



28th November 2011

Dear Colleague,

I am writing to let you know about an unusual opportunity for your **GCSE & AS** students. We have managed to arrange totally **FREE conferences to support the study of topics in Ethics and the Philosophy of Religion** in regional centres during 2012 with the intention of enthusing students and inspiring them to continue with Religious Studies to A Level and beyond.

We understand the pressure that RS departments are under at the moment; the economic climate, the English Baccalaureate and the raising of tuition fees all squeeze the numbers wanting to study our subject and make it imperative that we provide the highest quality learning experience, showing young people that it is not all about money or exams but that some things matter in a broader and more lasting sense.

Nevertheless, the conference sessions have been carefully designed to develop themes which appear on the most popular GCSE and AS papers, including...

- **How do Catholics make moral decisions?** *Natural Law and its application to questions in contraception, abortion and euthanasia.*
- **Islam & Ethics.** *How Muslims respond to questions arising from assisted reproduction, including surrogacy, IVF, use of "spare embryos" etc. How this compares with Christian and secular decision making.*
- **Utilitarianism, Justice and Violence.** *How Utilitarianism developed as a rational method of forming and administering laws and how different utilitarian systems are similar and different to Christian responses to questions about human rights, prison, capital punishment and war.*
- **The problem of evil & suffering.** *How Christians and Jews respond to the philosophical and pastoral problems caused by the existence of evil and suffering in a world created by one God.*

There will also be a session and a printed guide on study-skills and exam tips which we have developed in consultation with examiners from OCR, AQA and Edexcel and, perhaps more importantly, with teachers who have experience of teaching these specifications year after year; the two groups are (sadly) not always the same!

Dr Peter Vardy has donated his time, Candle Conferences Ltd. will do the admin without charge, The Coexist Foundation is making a contribution towards the costs of circulation and travel, **Truro** High School, Trinity School in **Carlisle**, Carmel School in **Darlington** and Gateways School in **Leeds** have volunteered to host in **January/February** and their wonderful RS teachers have agreed to help us to run the days.

We are even distributing free resources for each student, which include topic-summaries, quizzes, activities and practice questions, and some video-clips and PowerPoints for teachers. Please support these conferences if you can and contact our administrator, Katie, at candleconferences@ymail.com to reserve your places before the end of term.

With best wishes for the holiday season,

Charlotte Vardy

Candle Conferences Ltd.

www.candleconferences.com