



For Life

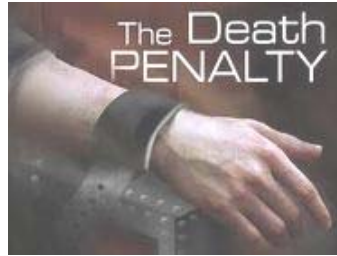
Volume 17, Issue 3

Third Quarter
2011

Death Penalty Progress Number of Executions Dropping Significantly

—by Father John Flynn, LC

ROME, APRIL 3, 2011 (Zenit.org) - The use of the death penalty continued on a downward trend in 2010, according to a report published March 28 by Amnesty International. The report, "Death Sentences and Executions in 2010," hailed the progress achieved in the last decade, saying that in this period no less than 31 countries abolished the death penalty either in law or in practice.



At the time of publication there was a total of 3,261 prisoners on death row, compared to 3,297 at the same time the previous year. According to the report, nationally there have been 138 exonerations from death row since 1973.

These were far from being the only cases that cast doubt on the use of the death penalty. The report noted a number of controversial executions, such as the one in Virginia of Teresa Lewis, a grandmother with an IQ of 72. She did not physically participate in the murders that led to her death sentence and the two co-defendants who actually shot the victims received life sentences.

Executions continue, such as that of Eric John King, in the state of Arizona on March 29, but opponents of the death penalty will continue their pressure for its abolition.

The use of the death penalty when there are other means available to keep society safe, "is an act of eye-for-an-eye vengeance that contradicts the values of our nation and that denies the dignity and sanctity of human life," declared Arizona's Catholic bishops the day before the execution. A point of view that is shared by more and more people.

Spiritual Healing After Abortion

—Our Sunday Visitor, December 26, 2010

Most people recognize the need for women to grieve after a miscarriage or a stillbirth. But few understand that an abortion can also trigger deep sorrow and emotional pain. Experts now recognize that depression, feelings of worthlessness, alienation, guilt, shame, anger, difficulty concentrating, sleep disorders and anxiety can occur in the immediate aftermath of an abortion. Or it could surface years later.

Many women admit that after an abortion they feel separated from God and wonder if they can ever be forgiven. And many wonder if they will be welcomed by the Catholic Church. The answer to both is yes. God's forgiveness and ability to forgive themselves are part of the healing process. And the Church can facilitate that process.

If you or someone you know is struggling with emotional turmoil after having an abortion, it is important to talk with someone. Every diocese offers a post-abortion healing ministry. You can find contact information, prayers and resources at Project Rachel (hopeafterabortion.com), the Church's healing ministry to those who have been involved in abortion, not just for the mothers of aborted children, but for fathers as well.

You can also find information, books, tapes, retreats and other Catholic resources through Rachel's Vineyard Ministries at www.rachelsvineyard.org and Lumina Referral Network at www.postabortionhelp.org.

Every human person is unique and unrepeatable and was created out of the infinite love of God. Each of us came from God and is destined to live with Him forever. Because we are created out of and for love, we find the meaning of our lives in making a total self-gift, through giving and receiving love. The inseparable link between life and love is deeply rooted in the life-giving love of the Trinity and is reflected in religious life and in marriage where total self-giving generates new life.

—Sisters of Life, Spring 2011

Please copy and distribute freely.

From the Director

Recently Dennis McNulty, Catholic Charities Director of Disability Services, and I were discussing another media report regarding the shocking treatment of persons with disabilities. We just read a current study about the high number of abortions after a pre-natal genetic test indicating some sort of disability; we once again were surprised that our response was disbelief and sadness. Every time we hear a similar report, and truthfully they are numerous, it still takes us by surprise. This shocking treatment is also often documented in promoting physician-assisted suicide. And here, too, we are overwhelmed with sadness and disbelief as we read that lives of persons with disabilities would improve with suicide.

I call it the *disability squeeze*. If you have some sort of genetic irregularity and are lucky enough to be born, there may likely be some pressure to artificially limit the number of years you will live. So the disability squeeze of threats to terminating life comes at life's inception and again at its end.

Birth and death are two very special and holy times in an individual's life, disabled or not. The sacredness of life and death are moments that are pivotal for the person being born or dying, as well as the loved ones who walk with them. Yet, these loved ones, confused in their understanding of the human person, sometimes make decisions to terminate life. It is so painful to know that this is happening to thousands of people every year. There is a societal norm building that suggests an increase in abortion and suicide of the disabled would be a good thing for the person, their family and the world.

My colleague and I cannot understand this thinking and mourn for the individuals every time we hear of it. And yes, we are working to change the norm. Can you help us? Can you love the precious lives of disabled persons enough to have an uncomfortable, yet loving discussion with someone who says terminating a life is compassionate?

