

Human Prenatal Development – Investigation 3: Faith and Reason Reflection Worksheet – **Answer Key**

1. *How does the development of a beating heart during the first trimester reflect the truth that life begins from the moment of conception?*

The beating heart is one of the first visible signs of life and organization in the body. It shows that even at this early stage, the embryo is alive, growing, and acting as a unified human organism—not just a collection of cells.

2. *The Catechism teaches that “human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception.” How does what you’ve learned about first trimester development support this teaching?*

We now know that by the end of the first trimester, all major organs are formed, and the baby can move, react, and even begin forming fingerprints. This complexity and activity show the presence of a living human being, deserving protection.

3. *In Luke 1:41, John the Baptist leapt in his mother’s womb when Mary greeted Elizabeth. What does this reveal about the spiritual life and awareness of an unborn child?*

It shows that unborn children can be touched by God and can even respond to His presence. Spiritual life is not limited to those already born—God is present to each person from the very beginning.

4. *St. John Paul II said, “Freedom consists not in doing what we like, but in having the right to do what we ought.” How might understanding prenatal development influence how we use our freedom?*

Learning about the early stages of life teaches us that we have a responsibility to protect and defend those who cannot protect themselves. True freedom means choosing to support life, not harm it.

5. *Choose two virtues and explain how learning about the first trimester can help you grow in that virtue.*

Examples:

- **Courage:** It takes courage to speak up for the unborn or stand for life when others may disagree.
- **Gratitude:** Realizing how much development happens so early helps me appreciate that I, too, was once that small and loved by God even then.
- **Respect:** Seeing how advanced and vulnerable life is in the first trimester helps me respect all human beings, especially those not yet born.