



FOR LIFE

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Pope Connects Right to Food to Right to Life

—Excerpts from Zenit.org, JUNE 2, 2008

There is an ethical duty to fight against hunger, especially when children are the hungry ones, Benedict XVI said to Guatemala's new ambassador to the Holy See.

In his address, the Pontiff focused on the problem of child hunger: "There is an ethical motive behind the right to food: 'I was hungry and you gave me to eat,' which exhorts us to share material goods as a demonstration of the love that we all need." "The objective of eliminating hunger and, at the same time, of counting on healthy and sufficient food, also requires specific actions and methods that permit a harvesting of resources that is respectful of the patrimony of creation," added the Holy Father.

"This primary right to food," continued Benedict XVI, "is intrinsically connected to the protection and the defense of human life, the first and inviolable rock upon which the entire edifice of human rights is founded." He continued: "The effort to help mothers, above all those who are in great difficulty, to bring children into the world with dignity, thus avoiding the unjustified recourse to abortion, will never be sufficient." "In this sense, safeguarding human life, in particular that which has already been conceived but not yet born, which is more innocent and defenseless, is a duty, with which there is linked, by its very nature, the care that the adoption of children be guaranteed by the legality of the procedures followed for this purpose."

The Pope also commented on "the scourge of social violence, [which] is often made more acute because of the lack of dialogue and the stability of the family, economic inequality, grave negligence and deficiencies in the area of health care, drug consumption and trafficking and the plague of corruption."



Good News for the Pro-Life Movement

—Excerpts from OUR SUNDAY VISITOR, April 27, 2008

For several years, many seeking progress in combating Parkinson's disease put much of their energy into convincing the public that embryonic stem-cell research was the only, best way to do so. Now comes more good news for those who promoted licit, moral means for this type of research—specifically, not destroying humans while procuring stem cells.

MIT researchers report they have demonstrated for the first time that artificially created stem cells can be used to treat symptoms of Parkinson's disease in rats, according to Mass High Tech: The Journal of New England Technology.

The work may lead to successful treatments for human patients of Parkinson's, according to the school.

Last year, U.S. and Japanese researchers reported they had reprogrammed normal human skin cells into behaving like embryonic stem cells. In December, a team from the Whitehead Institute of Biomedical Research found that the reprogrammed skin cells could be used to treat mice with a human sickle-cell anemia disease trait.

The latest discovery involved members of the same Whitehead lab. They found that nerve cells derived from the reprogrammed human skin cells can be successfully integrated in animal brains and improve symptoms of a neurodegenerative condition similar to Parkinson's.

The research was supported by the Ellison Medical Foundation and the National Institutes of Health.



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From the Director

I hear the following statements, or many like them, again and again:

Only special people can parent a disabled child.

We don't need to focus on the poor, at least they're born.

The death penalty respects the murder victim's family.

Global warming & unsustainable agriculture are not threats to human life.

I oppose abortion but I can't make a decision for someone else.

Ending embryonic stem cell research is a stretch to the respect life issue.

As I talk about Consistent Ethic of Life, listen to people or read articles, I recognize a theme in comments like these. What I hear in each statement is a hierarchy of human life. Every time a statement is made indicating lives can be eliminated or ignored because of their stage or situation, a hierarchy is being named. If the unborn, the abject poor, the dying, etc . . . can be eliminated or forgotten, it seems a hierarchy has been created. There is a sentiment that some people should die or unfortunately need to die for the good of the other.

Catholic teaching and Jesus himself tell us time and again that this is not so. All people are made in the image and likeness of God. All have the grace of love and mercy

bestowed on each of us by our Creator. There is no hierarchy in these statements. Every person no matter their lot in life is loved by God and thus should be loved and honored by us. John Paul II framed all of this together for us in his encyclical the Gospel of Life. Today, Pope Benedict XVI continues this teaching in his encyclicals and in homilies and speeches on almost a daily basis. (See some highlights in this issue). And closer to home, it is the work of this Pro Life Office to educate and inspire individuals to respect life.