We need to turn the tide and gain the hearts of those who don't really understand the total gift of love each person receives from God for their life. Conversions occur one heart at a time. It takes love and respect for the life you are honoring and for someone who doesn't understand your principals, motives and morals. It all begins in prayer when we are one with God who promises to love and guide us to be a "people for life."

—Peggy Gerovac

China's Population Problems Missing Girls and Rapid Aging (some important points)

—by Father John Flynn, LC
ROME, MAY 22, 2011 (Zenit.org)

When it comes to China's population the emphasis is usually on the large size, but the recent census revealed that, in fact, the problem may well be the reverse, namely that population growth is too slow.

The markedly fewer number of children being born means that the working age population will be under much greater pressure in the future to support the elderly.

China's population policies also have a long history of abuses. One of the most recent instances was a report that family planning officials are abducting children and selling them for profit overseas.

According to a May 11 report by Australia's ABC news authorities are investigating accusations that about 20 babies born in the Hunan province in violation of the one-child limit were sold to people in the United States and the Netherlands.

In addition, men and women who violated the restrictions on the number of children have been beaten, detained, or fined. Some have even lost their jobs, or were denied household registration permits for their children, according to CHR.D.

The destiny of these children varies. Some are used by criminal gangs as street beggars, others are destined for child labor, and many are sold for adoption.

And in India . . . (The Lancet, Early Online Publication, 24 May 2011)

Selective abortions of girls totaled about 4.2–12.1 million from 1980–2010, with a greater rate of increase in the 1990s than in the 2000s.

Selective abortion of girls, especially for pregnancies after a firstborn girl, has increased substantially in India. Most of India's population now lives in states where selective abortion of girls is common.

We Use Recycled Paper.

Benedict XVI's Exchange With Space Station Crew some highlights

VATICAN CITY, MAY 22, 2011 (Zenit.org) -

A teleconference between Benedict XVI and the crew aboard the International Space Station, on the occasion of the last mission of the shuttle Endeavour.



Humanity is experiencing a period of extremely rapid progress in the fields of scientific knowledge and technical applications. In a sense, you are our representatives—spear-heading humanity's exploration of new spaces and possibilities for our future, going beyond the limitations of our everyday existence.

From Pope Benedict: We all admire your courage, as well as the discipline and commitment with which you prepared yourselves for this mission. We are convinced you are inspired by noble ideals and that you intend placing the results of your research and endeavors at the disposal of all humanity and for the common good.

This conversation gives me the chance to express my own admiration and appreciation to you and to all those who collaborate in making your mission possible, and to add my heartfelt encouragement to bring it to a safe and successful conclusion.

From Mark Kelly, USA ... we fly over most of the world and you don't see borders, but at the same time we realize that people fight with each other and there is a lot of violence in this world and it's really an unfortunate thing.

Usually, people fight over many different things. As we've seen in the Middle East right now: it's somewhat for democracy in certain areas, but usually people fight for resources. And it's interesting in space; on Earth, people often fight for energy; in space we use solar power and we have fuel cells on the Space Station.

You know, the science and the technology that we put into the Space Station to develop a solar power capability, gives us pretty much an unlimited amount of energy. And if those technologies

could be adapted more on Earth, we could possibly reduce some of that violence.

From Mike Finchke, USA ... we can look down and see our beautiful planet Earth that God has made, and it is the most beautiful planet in the whole Solar System. However, if we look up, we can see the rest of the universe, and the rest of the Universe is out there for us to go explore. And the International Space Station is just one symbol, one example of what human beings can do when we work together constructively.

So our message, I think—one of our many messages, but I think one of our most important messages—is to let the children of the planet know, the young people know that there is a whole universe for us to go explore.

Ethicist: Pope intended condom use/AIDS reflection

—by John Norton, excerpt from *Our Sunday Visitor*, December 19, 2010 (An email interview with Father Martin Rhonheimer, professor of ethics and political philosophy at the Rome's Pontifical University of the Holy Cross)



Our Sunday Visitor: Some Catholic commentators are calling the pope's remarks a "sea change"; others say absolutely nothing has changed. Which position is right?

Father Martin Rhonheimer: . . . "Nothing has changed." This is not true. Pope Benedict, after what I assume careful consideration, has made a public statement that has changed the discourse on these issues, both inside and outside the Church. For the first time it has been said by the pope himself, though not in a formal teaching act of the Church's magisterium, that the Church does not unconditionally "prohibit" prophylactic use of condoms. On the contrary, the Holy Father has said that in certain cases (in the sex business, for example), their use can be a sign of or first step toward responsibility (at the same time making it clear that this is neither a solution for overcoming the AIDS epidemic nor a moral solution; the only moral solution is abandoning a morally disordered lifestyle, and living sexuality in a really humanized way). This topic raises many emotions on both sides, which is why I hope Benedict's step might change the way we discuss these matters, in a less tense and more open way.

