



# For Life

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## Consistent Ethic of Life

All life is sacred, and all life-issues are intimately woven together. A person cannot truly respect the life of one human being if he or she does not respect the lives of all. One who opposes the killing of unborn children through abortion or the destruction of embryos but supports the killing of a man on death row, for instance, is not really pro-life. Likewise, one who is opposed to capital punishment yet supports the destruction of human embryos for stem cell research does not really respect life. The list goes on. How can one be pro-life, yet support an unjust war that has resulted in the deaths of many people or support environmental policies that cause human suffering and the deaths of many of earth's living creatures? There is no artificial dividing line. The fabric of life extends to all.

—W. Malcolm Byrnes

*Excerpt from The National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly, Vol. 9, No. 2, Summer 2009*

## If You Want to Cultivate Peace, Protect Creation



*The Church has a responsibility towards creation, and she considers it her duty to exercise that responsibility in public life, in order to protect earth, water and air as gifts of God the Creator meant for everyone,*

and above all to save mankind from the danger of self-destruction. The degradation of nature is closely linked to the cultural models shaping human coexistence: consequently, "when 'human ecology' is respected within society, environmental ecology also benefits." Young people cannot be asked to respect the environment if they are not helped, within families and society as a whole, to respect themselves. The book of nature is one and indivisible; it includes not only the environment but also individual, family and social ethics. Our duties towards the environment flow from our duties towards the person, considered both individually and in relation to others.

—Pope Benedict XVI *World Day of Peace*  
1 January 2010

## Patron saint sought for trafficking victims

### St. Josephine Bakhita

There's a move under way in Oregon to seek Vatican approval for a patron saint of human trafficking and slavery victims. St. Josephine Bakhita, a Sudanese slave-turned-nun, is the ideal saint for people whose labor and bodies are being exploited, says Brian Willis. He's a member of St. Mary Cathedral in Portland who has worked for years to help women who have been forced into the sex trade. In addition to the patron saint designation, Willis is hoping that February 8—St. Josephine's feast day—becomes an annual day of prayer for victims of human trafficking and slavery.

Born in the Darfur region of southern Sudan, St. Josephine was kidnapped at 7, sold into slavery and given the name Bakhita, which means, ironically, "fortunate." She was re-sold several times and was handled brutally. In 1883, the Italian consul in Khartoum bought her. Unlike her former owners, he did not use the lash and treated her with respect. Two years later, the consul took Bakhita to Italy and gave her to his friend, who put her to work as a babysitter for a daughter. The young slave accompanied the daughter to boarding school in Venice, run by the Canossian Daughters of Charity.

When the family planned to move back to Africa and wanted to take Josephine with them, the future saint refused to go. During an ensuing court case, the Canossian sisters and the patriarch of Venice intervened on Josephine's behalf. The judge concluded that since slavery was illegal in Italy, Josephine was free.

—by Ed Langlois, *excerpts from Catholic Sentinel, Feb 4, 2010, Portland*

## Voices of Peace and Life

When we allow abortion, we are punishing the women—who must abort their children because their men have run away—and we are punishing the children whose lives are terminated... I want us to step back a little bit and say: Why is this woman and this child threatened? Why is this woman threatening to terminate this life? What do we need to do as a society? What are we not doing right now as a society?

—by Wangari Maathai, of Kenya,  
Nobel Peace Prize Winner, 2004  
*Consistent Life News, December 2009*

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## From the Director

***“Every moment gives new birth to a new moment, full of fresh potential, and sometimes like an unexpected present . . . One must not cling to moments of malaise . . . because in doing so one may prevent the birth of a richer moment. Life courses through one as a constant current in a great series of moments, each having its own place in the day.”***

—Etty Hillsem, *Concentration Camp Mystic*

This seems to me a good reflection for the work of defending life. We are working for the richer moment of God's grace at work in the world. In doing so, we must always believe and trust in the greater good that God has in store. If we have hope and believe that God is alive in our world and in ourselves, then we must be open to the next moment when life triumphs over death.

There are times in my own ministry when I feel like there is a huge brick wall that I am working to take down. There is the overturning of *Roe v. Wade* which has been the rule of the land for over 40 years, human trafficking which keeps slavery alive and very profitable years after slavery's abolition, the human dignity of persons with disabilities being denied in more and more ways now including a threat to their very existence, and on and on. When I stack all the affronts up like a collection of bricks comprising a very large wall, my vision can be clouded and hopeless. It is then that my faith and my communion with God are essential to taking the next step.

