

Just how many souls has a zygote got? How many people is it?

A newly fertilised egg cannot be considered to be an individual person for it might become twins. Some argue that it is an individual person with the power to become two people - a power that is lost later on. Anthony Kenny argues that neither of those two people will be able to say that the zygote was him/her as an individual. Even worse, if the zygote has the power to become two people maybe it has the power to become 100 though this does not happen. Thus killing the zygote must be risking mass murder. The Church will say the zygote has a soul or if it will become twins it has two souls. Nobody can prove the soul. It is not right to accuse people of mass murder or deliberate killing of many unborn persons when a zygote is killed. If a person has the right to do that, then why not say that whoever eats cucumber is a mass murderer?

Richard Harries argues on page 21 of Questions of Life and Death that the Bible sees the body and soul and mind as a unity. It supposedly rejects the idea of the soul being something that lives inside your body and that can function after death. He says the word soul is not about some ghost inside us but merely refers to our need for God and a relationship with him. No sensible person believes Catholic teaching about the soul where it is something that is independent of the body but runs the body and lives on after death to go to Heaven or Hell or Purgatory. Interestingly, Harris' view would imply that embryos cannot have souls or that the soul debate is irrelevant in the matter of the morality of abortion.

If the Catholic Church really believes in what it is saying - that abortion at any stage, even at conception, is murdering - it will sanction our logic that if personhood begins at conception then killing the zygote is mass murder.

Some argue that abortion is wrong at any stage in case the embryo really is a person or ensouled. Now, you do not fire shots in the dark just for fun unless you make sure there is nobody about. But banning abortion in case the embryo is a person is not the same thing. Why? Because you cannot tell by checking. Thus aborting the embryo though it might be a person is acceptable.

It is a fact that a huge number of embryos are abnormal and nature itself aborts them - page 28, Questions of Life and Death. God is a poor designer if he exists!

Does the Catholic Church want us to keep hybrids alive? A hybrid is a mixture of human and animal. It is what would happen if we were able to cross a human and a cow for example. Hybrids are made today and destroyed in two weeks.

Religion bans combining human dna and animal to produce chimeras for research. This is anti-science for the fact is we ARE chimeras. We are hybrids. The only people who are not are cloned people or people produced by close genetic relationship incest – say the child of a father by his own daughter. The assumption that we are unique and made in the image of something special if not God is behind all that prohibition.

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