Of course it is not possible, for us as individuals, to devote equal time and energy to each and every threat to life in our world. In our own prayer and discernment we are called and given passion toward our own role in building this Culture of Life. We use the skills and drive we have to then honor these life issues in very concrete ways within our means. We are very clear about the evil of direct killing; we also know denying anyone's dignity is also wrong.

So we respect and honor all work and ministry that seeks to uphold the dignity of each person. We realize that each effort brings us closer to a John Paul's vision of a Culture of Life. All is good. All is in honor of the gift of life. Yes we can devote ourselves to the disabled, people on death row or the tiniest humans whom some scientists would destroy in the name of progress or cure. At the same time we can honor and respect God's people who are also building the Culture of Life. The issues are great. We are not working against each other, but together, when we support the multitude of ministries dedicated to life. Be a part of creating a world where every human life is respected.

—Peggy Gerovac

Men and Women Join Against Trafficking

—By Mirko Testa, ROME, excerpts from Zenit.org, JUNE 8, 2008

Men can no longer think of the trafficking of persons as an issue only concerning women, according to a Salesian priest. Father Thomas Brennan, who represents the Salesians at the United Nations in New York, said this at an international congress in Rome last week on the trafficking of human persons.

The congress, titled "Network of Women Religious Against Human Trafficking," was organized by the International Union of Superiors General and the World Organization of Migrations.

Fr. Brennan said "the crime of trafficking has become so linked with governmental and societal corruption that what we see now is a decided resistance in the face of denunciations and efforts to bring about change."

The concluding statement of the congress affirmed that human trafficking and the exploitation of persons is "a violation of human rights and a disgrace for all humanity." It denounced human trafficking as one of the gravest current problems.

Addressing the issue of stricter immigration laws, the religious said "repressive clamping down on immigration does nothing but aid an increase in illegal trafficking."

Mary Ann Glendon, the U.S. ambassador to the Holy See assured the participants that President George Bush appreciates the work of the International Union of Superiors General, and that he "spoke with [Benedict XVI] about it during his recent visit to Washington."

Glendon noted that not only has poverty contributed to the growth of human trafficking, but also the decline in moral values in society.

The project is supported by the U.S. Embassy to the Holy See and financed by the Office for Refugees and Migrants of the U.S. government.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

**U.S. Bishops'
New Statement June 2008**

"On Embryonic Stem Cell Research"

Read the full statement at:

www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org/prolife

If you are unable to access the Internet, call the Pro Life Office at 216-334-2965 for a copy.

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Holy See: Cluster Bomb Ban a "Big Step"

—Excerpts from Zenit.org, JUNE 3, 2008

The international agreement to ban cluster bombs is a "big step," even though there is still much work to be done, according to the Holy See's permanent observer at the U.N. offices in Geneva.

The final treaty, signed Friday in Dublin by 111 nations, prohibits the production, use, transfer and stockpiling of cluster munitions. According to the agreement, cluster bombs are scheduled to disappear over the next eight years.

Archbishop Tomasi told Vatican Radio on Saturday that "the international community is quite compact on this vision to put an end to the cruelty implied in the use of this type of bombs, which fall indiscriminately on the civilian population." According to the prelate, the most important point of the agreement is that "it bans all cluster bombs used to date in different wars and, in addition, conditions the transport, construction of new bombs and also new technologies that can be adapted to these explosives."

He explained that the role played by the Holy See was "key," and that it acted "as bridge between the various groups and institutions of states, leading to a positive conviction on the document, an instrument that would be, as [Benedict XVI] has said, strong and credible. And this is exactly what it is."

"The path to complete this work is still long," Archbishop Tomasi added, noting the absence in the convention of countries such as the United States, Israel, Russia, China and Pakistan. Despite this, he said the fact that cluster bombs "has been declared illegal in international law" will "carry weight in the decisions and considerations of the countries that were not present."

"You cannot love with offensive weapons in your hands," Father Lombardi explained, citing Pope Paul VI. "Weapons destroy reciprocal trust, require an enormous amount of spending and impede projects of peace and solidarity. International life can only base itself on peace and not on force, the priest added. "Every effort against the production, sale, and use of weapons must be supported. The fight against antipersonnel mines, the fight against cluster munitions -- these too must be supported."