We Use Recycled Paper.

Reproductive Technologies in Light of Dignitas personae

—by Rev. Benedict M. Guevin, OSB

An excerpt from *The National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*, Spring 2010

[Dignitas Personae] makes it clear that the Church is not opposed to reproductive technologies as such. Citing *Donum vitae*, the Instruction states that these technologies “are not to be rejected on the grounds that they are artificial. As such, they bear witness to the possibilities of the art of medicine.” But they

Must respect three fundamental goods: (a) the right to life and to physical integrity of every human being from conception to natural death; (b) the unity of marriage, which means reciprocal respect for the right within marriage to become a father or mother only together with the other spouse; (c) the specifically human values of sexuality which require “that the procreation of a human person be brought about as the fruit of the conjugal act specific to the love between spouses.”

PRAYER CORNER

Eternal Father, Source of life open our hearts to see and desire the beauty of your plan for life and love. Fill us with your Holy Spirit so that our love will be generous and self-giving and we may be blessed with joy. Grant us great trust in your mercy. Forgive us for not receiving your gift of life and heal us from the effects of the culture of death. Instill in us and in all people a sense of the sacredness of every human life. Inspire our efforts to protect and care for the most vulnerable, especially women who are pregnant and their unborn children, the sick and the elderly. Strengthen us in the hope that with you nothing is impossible. We ask this in the name of Jesus, who by his Cross, makes all things new. Amen.

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Mother of Life, Pray for us.



Events

Pro-Life Prayer—First Saturday of the Month—Mary Queen of Peace, 4423 Pearl Rd., Cleveland (216-749-2323) is organizing a Pro Life Prayer time in front of the Surgicenter on Pearl Rd. on the first Saturday of the month. Mass at 8 am; prayer and social at 8:30 a.m., followed by prayer vigil at Surgicenter.

Womankind . . . **in need of volunteers**

Womankind, a free prenatal clinic in Garfield Heights, is in need of volunteers for day and evening appointment secretary, weekend/overnight phones, client support (training provided) and childbirth educators. For further information, please call Dianna Ulatowski, Volunteer Coordinator, or JoAnn Henderson, LISW-S, Director of Counseling and Social Services, at 216-662-5700 or visit the volunteer page on our website at

www.womankindcleveland.com

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Pro Life Office
Catholic Charities
Parish and Community Ministries
7911 Detroit Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44102

NON-PROFIT
ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Permit No. 2323



Partners Against Sex Trafficking

—by Edward Pentin

ROME, MAY 19, 2011 (Zenit.org) Millions of victims are caught up in human trafficking—an umbrella term that includes forced labor, sex trafficking, bonded labor, involuntary domestic servitude and child soldiering. It's an increasing scourge in many countries and, as it grows, it's becoming ever more sophisticated, posing challenges to those working against it.



Church members, those of other faith groups, businesses and nongovernmental organizations have tended to use the "three P" approach in their anti-

trafficking work: prevention, protection of the victims, and prosecution of the perpetrators. But to these, another has been added: partnerships—the need to combat the problem from the grassroots up to the highest levels of civil and political authority . . .

One of the most respected pro-life representatives in congress, [Chris] Smith praised the Church for its work in anti-trafficking. "The Church has been there from the very beginning, as have I, and it's been totally supportive," he said.

LOCAL PARTNERSHIP

Collaborative Initiative to End Human Trafficking
440-356-2254

collaborative_initiative@yahoo.com

So Scared... But We Can't Stand Still

I'm so scared! I'm so scared when I look at the news and see the faces of those broken down in grief caused by the hand of violence. That was someone's child, someone's spouse, someone's loved one; gunned down—senseless suffering.

I'm so scared when the news reports more deaths today than there were yesterday. Someone abducted that pretty young girl, someone drove herself and her children into the river, someone killed that nursing student over a computer game, someone didn't get paid their drug money so murder, stabbing, shooting and bullying takes the place of concern, compassion and guidance.

I'm so scared of the cruel and vicious fighting that exists among the young and not so young.

I'm so scared because of this violence and the violence that comes from poverty which is running zig-zag in our families and communities. Oftentimes the violence of poverty presses down on our people and here comes an abortion, here comes the robbing of elders and the upset of safety within our community. Those gunned down or aborted could possibly be the ones who could of changed history, built a blueprint for peace, invented life-changing inventions, cure illnesses and improve the quality of life by leading families and ultimately nations.

