

Religious Education Ideas

Why did around 20,000 men refuse to join the military and fight in World War 1?

Why might a political objector have refused?

Why might a religious objector have refused?

Why might a moral or philosophical objector have refused?

What is conscience?

Should there be a right to conscientiously object to things we conscientiously oppose, so that people have a legal right to refuse to obey the law (eg doing some form of national service, fighting in a war, religious education, vaccination, assisted dying, abortion, providing certain kinds of goods and services to some)?

Compulsory military service stopped after the First world War but was reintroduced in the Second World War and this time women could be called-up as well as men. There were far more conscientious objectors this time (over 60,000) and they were generally better treated. It continued for men until the early 1960 but was called National Service, with young men sent for 12-18 months training in the forces, although some COs undertook alternative work (eg on farms) and some were imprisoned. What would you do if 12 months of National Service in the military was introduced for women and men aged 18 today?