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For Life is a quarterly publication of the Pro Life Office, Catholic Charities Parish and Community Ministries, 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

Building A Civilization of Love

—Excerpts from Zenit.org, APRIL 2, 2008

Carl Anderson, the supreme knight of the Knights of Columbus, in his compelling new book entitled "A Civilization of Love: What Every Catholic Can Do to Transform the World," asserts that Christians have the responsibility to transform culture radically, to carry the example of St. Paul's preaching on the Areopagus into our present age "not by imposing values from above, but through a subtler yet more powerful process -- living a vocation of love in the day-to-day reality of our lives," a love whose actions are grounded in the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ. This vocation of love is written upon the heart of each person and makes each person human, and living out this calling leads to a culture that values human beings not because they are useful or productive, but rather because they are loved by the Creator and thus have inherent worth. By holding firm to the truth that the structure of human existence is love, such that "I have first been loved, therefore I am," we may transform an ever-present "culture of suspicion" into one that embraces responsibility for every human being, respecting the freedom and dignity of each individual in an authentic culture of life.

Building up a civilization of love involves a personal willingness to see Christ in the suffering of all human beings around us, such that our only response to them is one of responsibility for them in love. As Pope Benedict reminds us in "Deus Caritas Est" (34), "My deep personal sharing in the needs and sufferings of others becomes a sharing of my very self with them," with such a disposition serving as an essential aspect of the Christian work of charity. Anderson challenges his readers to confront difficult questions at both a personal and cultural level concerning attitudes toward the poor, handicapped, sick, and vulnerable (both born and unborn) -- Do I look at them as means rather than as ends? Do I see some persons as having no value apart from their real or imagined use to society? Do I affirm the equal dignity of every human being not only in law, but in practice?

Prayer Corner

A Prayer for Life

Father and maker of all, you adorn all creation with splendor and beauty, and fashion human lives in your image and likeness. Awaken in every heart reverence for the work of your hands, and renew among your people a readiness to nurture and sustain your precious gift of life. Grant this through our Lord Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, God, for ever and ever. Amen.



—Respect Life Office, Diocese of Stockton

DID YOU KNOW?... Each month, the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities sends out the "Word of Life" series with pro-life intercessions, homily notes, and bulletin briefs. "Word of Life" goes to hundreds of parish and diocesan staff, as well as all the bishops. To reach "Word of Life," visit the website at www.usccb.org/prolife/liturg.

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Upcoming Events . . .

Thurs. Aug. 7—The Fourth Annual Joseph M. Foley, MD Lecture presents “Dignity, Vulnerability, and the Care of the Marginalized Patient.” Speaker: Daniel P. Sulmasy, OFM, MD, PhD from 6-9 p.m. sponsored by Catholic Ministry of Health Care Professionals at the Center for Pastoral Leadership. Call 216-363-2674 for more information or go to: www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org/prolife/ for details and registration form.

Mon. & Tues., Sept. 8-9—Reclaiming Fatherhood: A Multifaceted Examination of Men Dealing with Abortion—Oak Brook, Illinois. For more information, go to: www.menandabortion.info or write to menandabortion@yahoo.com. Event organizer: National Office of Post-Abortion Reconciliation and Healing. Sponsored by Knights of Columbus and Archdiocese of Chicago.



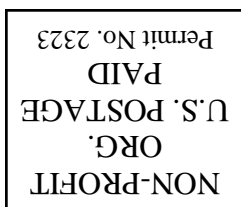
Wish List . . .

St. Joseph Parenting Center is a unique educational social service agency. We are a non-profit agency welcoming all parents-to-be and parents/primary caregivers of preschool age children. Our services are free of charge. Please send donations to 80 W. Bowery St., Ste. 200, Akron, OH 44308. For more information, call 330-252-0647 or visit www.saintjosephpc.com

Womankind—Your can support Womankind through your church, school or organization. Womankind can provide baby bottles and participants are asked to fill the bottles with loose change (or checks) by a specific date. Womankind will provide a speaker to give a brief presentation on Womankind’s services. Your participation raises awareness of the services and helps to assure that Womankind can continue to provide free prenatal care and support services to women and families in need. For additional info and to schedule a baby bottle fundraiser, call Bernadette at 216-662-5700.

