Moral Maze Handbook

RME Year 2
(NOCN General Religious Education level 2)
LESSON 1 : MORAL CHOICES

Introduction

In your second year at St. Dominic’s you will continue to follow a course in Religious & Moral Education. This qualification is accredited by the National Open College Network and each student that successfully passes the course will receive an NOCN certificate. This is a nationally recognised qualification which demonstrates that you have successfully completed a course in Religious & Moral Education. To pass the course you need to attend regularly, participate in discussion and group work and complete the written elements of the Course Handbooks. There are three Handbooks covering the topics How to be Happy, Searching for God and The Moral Maze.

Lesson Objectives:

• To get to know each other and complete the RME Individual Learning Plan.
• To consider our responses to a variety of moral choices.
• To consider making changes in our personal behaviour in order to embrace a higher sense of personal moral integrity.

Activity 1: Icebreaker

Activity 2: RME ILP

The Learning Objectives on this Moral Maze course are:

a) To increase your knowledge and understanding of ethical issues, spirituality and theology
b) To help you to become a more moral person, able to make better moral choices and understand the demands of religious commitment in everyday life
c) To understand how different faith traditions view ethical and spiritual issues

Complete part A of the RME Individual Learning Plan, which your teacher will give you.

Activity 3: Case Studies

In groups study each situation in the Case Studies exercise below and decide what you would do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Situation</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Write down what you would do and why (briefly explain your action)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. You buy something in a shop for £1 and hand over a £10 note. The shop assistant is a bit distracted and thinks you’ve given her £20, and gives you £19 change.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. You meet someone and find them attractive. You find out they are married. They say they aren’t getting on with their partner and ‘the marriage is on the rocks’ anyway. They ask you out.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. There is one week to go before your public exam. You find an envelope in a classroom which an Examiner has carelessly dropped. The Paper for the exam you are about to sit is inside. Do you look (no-one will know)?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### Case Studies Exercise

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4. You and your best friend are visiting an old lady who lives nearby. You see your friend taking the old lady's savings (£500). The police interview you later and they ask if your friend took the money – what do you say? The case comes to court and you are a witness, under oath. Do you tell the truth?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Your friends are using forged Travelcards. One of them says he can get you some if you want.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. You are with a group of friends who are all from the same ethnic group as you. One of your friends makes an offensive racist comment about a different ethnic group and everyone laughs. Do you: do nothing, laugh along, say something?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. You are at a party and you get into an argument with someone. They say why don’t you come outside and sort it out (have a fight). You think you could probably win a fight with this person. Your response?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Your trainers (Nike, Adidas whatever) are comfortable, not worn too badly and in perfect working order. However, the brand brings out a new more fashionable trainer. You want them. You have the money. Do you buy the latest pair?</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Activity 4

Whole class **discussion** on the issues arising from the Case Studies exercise

### REFLECTIVE LOG

In the space below record at least one interesting thing you have learnt about moral choices in this lesson.
LESSON 2 : WHAT ABOUT YOU?

Lesson Objectives:

- To explore your own personal morality, and what you believe to be right/wrong
- To place morality in a spiritual context

Activity 1: Morality

Read the following article: [http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/merseyside/7130871.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/england/merseyside/7130871.stm)

Why do you think this mother told of her son's confession?

Activity 2: Where does your moral code come from?

In the box below list all of the influences that have helped shape your moral code

Using the examples above put them in order of importance with the biggest influence being at the top
Activity 3: Evaluation

Do you think your moral code will change over time? Give reasons for your answer.

Activity 4: Clip from ‘The Wire’

Have a look at this clip from ‘The Wire’. Omar is a murderer and a thief about to testify against another known murderer and drug dealer.

What is his moral code?

Do you think he has a point?

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oYj7q_by_2E

Activity 5: Different Kinds of Sin

Brainstorm the most common things people do which are wrong – this list will be recorded on the board.

