

LIFE Meeting

Human Dignity

April 11, 2018

1. Opening Prayer

Delaney

2. Large Group:

Jamie

3. Small Group 1: Womb

4. Small Group 2: To

5. Small Group 3: Tomb

6. Closing Prayer

Jamie

- **Next Meeting: May 11th**
- **Planning Meeting: April 25th**
 - **Sophie, Alex, Delaney, Maggie H.**

Opening Prayer

You're Not Alone by Owl City

<https://youtu.be/DavJ9UKS2ps>

Some days I barely hold on
When life drags me down
I wanna let go
But when my spirit is weak
You come to my aid
And strengthen my soul
I'm lost without You
I'll never doubt You
Your grace is beyond compare, ooh
And though when it rains, it pours
You know all I have is Yours
You smile when you hear my prayer
You rescued me and I believe
That God is love and He is all I need
From this day forth for all eternity
I'll never wander on my own
For I am Yours until you call me home
I close my eyes and I can hear You say
You're not alone!
You're not alone!
Some days I just can't go on
I stumble and fall
And I hang my head
But You reach out for my hand
And You lift me up
Again and again
Oh, yes, You do
I'm lost without You
I'll never doubt You
Your grace is beyond compare, ooh
And though when it rains, it pours
You know all I have is Yours
You smile when you hear my prayer
You rescued me and I believe
That God is love and He is all I need
From this day forth for all eternity
I'll never wander on my own
For I am Yours until you call me home
I close my eyes and I can hear You say
You're not alone!
You're not alone!
In the face of my depravity
For God so loved the world He died for me,
yeah
My fire burns 'til He returns

And takes me home beyond the galaxy,
yeah
You rescued me and I believe
That God is love and He is all I need
From this day forth for all eternity (All
eternity)
I'll never wander on my own
For I am Yours until you call me home
I close my eyes and I can hear You say
You're not alone!
You're not alone!
You're not, you're not alone
Never alone

You're not alone. Today's meeting is about human dignity which centers around the word respect. Respecting oneself and respecting others. Today we will talk about a variety of topics ranging from abortion to the death penalty, euthanasia, and all in between. I chose this song because I think all of Owl City's lyrics tell a good story and this one in particular shows that when dealing with severe matters and listening to others opinions on such, you are not alone, especially when you might feel you have no other choice with your life. God is here to rescue you and face your troubles with you. As we talk about some heavy opinionated topics, realize that through every matter in life God is the center of it. He gave humans free will and that means we can think and live according to our own hearts. Listen closely to others tonight and show respect to opinions that may differ from yours. Human dignity is focusing on all equality in life, not just on being pro-life etc. Open your hearts to respect and kindness tonight. As your people let us joyfully proclaim; May the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary, Amen.

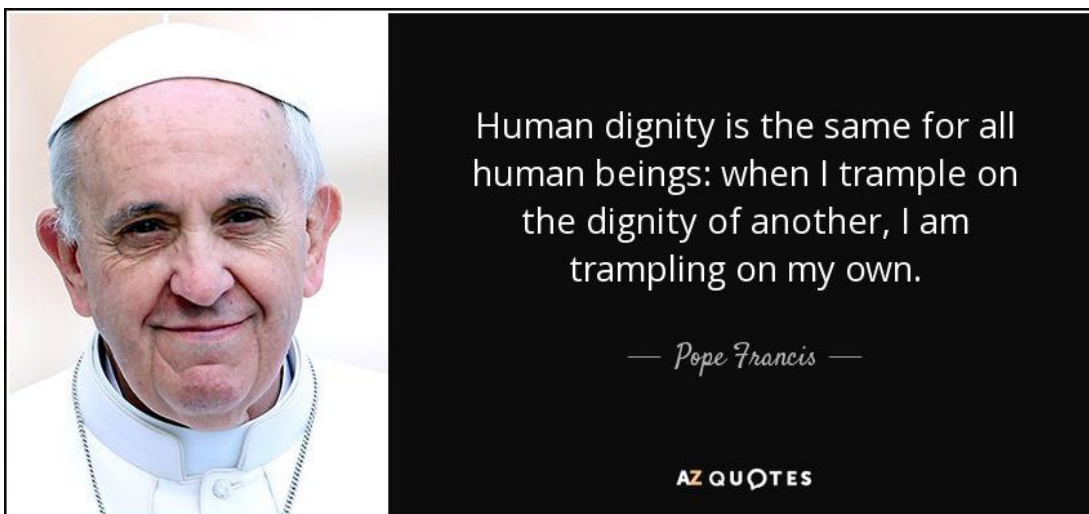
Agree/Disagree Game

I will read the following statements and you will need to decide if you agree or disagree with each statement. You will then collaborate with everyone on your side and state why you feel that way.

