

Motherless Study Guide

- 1) How did American Catholics go from using the Pill to *prevent* new life in one generation to using a petri dish to *conceive* new life in the next?
- 2) Could the Catholic Church in America have deterred, or even delayed, this development?
- 3) As a new CEO of a Catholic hospital, Maggie Kealey faces doctors who prescribe contraceptives and refer patients out for treatments that aren't approved by the Catholic Church. Are Catholic personnel facing similar struggles in hospitals and medical practices in reality?
- 4) Maggie never imagined that she'd be immediately navigating the waters of insuring that her institution is both faithful to Catholic teaching and profitable at the same time. Could she faithfully do both?
- 5) Was Maggie Kealey right to approach her bishop and ask him to intervene on her behalf with the Regina Order and Hospital?
- 6) Was it wrong for Maggie to ignore the lack of an annulment and delve into a romantic relationship? Why is an annulment different than a divorce?
- 7) What is the difference between Catholicism as a cultural identity and Catholicism as a lived faith?
- 8) What unique resources does the Catholic Church bring to this battle for those who will stand by the truth?
- 9) What brought about the change in the life of Father Sweeney? Did his suffering contribute to the change in any way? Can you think of suffering in your life that has brought about some good?
- 10) Your close Catholic friends desperately want to conceive and can't. They tell you they are exploring modern fertility treatments. Do you encourage it? Do you remain silent? Do you have an obligation to explain Catholic teaching to them?
- 11) In *Fatherless*, Michael Burns speaks truth to power while Joe Delgado reluctantly lets the opportunity pass; in *Motherless*, it is Delgado who stands tall while Burns shrinks from confrontation. What forces caused the role reversals?
- 12) Burns and Delgado are each asked to ignore his Catholic faith in order to do his job. What struggles do the men face with their consciences as they try to discern and rationalize their choices? Would you continue to work for an employer who is supporting immoral causes?
- 13) Are the genetic manipulation technologies proposed by Delgado and Burns' bosses out of the realm of imagination? Where could these new discoveries and technologies lead us?
- 14) Do you see any sort of a conflict in the way a man might be drawn to give himself to his career, his work, and the way he is drawn to give himself to his family?
- 15) Where *Fatherless* focused on the personal and social effects of the Sexual Revolution and the contraceptive Pill, *Motherless* picks up these threads and exposes the magnitude of the perversion to which those personal decisions have accommodated us. What are some of the evils we now see from those poor choices?
- 16) What could be some of the short-term and long-term consequences of society's embrace of in vitro fertilization? What affects will it have on the children who were created outside the marriage act and who are now motherless?

- 17) What affect on the family and society will it have as these children are used for commercial research purposes (tissue for embryonic stem cell research) or simply discarded as refuse? What is next on the steep slide down the slippery slope?
- 18) What should be done with the 500,000 frozen embryos who now reside in about 250 cryogenic freezers scattered about the country?
- 19) In what ways does the Life Sciences Revolution build on the achievements, and consequences, of man's three great preceding revolutions—Industrial (1820s), Cultural (1960s), and Technological (1990s)?
- 20) How would you characterize the fundamental differences between the Church's view of man and the view held by the architects of man's fourth and final revolution?
- 21) In *Motherless*, we see the early formation of a one-world governance structure being built around enormous private wealth, elite global conglomerates, and major NGO's like the UN, the IMF, the World Bank, and the World Court. What are the chances this could actually happen over the next ten to twenty years?
- 22) Denver Archbishop Charles Chaput recently said: "There will be no renewal of America without a renewal of the Catholic Church; and no renewal of the Catholic Church without a renewal of the Catholic family; and no renewal of the Catholic family without a *bold proclamation* of the sacred truths regarding the transmission of human life." What are the near and longer term implications of this statement for our Church and country?
- 23) Over 30 years ago John Paul II said the Church "is now facing the final confrontation between the gospel and the anti-gospel, the Church and the anti-church." He also said mankind was "on the cusp of a glorious New Springtime of humanity." How do we reconcile these boldly prophetic statements?