Discussion: Are some things worse than others? Why? Put the sins on the board into three groups and write an example of each in the boxes below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How we treat ourselves</th>
<th>How we treat others</th>
<th>How we treat God</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Discuss the idea of doing wrong by not doing anything, or not doing enough, e.g., do we do enough to help the poor? Think of other examples.

Activity 6: Closing Reflection

Prayer:

Almighty God, we are sorry for things we have done wrong – please forgive us. We thank you for your forgiveness and healing power. Please give us the love and the grace to be strong in the future, so that we might keep away from anything that is wrong, and do our best to help create a better world for all.
LESSON 3 : WHAT MAKES A GOOD LIFE?

Lesson Objectives:

- To consider where we learn morality and how we develop our own morality
- To understand the meaning of deontology and consequentialism, and why morality is sometimes a difficult concept

Activity 1: How do we decide?

Brainstorm in small groups the answer to the question “How do you decide what’s right/wrong?” Group feedback.

Activity 2: How do we change?

In the box below think of examples of something you have changed your view on, e.g., when you were younger you may have thought that eating meat was OK but now you are a vegetarian and believe it is wrong.

Share your example with your neighbour. What caused this change, what factors were behind your decision to change?

Activity 3: Are Some Things Always Wrong?

Complete the table below ‘Are Some Things Always Wrong?’ Explore differences between deontology and consequentialism

There are two approaches to moral philosophy

1. **Deontology** - Morality is a predetermined set of laws or rules which are applied to each situation. Someone with this view would therefore argue that killing is always wrong.

2. **Consequentialism** - The morality of an action is determined by the goodness or badness of the consequences. Someone with this view might argue that if killing someone had good possible consequences then it would be morally good (e.g., killing Adolf Hitler).

Watch the YouTube clip Bonhoeffer: Who Am I? (W/RME/Moral Maze Resources/Bonhoeffer). Dietrich Bonhoeffer was a German Christian pastor who spoke out against Hitler in World War 2, and was involved in a failed assassination attempt. He was later hanged by Hitler.
Study the examples below and for each write down why it might be always wrong, and in what circumstances (if any) it might be morally acceptable. Make up another example for No.8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>Why it could be argued this is always wrong?</th>
<th>Why it might be acceptable? (Give possible circumstances)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The murder of Adolf Hitler</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Stealing food</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Lying to a friend</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Dropping the A-bomb on Japan in 1945</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Smacking a child who is misbehaving</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Homosexual activity between consenting adults</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Abortion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Activity 4:**

Group discussion. Plenary session. Share your ideas and what you have written for point 8.

**REFLECTIVE LOG**

Complete the list below with some example statements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>It is always right to ...</th>
<th>It is always wrong to ...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LESSON 4 : WHAT GOES AROUND COMES AROUND

Lesson Objectives:

- To understand that actions have consequences
- To explore how our actions impact upon others and ourselves

Activity 1: Joy’s Refund

Watch Joy’s Refund clip from My Name is Earl (W/RME/Moral Maze Resources/Joy’s Refund)

Joy made a number of poor moral choices, which led her from one thing to another (eventually to jail). In groups of three, can you think of examples from your own life, or from others, when the wrong moral choice was made. What were the consequences of that poor choice (on you or others)\

Activity 2: What Goes Around

Watch first two minutes of What Goes Around Comes Around (Justin Timberlake in Paris) YouTube clip (W/RME/Moral Maze Resources/What Goes Around Comes Around)

Making poor moral choices impacts not just on other people but damages ourselves too. Complete the table below with possible negative consequences that might flow from poor moral choices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moral Choice</th>
<th>Damage to Me</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. I refuse to forgive someone.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. I make negative comments about someone behind their back.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. I decide not to do some voluntary work I am offered because I won’t get paid.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. I see a friend is in trouble and I pretend not to notice.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Someone is making fun of another person based on their race. It’s not funny, but I laugh along anyway.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. I’m late into College because I overslept after going to bed late. I tell the College I had a dentist’s appointment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. I sleep with someone I don’t really like because I think it will be fun.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
8. I know I don’t need another pair of trainers/outfit/new mobile (delete as appropriate) but I simply must have the latest fashion item.

