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Class: 8A **Date:** 11/17/15

Saint of the Day: St. Elizabeth of Hungary
(Pray for me!)

***Worth 20 points**

INSTRUCTIONS: Every other month (starting in September) you are asked to undertake a Christian examination of something from popular culture (examples listed below). Your goal is to highlight the deeper messages (good or bad) within the example from pop culture you chose and figure out what kind of action a trying-to-be-a-saint Christian should take.

***Important Note:** This does **NOT** give you free license to do anything your parents would not normally want you doing (Examples: watching bad TV shows, buying bad magazines/songs/music videos, etc.). For this assignment you should not have to go looking in deep and dark places. Rather, just keep your eyes and ears open as you go about your daily life.

THE BASICS

A. What kind of example from pop culture did you choose? (½ pt.)

***Example answers:** Advertisement, book, celebrity, fashion trend, magazine, movie, music video, news story, phone app, song, Internet trend, video game, etc.

I chose a song.

B. Give the specifics of the example of pop culture that you chose. (½ pt.)

***Example answer 1:** The song “Bang Bang” by Jessie J, Ariana Grande, and Nicki Minaj. This song is currently the #4 song (and #4 music video) in the world according to iTunes.

***Example answer 2:** I chose a billboard advertising beer. The billboard showed a picture of a woman not wearing many clothes drinking a beer and saying, “Let’s drink til’ the sun comes up.”

I chose the song "The Hills" by The Weeknd, which is currently the #4 song in the world and the #13 music video.

C. How morally good/bad would you consider your example? (1 pt.)

***Example answer 1:** 75% good, 25% bad. / ***Example answer 2:** 10% good, 90% bad.

100% bad

CHRISTIAN EXAMINATION

Put your Catholic goggles on and examine the example you chose.

What are its main messages? (3 pts.)

My song is called "The Hills" by The Weekend, and there are about sixty bad things in this song. For one thing, he swears 5 times in each chorus and three times in the second verse. I'm surprised that it's even on the radio, because so many F bombs are blurred and censored out. One of the things The Weeknd is saying in this song is how he has a friend but he just wants to start dating and hooking up with her. He says that she has a good body and never says anything about her talents and brains and personality, which as

Christians we know those are the only things worth being loved for. In the chorus, The Weeknd says that he only calls up this girl after five o' clock (only in the nighttime) and only loves her when she touches him, so now we KNOW that he only likes her for her looks. In the second verse, The Weeknd says that he's hooked up with two other girls before this one, which also goes against the Catholic belief of saving intimacy for marriage. Also, he says that getting high on drugs "feels like decaf" and doesn't feel as good as it used to because he's done it so many times. Well, the reason it doesn't feel as good as it used to is because the only way to be really happy is to love and serve God.

What would Jesus think about it? Why? (3 pts.)

I think that Jesus would be really unhappy. One of the 10 commandments is "You shall not commit adultery", and The Weeknd is breaking this commandment by singing this song. Most songwriters get their lyrics from events that have happened in their own life, so there's a pretty good chance The Weeknd did all these awful things he's singing about. And if he did do all these things, then he is breaking a commandment and sinning against God.

What kind of good and/or bad effects could this have on a person, community, or culture? (3 pts.)

This could have bad effects on a person, community, or culture because it could encourage someone to love another person only for their looks or their body. It could also spread bad effects because this song could encourage people to hook up with multiple people, when we as Christians know you need to save your love for one person. Finally, it could make people think that sinning is not only right, but fun as well.

ACTION STEPS (9 pts.)

PERSONAL ACTION STEP: Based on my examination of this item from popular culture, this is what I can do to help *myself* be saintlier. (3 pts.)

To help myself be saintlier, I can always switch the radio station or turn the radio off whenever this song comes on. I will also not buy this song on iTunes or any other song by The Weeknd. If he's going to use his fame to sing about hooking up with girls and getting high, then I'm not going to support him or any of his songs.

INTERPERSONAL ACTION STEP: Based on my examination of this item from popular culture, this is what I can do to help *those around me (parents, siblings, teachers, friends, teammates, etc.)* be saintlier. (3 pts.)

I can help others around me by informing them of the actual meaning of this song and how it can affect them. I will encourage my friends and family members to change that radio station and not buy his songs and to also educate THEIR friends about it as well.

COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL ACTION STEP: Based on my examination of this item from popular culture, this is what I can do to help *my community (school, town, etc.) and culture (the behaviors and beliefs in America)* be saintlier. (3 pts.)

I can help people in my community by contacting a radio station (Cities97, KDWB, KS95) and ask them not to play this song because it could have so many negative effects. A couple weeks ago, my bus driver turned on the radio for everyone and this song was playing. Of course, he didn't change it because he wasn't listening to it and didn't know the true meaning of it, but there were kindergarteners and first-graders on the bus who WERE listening. Next time, I can step up and ask my bus driver to switch the station.