said that animals are God's children, too, and should be looked after 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Human beings have both an affinity with and an obligation to animals.' The Anglican Church understand that animal experimentation is an important method of testing drugs but we have a responsibility to use them only when the outcome is to relieve human suffering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'The Lord God took man and put him in the Garden of Eden to work it and take care of it.' – Genesis 2: 15 'The world is the Lord's and everything in it, the world, and all
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Animal testing is when people use animals to advance scientific knowledge, test medicines or practice genetic engineering, it can also be for 		

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