9. I like to do a bit of binge drinking now and again, not too often just now and again, everybody does it, won’t do any harm as long as you don’t make a habit out of it, don’t want to be a party-pooper.

10. I sometimes carry a weapon with me (for protection only).

Once you have completed the table discuss your findings in the group.

1. How do poor moral choices cause us problems?
2. What do people mean when they talk about conscience?

Activity 3: You Reap What You Sow

Read the following passage from the Bible: St. Paul’s Letter to the Galatians (6:7-10) and briefly discuss what Paul means.

Don’t delude yourself into thinking God can be cheated: where a man sows, then he reaps: if he sows in the field of self-indulgence he will get a harvest of corruption out of it; if he sows in the field of the spirit he will get from it a harvest of eternal life. We must never get tired of doing good because if we don’t give up the struggle we shall get our harvest at the proper time. While we have the chance, we must do good to all …

Activity 4: Quiet Reflection

These quotes are not necessarily for discussion. Read quietly on your own and reflect in silence.

1. Have you ever said something about someone else you really regretted? How did you feel when they found out?
2. Have you ever done something that you felt guilty about later? What does it feel like to be guilty?
3. Is there anything that you feel guilty about today?
4. Are there things you feel you should be doing but you aren’t, maybe because it’s too much effort, or you’d rather do something else?
5. How often do you put the needs of others before your own?
6. Do you sometimes neglect God? Do you ever listen to what he is asking of you?

Final Prayer

Almighty God, we thank you for giving us a conscience, to help us work out right from wrong. Give us the strength to always make the right moral choices, and forgive us when we do things which are wrong.
Lesson Objectives:

- To explore whether or not intolerance is innate
- To consider our individual response to intolerance in today’s society
- To understand what our faiths teaches us about tolerance

Activity 1: Tolerance

In the boxes below define what you believe ‘tolerance’ and ‘intolerance’ to mean.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Define tolerance</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Define intolerance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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</table>

Activity 2: Feedback to the rest of the class. What other definitions have you heard?

Activity 3: Debate and Q&A

Following the debate/s you have just taken part in take time to reflect on these questions and answer them as honestly as possible.

1. Did I listen to my peers when they were making a point?
2. If not, why not? What was going through your mind as they spoke?
3. Did you make a contribution to the discussion? If not why not?
4. Should we listen to one another? Why?
5. Did what anyone said make you annoyed, angry or sad in any way? Why?
6. Did you find yourself agreeing wholeheartedly with someone in your group? What were your feelings towards that person at that time?

Activity 4: Reflection

1. What are the dangers of not listening to one another?
2. Is tolerance really possible in the world we live in?
What does my faith teach me about tolerance?

What does my faith teach me about intolerance?

**Activity 5:**

What will you do personally in the fight against intolerance? Circle the things you will do.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vote for candidates who oppose racism</th>
<th>Be more open minded</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Learn about other faiths</td>
<td>Join a pressure group like Amnesty International</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Be more tolerant of asylum seekers</td>
<td>Give money to charities fighting injustice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop thinking my religion is the only way</td>
<td>Pray regularly for peace and justice</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stop looking down on people who are different from me</td>
<td>Speak out when friends make racist remarks and jokes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get rid of racist, sexist and homophobic ways of thinking</td>
<td>Speak out against Islamophobia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join a group fighting for the rights of the people of Burma</td>
<td>Visit Auschwitz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Join the Holocaust Educational Trust</td>
<td>Always commemorate Holocaust Memorial Day</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign to end the genocide in Darfur</td>
<td>Stop making scapegoats of other people for what is wrong in society</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discover more about Judaism</td>
<td>Send Christmas Cards to political prisoners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Accept and treat those with disabilities as equals</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Final Prayer:** say together

_Dear God,_

We pray for all the victims of racial or religious hatred and intolerance throughout the world.