- Pro-life only deals with abortion
- Abortion is acceptable if the woman has been raped
- Euthanasia is allowed when the person is terminally ill
- Certain types of people are better than others
- People should be treated equally in the workplace
- Adoption is a better choice than abortion
- People should be able to live out their full life, no matter the circumstances
- the death penalty is ok only for someone who has killed many people
- People who make more money than others are better than people who make less
- Abortion is not considered murder since the child can't think for themselves
- Elderly people are less capable of performing tasks in society
- People with disabilities are a nuisance to the world
- Immigration is not a pro-life issue

Transition to Small Group

Tonight we are looking at all aspects of human dignity: from womb to tomb. Many times when we talk about pro-life issues, people get very passionate about a particular issue but they don't carry that pro-life attitude across the board. If we are truly pro-life, we would then be concerned with human dignity for all: from womb to tomb. Pope Francis has said, "All life has inestimable value even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor, are masterpieces of God's creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect." Let us keep his words in mind as we go throughout this meeting tonight.



Small Group 1: Womb

- Small Group Opening Prayer:
Genesis 1: 26-28 "Then God said: Let us make human beings in our image, after our likeness. Let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the tame animals, all the wild animals, and all the creatures that crawl on the earth. God created mankind in his image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them. God blessed them and God said to them: Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it." God wants us to respect all human life. He created all of us uniquely and exactly how he wanted. Help us be mindful of others and their opinions and as your people let us joyfully proclaim. May the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit be glorified in all places through the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Amen.
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kAk0Ag-tfxE>
 - Watch video
- <https://www.cbsnews.com/news/down-syndrome-iceland/>
 - Next we are going to read a story on "how Iceland is getting rid of down syndrome." Listen carefully to their solution.

With the rise of prenatal screening tests across Europe and the United States, the number of babies born with Down syndrome has significantly decreased, but few countries have come as close to eradicating Down syndrome births as Iceland. Since prenatal screening tests were introduced in Iceland in the early 2000s, close to 100 percent of women who received a positive test for Down syndrome terminated their pregnancy.

While the tests are optional, the government states that all expectant mothers must be informed about availability of screening tests, which reveal the likelihood of a child being born with Down syndrome. Around 80 to 85 percent of pregnant women choose to take the prenatal screening test. Using an ultrasound, blood test and the mother's age, the test, called the Combination Test, determines whether the fetus will have a chromosome abnormality, the most common of which results in Down syndrome.

Other countries aren't lagging too far behind in Down syndrome termination rates. According to the most recent data available, the United States has an estimated termination rate for Down syndrome of 67%, France is at 77%, and Denmark is at 98%. The law in Iceland permits abortion after 16 weeks if the fetus has a deformity -- and Down syndrome is included in this category.

With a population of around 330,000, Iceland has on average just one or two children born with Down syndrome per year compared to the U.S. with about 6,000 babies with Down syndrome born each year.

When Thordis Ingadottir was pregnant with her third child at the age of 40, she took the screening test. The results showed her chances of having a child with Down syndrome were very slim, odds of 1 in 1,600. However, the screening test is only 85% accurate. That year, in

2009, three babies were born with Down syndrome in Iceland, including Thordis's daughter Agusta, who is now 7.

According to Ingadottir, three babies born with Down syndrome is "quite more than usual. Normally there are two, in the last few years." Since the birth of her daughter, Ingadottir has become an activist for the rights of people with Down syndrome.

Over at Landspítali University Hospital, Helga Sol Olafsdottir counsels women who have a pregnancy with a chromosomal abnormality. They speak to her when deciding whether to continue or end their pregnancies. Olafsdottir tells women who are wrestling with the decision or feelings of guilt: "This is your life — you have the right to choose how your life will look like." She showed Quijano a prayer card inscribed with the date and tiny footprints of a fetus that was terminated.

Quijano noted, "In America, I think some people would be confused about people calling this 'our child,' saying a prayer or saying goodbye or having a priest come in -- because to them abortion is murder."

