

1. Normative Ethical Theories: Religious Approaches

Two normative ethical theories taking a religious approach to moral decision-making

Topic	Content	Key Knowledge
Natural Law*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aquinas' natural law, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ <i>telos</i> ○ the four tiers of law ○ the precepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • origins of the significant concept of <i>telos</i> in Aristotle and its religious development in the writing of Aquinas • what they are and how they are related: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Eternal Law: the principles by which God made and controls the universe and which are only fully known to God 2. Divine Law: the law of God revealed in the Bible, particularly in the Ten Commandments and the Sermon on the Mount 3. Natural Law: the moral law of God within human nature that is discoverable through the use of reason 4. Human Law: the laws of nations • what they are and how they are related <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the key precept (do good, avoid evil) ○ five primary precepts (preservation of life, ordering of society, worship of God, education of children, reproduction) ○ secondary precepts
<p>Learners should have the opportunity to discuss issues raised by Aquinas' theory of natural law, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • whether or not natural law provides a helpful method of moral decision-making • whether or not a judgement about something being good, bad, right or wrong can be based on its success or failure in achieving its <i>telos</i> • whether or not the universe as a whole is designed with a <i>telos</i>, or human nature has an orientation towards the good • whether or not the doctrine of double effect can be used to justify an action, such as killing someone as an act of self-defence 		
<p>Contextual references</p> <p><i>For reference, the ideas of Aquinas listed above can be found in:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Summa Theologica</i> I-II (93–95) <p>Suggested scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority</p> <p><i>Learners will be given credit for referring to any appropriate scholarly views, academic approaches and sources of wisdom and authority, however the following examples may prove useful</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aristotle <i>Physics</i> II 3 • Catechism of the Catholic Church 1954–1960 • Stanford Encycloedia of Philosophy (2005 rev.2011) <i>Aquinas' Moral, Political and Legal Philosophy</i>, http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/aquinas-moral-political/ 		