_We pray for all who suffer in our country and in our local communities. May we learn to respect and celebrate our differences, and accept that we are all sons and daughters of the one true God._

_Forgive us, for all the times when we have let intolerance, anger, hatred or violence flourish in our hearts. Forgive us for the things we have said, done and thought._

_Help us to love our brothers and sisters whatever their faith and colour, so that we may build bridges of friendship between each other and within our community here at St. Dominic’s._
LESSON 6 : BROWN EYES, BLUE EYES

Starter Activity

Look back to Lesson 5 and remind yourself of the things you decided to do in the fight against intolerance.

Activity 1:

Watch the first part of Brown Eyes, Blue Eyes (nine minutes).

Reflective Log

What struck you most (or surprised you) from this section?

Class discussion

Activity 2:

Watch second part of Brown Eyes, Blue eyes.

Discussion questions:

1. Why do you think it was so easy for the children to fall into such nasty patterns of behaviour?
2. What tactics did the teacher use to achieve the results she wanted?
3. Do you see any of these ideas/behaviour in society today?
4. What are the best ways of preventing such discrimination?

Activity 3:

If there is time watch the later sections when Jane Elliott, the teacher, uses her method with adults.

If you wish to watch all five sections of this programme see www.pbs.org/wgbh/frontline/shows/divided/etc/view.html
LESSON 7 : MORAL DILEMMAS

Lesson Objectives:

- To explore in more detail a number of case studies and the principles we use to make a moral decision
- To understand that moral decisions are sometimes not as black/white as they may at first appear

Activity 1: Dilemmas

- Briefly discuss your opinion on these questions in groups of three.
- Everyone should say something.
- Resist peer pressure.
- Be ready to report comments back to the whole class – and to argue your case.

I will ...

A: CASE STUDIES

1. There is a lot of pilfering at your Saturday job. Your workmates say it is a ‘perk’ of the job, and encourage you to take the odd thing ‘now and again, as long as you don’t go over the top’. What do you do?

2. A friend of yours asks you to lie to her/his parents, saying they are staying the night at your house when really they are at their girl/boyfriend’s. Do you?

3. Someone offers you an iPod for £10. You know that it has been stolen. Would you buy it?

4. The police are looking for someone who has been involved in a burglary. You know the person’s name. Do you tell them?

B: PRINCIPLES

5. “In today’s society it is better to be rich than clever.” Do you agree?

6. “The National Lottery encourages people to think too much about money. It should be scrapped.” Do you agree?

7. “You should never grass on your mates.” Do you agree?

8. “People who smoke should not get the same right to free healthcare as people who don’t. They should be made to pay for their own treatment” Do you agree?

9. Is it important always to tell the truth?

10. We all have rights. We also have responsibilities. What responsibilities do you think we have to other people?

11. God wants us to have high moral standards? Do you ever think about what God would want you to do before you act, or make a moral decision?
Activity 2: The Valjean Dilemma

In a country in Europe, a poor man named Valjean could find no work, nor could his sister and brother. He had no money so he stole food and medicine that they needed. He was captured and sentenced to prison for six years. After a couple of years, he escaped from the prison and went to live in another part of the country under a new name. He saved money and slowly built up a big factory. He gave his workers the highest wages and used most of his profits to build a hospital for people who couldn't afford good medical care. Twenty years had passed when a tailor recognized the factory owner as being Valjean, the escaped convict whom the police had been looking for back in his hometown.

Questions:

1. Should the tailor report Valjean to the police? Why or why not?
2. Does a citizen have a duty or obligation to report an escaped convict? Why or why not?
3. Suppose Valjean were a close friend of the tailor. Should he then report Valjean? Why or why not?
4. If Valjean were reported and brought before the judge, should the judge send him back to jail or let him go free? Why?
5. Thinking in terms of society, should people who break the law be punished? Why or why not? How does this apply to what the judge should do?
6. Valjean was doing what his conscience told him to do when he stole the food and medicine. Should a lawbreaker be punished if he is acting out of conscience? Why or why not?
LESSON 8 : WHY DOES GOD ALLOW BAD THINGS TO HAPPEN TO GOOD PEOPLE?

