

Online Catechism Lesson 11: Against suicide and euthanasia

By Richard Joseph Michael Ibranyi

1. It is a mortal sin to commit suicide. Suicide is a man taking his own life because of despair or hatred of his life or to escape pain and suffering.
2. It is not suicide to take one's life to guard a secret or to protect others in war or to die a noble death rather than be taken prisoner. For example,

If because of the imminent danger of torture one is in great danger of revealing an important secret that would greatly harm his cause, he can take his life and does not commit suicide.

It is not suicide when a soldier covers a grenade or other bomb with his body to protect his fellow soldiers: *"And Eleazar the son of Saura saw one of the beasts harnessed with the king's harness; and it was higher than the other beasts, and it seemed to him that the king was on it. And he exposed himself to deliver his people and to get himself an everlasting name. And he ran up to it boldly in the midst of the legion, killing on the right hand, and on the left, and they fell by him on this side and that side. And he went between the feet of the elephant and put himself under it and slew it and it fell to the ground upon him, and he died there."* (1 Mac. 6:43-46)

And it is not suicide to take one's life to avoid being taken prisoner, not to evade pain and suffering but to die a noble death rather than fall into the hands of a greatly hated enemy: *"Now Razias, one of the ancients of Jerusalem, was accused to Nicanor, a man that was a lover of the city and of good report, who for his affection was called the father of the Jews. This man, for a long time, had held fast his purpose of keeping himself pure in the Jews' religion and was ready to expose his body and life that he might persevere therein. So Nicanor being willing to declare the hatred that he bore the Jews sent five hundred soldiers to take him. For he thought by insnaring him to hurt the Jews very much. Now as the multitude sought to rush into his house, and to break open the door and to set fire to it when he was ready to be taken, he struck himself with his sword, choosing to die nobly rather than to fall into the hands of the wicked... And standing upon a steep rock, when he was now almost without blood, grasping his bowels with both hands, he cast them upon the throng, calling upon the Lord of life and spirit to restore these to him again; and so he departed this life."* (2 Mac. 14:37-46)

3. Euthanasia is a mortal sin. Euthanasia is the intentional ending of a human life in order to end pain and suffering. The man who commits the act and all who assist in any way are guilty of murder and the man who dies is guilty of suicide if he consents to the act. And anyone who believes in or defends or supports euthanasia is guilty of mortal sin.
4. It is not euthanasia to refuse extraordinary medical care to save a man's life. Men are bound by the natural law to use the ordinary means to save other men, such as by giving them food, water, shelter, and ordinary medical care. But they are not bound by the natural law to try to save lives by extraordinary medical care or by means that threaten the salvation of souls.

Ordinary medical care depends upon what is available and financially possible. Hence extraordinary medical care for a poor person is ordinary medical care for a rich person. Medical care that could threaten the salvation of souls is when Catholics must stay in non-Catholic hospitals for an extended period of time or when Catholics must deny the faith in order to get food, water, shelter, or any kind of medical care. Therefore, if men do not want to go to a hospital because they cannot afford it or it would cause bankruptcy or Catholics do not want to stay for an extended period of time in non-Catholic hospitals for fear of falling into mortal sin, they do not commit sin by staying home and using ordinary medical care even if it

means they must die whereas they would have lived if they stayed in the hospital. And it is not a sin to remove a man from life support if he is brain dead or if he can no longer afford it or the support could be used for another who has a better hope of saving his life or the man is a Catholic whose soul is in danger because of the evil influence of the non-Catholics that surround him.

For the glory of God; in honor of the Blessed Virgin Mary, St. Michael, St. Joseph, Ss. Joachim and Anne, St. John the Baptist, the other angels and saints; and for the salvation of men

Original version: 11/2021; Current version: 11/2021

Mary's Little Remnant

302 East Joffre St.

Truth or Consequences, New Mexico 87901-2878, USA

Website: www.JohnTheBaptist.us