Olafsdottir responded, "We don't look at abortion as a murder. We look at it as a thing that we ended. We ended a possible life that may have had a huge complication... preventing suffering for the child and for the family. And I think that is more right than seeing it as a murder -- that's so black and white. Life isn't black and white. Life is grey."

- Questions:
 1. When do you think life starts?
 2. In the video, what touched you the most?
 3. Did the video give you a different perspective on the growth of a baby?
 4. In the article, do you think Iceland has a true solution? Why?
 5. The article said that the screening tests are only 85% accurate. Do you think mothers should terminate their pregnancy still with the chance they could be terminating a perfectly normal baby?
 6. Do you agree that the U.S. sees "life as black and white" opposed to Iceland seeing "life as grey"?
- Short transition
 - Now that we have explored human dignity "in the womb," we are going to move on to the "to" room of our "womb to tomb" night. You will be moving to _____ room and will be discussing equality.

Small Group 2: "To"

Skit:

1st Scenario

Freshman- *Walks through senior hallway and drops books*

senior:*steps around the books and laughs at them*

2nd scenario

Freshman - *drops books in hallway*

Senior -"do you need some help?" *helps pick up books and shows them the way*

Have them pair up and develop some skits that show people value of human dignity and people not valuing human dignity.

Discussion Questions:

1. How did these skits help you have a better understanding of respect and equality?
2. Do you think there are people in the world who don't deserve to be treated equally?
3. What are other scenarios you can think of that don't receive the respect they deserve?
 - Ex. War Veterans
 - Abusive relationships/abused animals
 - Lower class jobs
4. What are ways you can at show respect just at Gross? Community?
5. How does the bible verse "Love your neighbor as you love yourself" apply to this?

Transition: Now we are going to the "Tomb" room to talk about matters involving the end of your life, and how human dignity plays a role in it.

Small group 3: Tomb- death penalty

- Death Penalty- Reading about person on death row who was supposed to be on death row but ended living a good life
 - <https://deathpenaltyinfo.org/articles/the-story-death-row-inmate-who-wanted-die>

A commuted sentence, and a life reborn

By CAROL MARIN | Sun-Times columnist | cmarin@suntimes.com

Ten days ago, I took a trip I wouldn't have predicted. This is a story about a near-execution, a graduation and a decision by former Gov. Jim Edgar that has delivered unexpected consequences.

It's a story about rising up and reaching down.

In January 1996, Guin Garcia, an inmate on Death Row at Dwight Correctional Center in Downstate Illinois, was on the verge of execution.

Months earlier, Garcia, a 36-year-old convicted double murderer, had dropped her court appeals, said she was done "begging for her life" and put the wheels in motion for her death by lethal injection. It would mark the first execution of a woman in the U.S. in two decades. It became an international story.

Garcia's biography wasn't pretty. At age 2, she saw her mother jump out a window and die.

Her father split. She was reared by grandparents and an uncle. The uncle began raping her when she was 7, giving her alcohol to calm her and shut her up. Family members confirm the grandmother knew but did nothing.

By 16, she was an alcoholic and a prostitute. By 17, she was married and pregnant.

Her baby, Sara, was not yet 1 when she suffocated her with a plastic dry cleaning bag rather than face the prospect of DCFS taking Sara away to live with the grandmother and the pedophile uncle.

She confessed, went to prison for 10 years, married one of her tricks, an older man named George Garcia, who once, according to Supreme Court records, genitally mutilated her with a broken bottle.

Drunk one night, she shot and killed George. Her sorrow over Sara is something Guin Garcia lives with every day. She is not sorry about George.

Fourteen hours before her scheduled execution in 1996, Gov. Edgar, who had signed off on the executions of four men, suddenly stopped the wheels from turning on this one. For a Republican who supported the death penalty, it was not an easy decision. Edgar commuted her sentence to natural life.

Last week, I went back to the prison at Dwight. With a 3.95 "A" average, Garcia was graduating magna cum laude from Lake Land College.

Dressed in caps and gowns, marching to "Pomp and Circumstance," 57 other women received GEDs and certificates in computer technology, commercial cooking, dog training and business management.

Friends and family filled the prison gym. Small children were in their Sunday best, waving to their mothers. There aren't many happy days in prison, said Warden Mary Sigler. This was one.

As one of the inmates rose to claim her diploma, a young man in a back row proudly cried out, "That's my Mom!"

Garcia was last to be called up, the only one that day to accept a college degree, an associate in liberal studies.

You might be asking, what's the point? Why waste tax dollars on a lifer? There's an answer.

