**Theories of Conscience:**

1. THE "HUNCH THEORY"

When asked whether a certain action or decision is right or wrong, many people respond: I just know it is or something just tells me it is. However, when asked the reasons, they can't be specific.

2. "DOING WHAT COMES NATURALLY" THEORY

Some believe we are born with a certain moral instinct that tells them right from wrong. Therefore, if people just did what came naturally by instinct they would be doing the right thing according to their conscience.

3. "THE LITTLE VOICE” THEORY

A voice inside telling right or wrong. To them it is the voice of a force or a power other than themselves who gives guidance. When asked, these people will often say: I just know that's what God wants or it’s God's will.

4. "FOLLOW THE CROWD" THEORY

This group believe the majority can't be wrong. If enough people think or feel that something is right then it must be, or wrong- it has to be so.

5. "THE FEELING” THEORY

Conscience for some is a matter of how one "feels" after the action is taken or a decision is made. If you feel good - it was right, if you feel bad - it was wrong. If a person feels bad, or guilty, then it was wrong.

6. "NO CONSCIENCE" THEORY

No conscience at all. The idea is something that religions have made up to make people feel guilty about certain actions. A person just does what they decide to do or does what they must in a given situation and that is all that should be expected or required of anyone.

7. "USING YOUR HEAD" THEORY

Conscience involves using our head - our ability to reason, considering all alternatives and aspects of a given situation while always keeping in mind which values and priorities are most important and which are not; and trying to do the most loving and least harmful thing for all concerned.

**Number 7** is the teaching of the Catholic Church. We also believe that a person's conscience develops as that individual's ability to think, to reflect and to exercise clearer, more objective judgement matures.