Lesson Objectives:

- To explore how events such as the Tsunami/earthquakes etc. can be reconciled with the idea of a God of love
- To understand a variety of possible explanations for the Problem of Evil

Activity 1: Reflective Log

Watch the YouTube clip – Why Bad Things Happen to Good People (W/RME/Moral Maze/Why Bad Things Happen to Good People).

As you watch the clip write down the explanation given by the speaker to the Question: Why do bad things happen to good people?

[Blank space for reflection]

Whole class discussion.

Activity 2: Complete the following questions on your own.

1. Think of a time in your life when you have suffered a great deal (mentally or physically). Can you reconcile this suffering with the idea of a good and loving God?

2. Does evil exist? If so, how would you define or describe evil?

3. Do you sometimes act in ways which are selfish and uncaring? Why do you think this is?

4. Do you believe in the devil (Satan)? If so, describe him (if God is all powerful why doesn’t he get rid of the devil?).

5. Can you think of any examples where pain and suffering lead to a positive outcome?
Activity 3: Watch the Problem of Evil Powerpoint (W/RME/Moral Maze Resources/Problem of Evil)

Examine the chart - can you see any flaws in the reasoning?

What do you think of the possible explanations?

Closing Prayer:

Lord God, you said that your ways are not our ways. Much of what happens in life is a mystery and cannot be easily explained. Help us to trust you even when it appears that you are not there or you have forgotten us. Give us faith to see you at work in all things and at all times.
LESSON 9: ISSUES OF LIFE

Lesson Objectives:

- To consider the morality of various life issues
- To explore our personal response to such issues

Activity 1:

Split into groups of 4 – 6. Your teacher will give you one issue card at a time. The person who gets the card gives their personal view on each issue. Is it moral/immoral? The person must give reasons for their view and others may challenge him/disagree. When discussion is over take another card and continue until all the cards are done.

Activity 2:

Note in the box below what criteria you used to decide whether something was right or wrong:

Concluding Thought:

In the US you can get wristbands with WWJD on them (What Would Jesus Do?). It reminds the wearer to think about how Jesus might react in various situations. What do you think of this approach?
LESSON 10 : FREE TO CHOOSE

Lesson Objectives:

- To consider the extent to which we are responsible for our moral actions
- To understand the need for courage and integrity when making moral choices

Starter Activity: Advice for a Child

If you have children in the future what piece of advice would you give them about living a moral life?

Activity 1: BIG Questions

In small groups discuss the following questions:

1. Are people responsible for their actions, or are we all products of our upbringing and environment?
2. “Most people who commit bad crimes have suffered badly as small children. When they are young we have great sympathy for them, yet if they grow up and commit serious crimes we want to lock them up and throw away the key. Where’s the logic in that?” Do you agree with this statement?
3. Do bad people go to hell, and good people to heaven?

Activity 2: Maximilian Kolbe

Watch the YouTube clip in Maximilian Kolbe (W/RME/Moral Maze/Max Kolbe Story). We all make moral choices, Fr. Kolbe chose to sacrifice his own life for another. He is a tremendous example of selfless love. An Auschwitz survivor wrote that he raised ‘the standard of love on high’. His sacrifice gives hope to thousands: “he saved thousands, his death was a mighty explosion of light” in Auschwitz.

Even in the darkest of times, love conquers all.

When Pope John Paul II made Fr. Kolbe a saint, the Jewish man he saved was present, along with his children and grandchildren.

Activity 3: ILP

Your teacher will reissue the RME ILP sheet, giving you a list of the ten lessons on the course. Please complete and return to your teacher.

Activity 4: Paraliturgy

Your teacher will give you a slip with a spiritual quote on it. Each is different. Ponder the words on these cards and see what meaning they may have for you and your life. In silence ask for God’s help and guidance.

Prayer

Leader: Almighty God when we face tough moral choices may we be inspired by the example of Fr. Kolbe. Help us always to act with love in our hearts. Help us always to do the right thing, no matter what the personal cost. May we, like Fr. Kolbe be ‘an explosion of light’ for others.