It's what Pulitzer Prize-winning author Anna Quindlen calls "Rising up, reaching down."

Graduates I talked to that day, including one who is 28 and has been locked up since she was 15, told me the reason she earned her GED last year and got a certificate in professional dog grooming this year was that Garcia, whom younger inmates call "Granny," demanded that she straighten up and fly right.

Garcia's quest for education helped motivate hers.

That young woman -- a slight, pretty African American -- will get out in two years better prepared to go forward because Guin Garcia, in life's depths, somehow found it in herself to rise up and reach down.

Today, Garcia is 49, with no illusions about getting out. And yet, thanks to a decision by a pro-death penalty governor to spare one life, new life has been given.

Rise up. Reach down. It can happen anywhere.

Questions:

1. What did you think was going to happen from the beginning of this story?
2. How do you feel about the end of this story?
3. Do you think it's right to have the death penalty?
4. Do you think God wants the death penalty/ what role do you think God plays in all of this?
5. What does someone have to do to deserve the death penalty?
6. How do you feel about people in the past who were put to death but were innocent? Talk about Jesus as well with this question.
7. When is the death penalty okay? When is it not okay?
8. Switch: Does everyone know what euthanasia is?

Euthanasia : the painless killing of a patient suffering from an incurable and painful disease or in an irreversible coma. The practice is illegal in most countries.

9. Have you ever known someone only kept alive by machines? How did that make you feel? If you haven't how do you think you would feel?
10. Who's job is it to decide if someone should be killed or not? (doctor or ?)
11. How long should someone be kept alive before you decide if he/she should be taken over?
12. Are humans playing God when we keep people alive on machines or use euthanasia?
13. Some older people/ people with suicidal thoughts have been allowed to use euthanasia to end their life is this wrong?
14. What circumstances is it okay?
15. What circumstances is it not okay?

- Sister Helen video if there is time
 - <https://www.sisterhelen.org/>
 - <https://www.sisterhelen.org/audiovideo/>
 - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w_WG_Km-DIE (documentary about sister Helen and watching people die at executions)

Small group closing prayer:

In the name of the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Revelation 14:13 says, "Then I heard a voice from heaven say, "write this : blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on." "Yes," says the Spirit, they will rest from their labor , for their deeds will follow them" . Dear God, help us protect the lives of all humans and guide all souls to heaven. Help us to see what your will is. Everyone is equal and we should all respect those around us. Dear God, thank you for the life you've given us all we take for granted.

Amen.

Closing Prayer

Speak Life- Toby Mac

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7rK6O0YtBRY>

Some days life feels perfect
Other days, it just ain't workin'
The good, the bad, the right, the wrong
And everything in between
Yo it's crazy, amazing
We can turn our heart through the words
we say

Mountains crumble with every syllable
Hope can live or die

So speak life, speak life

To the deadest darkest night

Speak life, speak life

**When the sun won't shine and you don't
know why**

Look into the eyes of the broken hearted

**Watch them come alive as soon as you
speak hope**

You speak love, you speak

You speak life, oh oh oh oh oh

You speak life, oh oh oh oh oh

Some days the tongue gets twisted
Other day my thoughts just fall apart
I do, I don't, I will, I won't
It's like I'm drowning in the deep
Well, it's crazy to imagine
Words from my lips as the arms of
compassion
Mountains crumble with every syllable
Hope can live or die

When the sun won't shine and you don't
know why

Lift your head a little higher
Spread the love like fire
Hope will fall like rain
When you speak life with the words you

say
Raise your thoughts a little higher
Use your words to inspire
Joy will fall like rain when you speak life
with the things you say
Lift your head a little higher
Spread the love like fire
Hope will fall like rain
When you speak life with the words you
say

The joy in life and what makes it memorable is having ups and downs. God makes life hard for people sometimes to create challenges that make us stronger people. The whole point of life is to continue to live from womb to tomb. When God puts challenges in our life, we are not supposed to take the easy way. For example, when God puts challenges in the beginning of life, we shall choose to power through instead of taking the "easy way" and ending life before it gets too complicated. Throughout life, God puts varieties of people in the world to create uniqueness and diversity. We should not judge different groups of people because we were all created by God and discriminating against God is wrong. And at the end of life no matter how hard it gets or what hardships people throw at people towards the end stages of their life, we should allow them to live out their life as God has plans. We must remember to respect God's life and God's plan from womb to Tomb.