I'm so scared but I can't stand still and I can't stand still alone! . . .

"Black cultural tradition has always valued life and the mystery of its transmission and growth. Children have always been a sign of hope, the loss of this perspective is a cultural and spiritual impoverishment for us as a people... **(What We Have Seen and Heard: A Pastoral Letter on Evangelization from the Black Catholic Bishops of the United States- September 9, 1984).**"

Let's shift from being so scared to being so active. Let's get up and keep moving for peace and the protection of life now, because so much depends on it as we walk into our future!

Written by Therese Wilson Favors (May 1, 2011)
<http://www.blackcatholicsforlife.org>

Volume 17

Issue 3

For Life is a quarterly publication of the Pro Life Office, Catholic Charities, Catholic Diocese of Cleveland, as an educational service for the people of this diocese.

The mission of the Pro Life Office is to proclaim the sanctity and value of human life as a gift from God and the foundation of human dignity, and work to ensure the quality of life at all stages of existence. This office encourages a Consistent Ethic of Life approach in promoting reverence for life, which is rooted in the Gospel and teachings of the Church.

Pro Life Office, 7911 Detroit Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44102 • (216) 334-2965

www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org/prolife

Benedict XVI Calling on Youth for Global Peace Theme Announced for 2012 World Day

VATICAN CITY, MAY 19, 2011 (Zenit.org) - If the world is going to achieve peace, young people have a key role to play, according to Benedict XVI.

The Pope is dedicating the 45th World Day of Peace, Jan. 1, 2012, to the duty to educate the young in promoting peace and the common good.

A statement from the Vatican today announced the theme: "Educating Young People in Justice and Peace." The communiqué noted that this topic "engages an urgent need in the world today: to listen to and enhance the important role of new generations in the realization of the common good, and in the affirmation of a just and peaceful social order where fundamental human rights can be fully expressed and realized."

She Is For Life

—from *Our Sunday Visitor*, January 16, 2011

Jeannie Alexander always had strong human rights values.

"I was anti-war, against the death penalty, and when I was in Dallas, I was involved with survivors of torture in African nations," she said. "It seemed to me that there was something very wrong with our society, that there was a real lack of concern for other people. But I was pro-choice."

She had a "deep gnawing sense" that her law practice was not where she was supposed to be, and one weekend she reread the Gospels, then reread them again.

"It rocked my world," Alexander told OSV. "What if Jesus meant this, that he means everything he is saying? I realized that if we took Jesus seriously, it changes everything."

She went back to where she grew up in Atlanta and, although a Baptist, she spent hours a day praying at a Trappist monastery.

"One day a very audible voice said, 'On your knees,' and that was it," Alexander said. "I hit the kneeler and everything inside that I was holding back was gone. I really had this clarity of what it meant to submit to God. Something spiritual happened to me. It occurred to me that you can't be anti-war, anti-death penalty, pro-housing and universal health care—all these things that really affirm life—and still think that abortion is OK."

Alexander, 39, changed her mind about abortion, converted to Catholicism and moved to Nashville in 2007. There she became involved in the Catholic Worker Movement and cofounded Amos House, a multiple-site ministry that engages in daily works of mercy and worship.

"Pro-life is not just about babies," Alexander said. "It's not about politics. It's about Jesus Christ."



Makes you go hmmm....

(A Column of Quotes)

Where is the place where man's conscience is formed, a conscience inspired in objective values, a conscience as the place of dialogue for the search of the truth and the good? It is formed throughout the whole history of a person's life, beginning with his infancy, his way of playing, his way of amusing himself and of entering into relationship, his relationship with the friends around him. Hence, formation of the conscience to the true and the good, to coexistence in positive dialogue with others, is something that accompanies the whole of life and, in particular, the family environment, which is truly where the profound bases of the personality are laid.

—Benedict XVI June 7, 2011

"A woman does not want an abortion like she wants an ice cream cone, a new dress, or a Porsche; she wants an abortion like an animal caught in a trap wants to gnaw off its own leg to escape."

—Anonymous Pro Choice Rant

"It is when we stand in this perspective of a 'higher court'—that of God's judgment seat—and a more noble view of the human person that we seriously question the appropriateness of capital punishment. We ask ourselves: Is the human family made more complete—is human personhood made more loving—in a society which demands life for life, eye for eye, tooth for tooth?"

—Cardinal Bernardin

"I dream of a world, where we can commit our social resources to the development of human life and not to its destruction."

—Benazir Bhutto
Former Prime Minister of Pakistan

Genuine nonviolence requires strict honesty, both on principle and because to do otherwise is sabotage to any worthy cause.

—www.consistent-life.org