Birthright is in urgent need of toddler clothing sizes 3, 4 and 5 boys and girls. Their summer room is empty of those sizes. To drop off clothing, contact 440-324-9566. All you do is so appreciated!

Community Pregnancy Center (1058 Wooster Road West, Barberton, OH 44203) is a Christian Pro-Life Outreach dedicated to the memory of Mother Terese and is obedient to the teachings of the Catholic Church. Here are ways you can help: Volunteer; provide financial assistance’ donate baby and children’s clothing (NB—14/16) or maternity clothing; donate new toys; promote baby showers, formula/diaper drives at your church. To volunteer or for information, please call 330-825-1900 or visit www.communitypregnancycenter.org.



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



Celebrating the 45th Anniversary of Pope John XXIII's *Pacem in Terris*

A THEOLOGY OF PEACE IN FIVE PARTS

by Lisa Sowle Cahill, Excerpts from *Origins*, May 29, 2008



THE PROBLEM OF EVIL

- Evil in the human and natural world is all that destroys the well-being and flourishing of humans and other creatures.
- "Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." This text reminds us that those who turn away from the suffering of others are just as culpable as those who directly cause it.
- Yet on another level our choice to do evil is not entirely free. This is what the doctrine of original sin means. There is a bias toward evil in each of us.
- Sinful structures are a form of institutional violence against oppressed peoples. But sinful structures and institutions also make it easier for those who are caught up in them to go along with patterns of sin and difficult to resist.
- A theology of peacemaking must honestly confront the hold of evil in our world if it is going to offer a real alternative to evil.



THEOLOGY OF CREATION

- The theology of creation affirms the essential goodness of humanity as made in the image of God and connects that image with social relationships.
- To fulfill the created nature that is "good" in God's eyes, humans must recognize that we are all "flesh of one flesh", charged together to be the stewards of creation and the parents and educators of the next generation.
- Fellow humanity as a basis for peacebuilding looks back to humanity's common creation by God and looks ahead to the redemption of all from evil in Christ.



SALVATION IN CHRIST

- Salvation means that despite the reality of evil it is possible to begin to live even now in unity with God, in the

goodness of creation and in "the kingdom of God" that Jesus preached.

- By suffering with despairing sinners as well as with innocent victims, Jesus Christ is fully human and, with the exception of sin, unites everything human with the divine.
- A theology of the cross for peacemaking holds up the innocent victims of violence of others, but it also approaches humans trapped in their own wickedness and lack of empathy for the suffering they have caused. In the incarnation, God enters into every aspect of human suffering, including both oppression and the feeling of "forsakenness" that comes from knowledge of our guilt.



THE TRINITY

- The Son and the Spirit draw us into participation in God's own life.
- The loving communion of persons in God provides a model of the kinds of social relationships that constitute our life in God's kingdom, beginning now.



THE CHURCH

- Life in the Christian community teaches us mutual respect, moral discipline, sharing among rich and poor, faith, hope and above all love.
- As an international and transnational institution, the Roman Catholic Church provides unique opportunities for global peacebuilding activities.
- In the Mindanao region of the Philippines, for example, Catholics partner with Muslims and indigenous peoples to build dialogue and collaboration in the implementation of a historic peace agreement.
- The church, and we its members, must have the courage to repent of our own sins. By doing so, we can model the way to take the first and most difficult step in the reconciliation and healing process.

"Bring your peace to our violent world: peace in the hearts of all men and women and peace among the nations of the earth."

"God's unconditional love, which bathes every human individual, points to a meaning and purpose for all human life."

—Pope Benedict XVI during his 2008 U.S. visit

See more at www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org/prolife/

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Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship

—Here are a few highlights

12. The Catholic community brings important assets to the political dialogue about our nation's future. We bring a consistent moral framework—drawn from basic human reason that is illuminated by Scripture and the teaching of the church—for assessing issues, political platforms and campaigns. We also bring broad experience in serving those in need—educating the young, caring for the sick, sheltering the homeless, helping women who face difficult pregnancies, feeding the hungry, welcoming immigrants and refugees, reaching out in global solidarity and pursuing peace.

