Assessment Task for Stage 5: Year 10

Subject: Religious Education

Assessment Task No. 1

Due Date: First Lesson of Week 10, 2015

THIS ASSESSMENT TASK CAN BE FOUND ON THE COLLEGE WEBSITE UNDER THE LEARNING AND TEACHING TAB

Submission Instructions

• Submit the task by handing to your teacher and signing a class list during your lesson on the due date.
• This cover sheet must be attached to the task.
• Penalty for late submission of an assessment task
  1. Assessments submitted after the lesson on the due date will immediately receive a Thursday Workshop (2 hours) during which time the task will be completed and submitted, pending a note from parents explaining the absence.

PLEASE NOTE: THIS TASK WILL NOT BE ASSESSED BY YOUR TEACHER UNLESS YOU HAVE ASSESSED YOUR PERFORMANCE BY HIGHLIGHTING OR TICKING THE APPROPRIATE BOXES ON THE ATTACHED ASSESSMENT CRITERIA

Outcomes being Assessed

C5.6 explains links between Christian life, fidelity to Church teaching, conscience, and inspiring people of faith
C5.9 gathers, analyses and synthesises information about religion, independently and in teams
C5.10 communicates information, ideas and issues in appropriate forms to different audiences and in different contexts
C5.11 applies appropriate and correct terminology and concepts related to religion and belief systems
C5.12 names, reflects on and integrates life experience, within a response to the Christian story and vision

Student Confirmation

By submitting the task for marking, I acknowledge the following:

1. The work submitted is my own work and appropriate acknowledgement of all sources has been made.
2. I am aware that the work may be submitted to plagiarism detection processes for the purpose of detecting possible plagiarism.
3. Where the work of others is used and not acknowledged, a finding of plagiarism will be made and a mark of zero awarded and I will have to resubmit the task.
4. I have a copy of this assessment if the original is lost or stolen.

Student’s signature: ___________________________ Date: _______________
TASK DETAILS

Description of the Task

Task:

You have been chosen by the BPC Social Justice Group to attend a National Christian Youth Forum.

You are responsible for composing an exposition (600 – 800 words) that evaluates Sister Helen Prejean’s moral integrity in her response to and her work for social justice.

This paper would be presented at the Youth Forum.

To complete this task you are to:

Use the attached information to compose a response that:

- examines the background document distributed in class
- identifies the moral decisions that Sister Helen Prejean makes in her work with people on death-row, as well as the families that are affected by the committed crimes
- makes specific reference to statements from Sister Helen Prejean on the issues for which she stands.
- evaluates the moral integrity of Sister Helen Prejean as demonstrated through her moral actions
- present your work using the exposition scaffold (see attached).

NOTE: If you use other resources besides the background document distributed in class, you must provide an accurately presented bibliography, using the format outlined in the College Diary.

Glossary:

Terms used in the description of this task:

- Evaluate – Make a judgment based on criteria; determine the value of
- Examine - Inquire into
- Exposition - a description and explanation
- Identify – Recognise and name
- Moral Actions and Decisions – Making decisions, and acting upon them, based on moral integrity
- Moral Integrity – the ability to make just and ‘right’ decisions, despite obstacles
Sister Helen Prejean

Originally from Louisiana, Sister Helen grew up in a loving family. This love transferred to her life as a Sister of St Joseph of Medaille. Sister Helen desired to live a cloistered life (where a person spends most of their time in isolation away from the outside world) and develop her spirituality. She participated in prayer and reflection, but entered the order at a time where there was a change in the attitude of the Catholic Church.

There was a movement that urged people who had taken Holy Orders (the process of becoming a priest or monk, or vowed to live as a consecrated religious person) to engage more in the outside world. Sister Helen struggled with this practice as she felt a closer connection to the spiritual and contemplative (thoughtful, using periods of time to think about faith and relationship with God) rather than the active demands of social justice. It was confronting to go out into the community and do the work of Christ.

It was not until Sister Helen experienced a retreat given by Sister Marie Augusta Neal (a major figure in leading American sisters to the service of justice) that her perspective began to change. Sister Helen recalls how Sister Marie Augusta started with an overview of the troubles of the poor in the world. Of course, Helen already knew that the poor faced many obstacles, but then Sister Marie Augusta talked about Jesus’ preaching to the poor. Helen thought she knew what would come next— that the poor would be with God in Heaven. Surprisingly, Sister Marie Augusta did not say that. Instead, she challenged the sisters to act for justice; Sister Helen was being called not to just pray for the poor and leave it to God to take care of them, but to take action to help raise people out of poverty. She would need to exercise moral integrity.