So many times when I receive emails, phone calls or phone messages, people are very distraught about a person or persons whose lives are threatened in some manner whether it be a

personal decision, a public policy or other. I very much try to remind the inquirers to pray in the midst of the struggle. I get a wide variety of responses like “yeah, yeah, yeah” or “but” . . . or “I should,” etc. I try to open the possibility of birthing a new moment of life illustrated by the Divine. Sometimes I need this very message spoken to me, also, so that I can concentrate on one block of stone in front of me and work in tandem with God's action to turn the stone into a building block of love and life.

Now I hope you hear me say that I am not asking God to fix all things for me and while washing my hands of the situations. I am answering my baptismal call to action. I am inviting God into my heart and ministry. Most importantly, I believe the Gospel message of the Resurrection and the action of the Holy Spirit today. The way of ministry works for the good of all people with the constant reliance on grace of the One who loves us intimately and also loves those who we are working to protect with that same intimate love.

As you work in your own way in defense of life, do not give into malaise and defeat. Join in hope and love with the One who loves each and every beloved person, created as though God had love for him or her alone.

—*Peggy Gerovac*

### Prayer Corner



In 2002, Pope John Paul II prayed:

Violence never again!

War never again!

Terrorism never again!

In God's name,

May all religions bring upon earth

Justice and peace,

Forgiveness, life and love!

***WATER . . . LIFE ESSENTIAL***

***“Water flows toward power and money.”***

—*Marc Reisner 1986*

“Jesus Christ, having declared himself ‘Source of Living Water that springs forth eternal life,’ calls us to administer water with justice and equity in order to quench the thirst of all.”

—*Bolivian Episcopal Conference 2003, Art. 110*



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## Reflection on an Execution

On the first day of my internship with Ohioans to Stop Execution, I was invited to go to Lucasville during an execution that would happen in June 2009.

Before leaving for Lucasville, I did a little research on Daniel Wilson, but I had not seen a picture of him. As we got close to the prison we stopped at a gas station and bought a newspaper. The local paper ran an article about Daniel Wilson and there was a picture of him. As I looked at his picture I had a strange feeling that this wasn't really happening. I thought, "*Bijal, you're not really looking at the picture of a man probably counting his last minutes before he is killed. And you're not really going to be there when it happens. This isn't really happening.*" But there I was, standing just a few yards from where this *really* was happening. The feeling I got as I took it all in and really became aware of where I was and what was taking place was numbing; it was unlike anything I'd ever experienced. I could not wrap my mind around the fact that our government was about to inject a man with a fatal dose of drugs and I was going to be there as it happened. I understood that Wilson had committed an awful crime, but I felt this overwhelming feeling that this whole process was just plain wrong. . .



The time of death was 10:33 AM. We decided to stay a while after the hearse drove off with Daniel's body to talk to some of the people who witnessed the execution. It was heart-wrenching to see

Daniel's friends so broken up and in tears. There was an immense feeling of sadness and loss. I realized then how many people are affected when our state gives the death penalty. It wasn't just the Lutz and Wilson families affected by what took place at Lucasville. There was a staff of dozens of prison workers inside and outside. There were people from the news and reporters. There were eight state highway patrolmen and four squad cars outside the prison. There were lawyers from the state and for Daniel. It made me wonder why the execution needed to happen at all. I didn't feel like the people in the state of Ohio were any better off now that Daniel Wilson was killed. The only thing accomplished was that another person was dead and another death certificate would read, "Cause of death: homicide."