14. Unfortunately, politics in our country often can be a contest of powerful interests, partisan attacks, sound bites and media hype. The church calls for a different kind of political engagement: one shaped by the moral convictions of well-formed consciences and focused on the dignity of every human being, the pursuit of the common good, and the protection of the weak and the vulnerable.

The Catholic call to faithful citizenship affirms the importance of political participation and insists that public service is a worthy vocation. As Catholics we should be guided more by our moral convictions than by our attachment to a political party or interest group.

When necessary, our participation should help transform the party to which we belong; we should not let the party transform us in such a way that we neglect or deny fundamental moral truths. We are called to bring together our principles and our political choices, our values and our votes to help build a better world.

20. The church's teaching is clear that a good end does not justify an immoral means. As we all seek to advance the common good—by defending the inviolable sanctity of human life from the moment of conception until natural death, by defending marriage, by feeding the hungry and housing the homeless, by welcoming the immigrant and protecting the environment—it is important to recognize that not all possible courses of action are morally acceptable.

We have a responsibility to discern carefully which public policies are morally sound. Catholics may choose different ways to respond to compelling social problems, but we cannot differ on our moral obligation to help build a more just and peaceful world through morally acceptable means, so that the weak and vulnerable are protected and human rights and dignity are defended.

—“Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,”
U.S. Bishops, November 29, 2007

Pope Affirms Ministry of Project Rachel

The tragedy of procured abortion leaves profound and sometimes indelible marks in the women who undergo it and in the people around them, as well as devastating consequences on the family and society, partly because of the materialistic mentality of contempt for life that it encourages. What selfish complicity often lies at the root of an agonizing decision which so many women have had to face on their own, who still carry in their heart an open wound! Although what has been done remains a grave injustice and is not in itself remediable, I make my own the exhortation in [Evangelium Vitae](#) addressed to women who have had an abortion: "Do not give in to discouragement and do not lose hope. Try rather to understand what happened and face it honestly. If you have not already done so, give yourselves over with humility and trust to repentance. The Father of mercies is ready to give you his forgiveness and his peace in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. To the same Father and his mercy you can with sure hope entrust your child" (n. 99).

ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS BENEDICT XVI 5 April 2008
—Excerpts from Libreria Editrice Vaticana



Makes you go hmmm....

(A Column of Quotes)

The creation of the world did not occur "once upon a time" in the distant past. Divine creation continues. Evolutionary change at all levels in ongoing, and we humans bear a responsibility for how the story will continue on earth.

—Rev Michael Dowd, [Thank God for Evolution!](#)

"... if just one of the five Catholic justices were to change his position on capital punishment, the use of the death penalty would end in the United States."

—America, April 28, 2008

We can't simply do whatever we can with this earth that has been entrusted to us. . . We have to respect the inner laws of creation, of this earth, we have to learn these laws and obey them if we want to survive. Existence itself, our earth, speaks to us, and we have to learn to listen"

—Benedict XVI, as stated in U.S. Catholic April 2008

"And in this [God] showed me something small, no bigger than a hazelnut, lying in the palm of my hand . . . I thought that because of its littleness it would suddenly have fallen into nothing. And I was answered with understanding. It lasts and always will, because God loves it; and thus everything has being through the love of God."

—Julian of Norwich

"Everyone has the seeds of human goodness."

—Myla Leguro, Catholic Relief Services

Climate change is an emerging threat to human life; indeed all life. Our grandchildren may some day ask us what we did in the face of such a threat. One response: We kept living unsustainable lifestyles. Another answer: We took seriously our church leaders' call to address climate change and responded prudently and urgently. We were a voice for the poor and promoted the common good over our own self interest. In doing so, we spared humankind and all of creation from the worst effects of a warming planet.

—Daniel Misleh, "Change and the Climate in Washington," U.S. Catholic April 2008

Today it is fashionable to talk with the poor. Unfortunately, it is not fashionable to talk with them.

—Blessed Teresa of Calcutta

"Give him who is dying of hunger to eat, because if you do not give him to eat, you have killed him."

—Benedict XVI message to UN June 3, 2008