Eventually, Sister Helen chose to move from her convent and move into the St Thomas housing project in New Orleans. Here she found adults who had graduated from public schools but were illiterate, as well as young dropouts, drug dealers, addicts, teenaged girls
who clutched their infants, and grief-stricken mothers of gunned-down teens. These now were her people. She spent her days helping single mothers make ends meet or counselling teens away from peddling drugs. Sister Helen, who had spent so many hours in prayer, began to learn that prayer and action can become one. She writes:

“Before, I had asked God to right the wrongs and comfort the suffering. Now I know—really know—that God entrusts those tasks to us.”

One evening in 1982, Sister Helen was asked if she would be a pen pal to someone on death row. Thinking that this would be just part of her new work with the poor, Sister Helen agreed. She wrote her first letter to Patrick Sonnier, and enclosed some pictures, including one of herself and one of Jesus on the cross. Sister Helen was surprised when Patrick answered and said that her letter was welcome. They began to correspond regularly.

Upon Sonnier’s request, Sister Helen repeatedly visited him as his spiritual advisor. On the night of April 5, 1984 she accompanied him at his execution. She assured Patrick that there was no way he was going to die without seeing a loving face.

“You look at me, you look at my face. I can’t bear the thought that you would die without seeing one loving face. I will be the face of Christ for you.”

Patrick Sonnier’s death opened Sister Helen’s eyes to the injustice of the execution process, which she saw as cruel and unfair. "Racism is integral in the application of the death penalty," she argued, citing statistics that 80 percent of U.S. death-row prison cells hold people who have killed whites, while half of all American murder victims are people of color. She said, too, that less than 1 percent of convicted murders are ultimately executed, and they tend to fit
a profile of being poor and killing white people.

“I couldn’t watch someone being killed and walk away. Like a sacrament, the execution left an **indelible** (Not able to be forgotten or removed) mark on my soul”

Since then Sister Helen has educated the public about the death penalty by lecturing and writing. She continues to counsel inmates on death row and accompany them at their execution. So far Sister Helen has walked six men to their executions.

Sister Helen also works with the families of both murderers and their victims. She speaks about the difficulty in working with both the death row inmates and the victims of their crimes. Sister Helen wrote about her experiences in the book *Dead Man Walking*.

Straightforward dedication and prayer drive Sister Helen. When she is at the right place at the right time; she is in God’s presence.

“We must oppose the death penalty and stand with all who suffer from crime.”

Sister Helen Prejean began her work in the personal belief that something needed to be done with the people she worked with. Others who wanted to help support her cause joined her.

I was forty years old before I realised the connection between the Jesus who had said, "I was in prison and you came to me, I was hungry and you gave me to eat" and real-life experience where I was actually with people who were hungry and people who were in prison and people who were struggling with the racism that permeates this society. And it was like the feeling of coming home. Finding God in the poor was like coming home, because you just say, "Where have I been all my life?"
Purpose: to argue for or against an issue
Structure: (see scaffold below)

| Statement of opinion/Thesis | 1. Define the terms: ‘moral integrity’ and ‘ethical decisions’
2. Identify the issue/s that Sr Helen faces
3. Explain how Sr Helen displays moral integrity and ethical decision-making in facing these issues
4. Make your thesis statement/answer the question by using an evaluative word that judges how Sr Helen’s actions reveal her moral integrity |

| Series of arguments | Argument 1
POINT
Outline an ethical decision made by Sr Helen and identify why this was an act that depicts her moral integrity.

EXPLANATION
Describe how the decision was made and what effect it had on the people involved in terms of bringing about justice and peace.

EVIDENCE
Provide a key quote from Sr Helen that provides your audience with an understanding of their motivations for the decision and/or why they felt that they needed to act.

LINK
Make an evaluative statement about how much this particular decision proves Sr Helen’s moral integrity.

| Language Features: | A. Subject Specific Terminology
morality, justice, peace, principles, social justice, moral development, conscience

B. Tense:
Present, Past or Future

C. Person:
First or Third
(Third person is used to imply that the arguments are universal rather than individual.)

D. Word Choice:
Imperatives and modals, Emotive or persuasive
e.g. Stop contaminating our waterways; People should stop polluting … (perhaps, must, should, might, etc.)

Quotes & statistics from relevant sources
Judgmental (eg. ‘This clearly illustrates…)

Connectives: words used at the beginning of a paragraph to connect your arguments. Examples include: Firstly; Another important point…; In addition…; etc

Evaluative language: tells us how much something has had an effect. These words help us to qualify the judgements we make. Examples include: huge, enormous, minimal, lasting, significant

E. Specifications:
Formal language and SST establish credibility on the part of the composer.

Prioritise reasons: First of all, To begin with, etc.

Most important point:: Above all; Above all else; Most of all, etc. |