—2009 OTSE summer intern, Bijal Shah

## What does justice say about euthanasia?

Justice says that euthanasia is not a bona fide liberty right, it does not maximize the good overall, and it is not fair. To euthanize a patient or assist in his suicide is the epitome of patient abandonment, indifference in the name of autonomy taken to the extreme; it is a distortion of compassion that reduces a human being to the status of an animal. It is also a dereliction of one's duty as healer and comforter, and a deprivation of the dying patient's final opportunity to reconcile with God and others. Participation in euthanasia is a violation of the long-standing communitarian and virtue-based tradition of the community of nursing that we do not kill patients even when asked or legally sanctioned to do so. Nurses are not executioners. Nurses are compassionate companions of the sick, tenderly caring for our patients and tirelessly working to do all that is properly within our power and moral limits to ease our patients' suffering until natural death. We are not to be the hand of death. Rather than support euthanasia, justice says that nursing must reject it and remain true to the wisdom that has been consistent through history, through the traditions and practices common to the nursing community, an ethos that is inspired by charity, dependent on prudence, and strengthened and sustained by the practice of virtue. Justice says euthanasia is not just at all. Justice is the "summary of all virtue ... its opposite, injustice, the whole of vice."



—excerpt from *The National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 2, Summer 2009

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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.

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[www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org/prolife](http://www.clevelandcatholiccharities.org/prolife)

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## In-Kind Donations

Thank you to all who have generously donated or collected donations for **Maggie's Place—The Zechariah House!** It is amazing and exciting to have so much support for our home.

For a current and complete Needs List, go to: <http://www.maggiesplace.org> and click on Zechariah House Needs List in the Needs, News and Events section of the website. Here is a short list of our most pressing needs. We gladly accept both gently used and new items:

Meat, poultry & fish	Fresh fruits & vegetables
Anti-fungal cream/spray	Hair products for
Cold, flu & allergy medicine	African-American hair
Masking tape	Vacuum cleaners
Stain remover for clothing	Kitchen sponges with
Copy paper	scrubber
Lockable storage cabinets	Bassinets & bassinet sheets
Infant strollers	Infant slings/carriers
Boppy pillows	Infant car seats
	Infant bottle brushes



Please contact Anna at  
440-886-2620 or  
[agrady@maggiesplace.org](mailto:agrady@maggiesplace.org)

## New Websites

**Catholic Mobilizing Network**  
<http://www.catholicmobilizing.org>

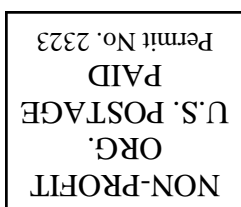


**Pax Christi USA's New Moment  
For Nuclear Disarmament Campaign**

Visit [www.paxchristiusa.org](http://www.paxchristiusa.org)  
(and click on the right-hand side of the page)  
Provides resources and organizing tools for you and your group to advocate and raise awareness regarding the critical need to end the nuclear weapons threat.

### Young Parent Program

YPP offers pregnant teens a comprehensive, coordinated program of education, social services and personal enrichment opportunities. YPP is a collaboration between Catholic Charities Community Services and the Cleveland Metropolitan School District serving students between ages of 14-18 years old. We offer hands on experiences, parenting classes, health and nutrition classes along with other workshops that will educate and prepare our young parents. For more information, call 216-391-4414, ext. 21.



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



## Indian Farmers vs. Bottling Industry

Water and beverages bottlers are coming under increasingly intense scrutiny from neighboring communities in both developing and developed countries as local water supplies dwindle. One of the most widely-covered conflicts involves Coca-Cola's bottling plants in India.



Under pressure from student-led campaigns in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom, supporting the demands of local residents for more responsible corporate behavior, the Energy and Resources Institute (TERI) performed an assessment covering six of the company's fifty plants in India. The study concluded in January 2008 that the company sited its bottling plants in already water-stressed areas, without much thought given to the impacts on communities. An alarming incidence of pollution in the immediate vicinity of the bottling plants was also highlighted, with not one plant having met the company's own wastewater treatment standards (India Post News Service, 2008).

—from *Water and Conflict: Incorporating Peacebuilding into Water Development*, CRS

## Pope at Soup Kitchen

"During lunch I've been able to hear some of your sorrowful and difficult stories: stories of the elderly, of immigrants, of the homeless, of Gypsies, of the disabled, of people with economic and other difficulties all of you, in one way or another, knocked about by life. I am here among you to tell you that I am close to you, that I love you and that your difficulties are not far from the thoughts of the Pope, but rather at their center, and in the heart of the community of believers."

—*Feast of the Holy Family with the Catholic Lay Community of San'Egidio*

## Abortion-Breast Cancer Link

Dr. Louise Brinton, with the National Cancer Institute, reversed her decision and is now finally admitting that abortion does indeed raise a woman's risk of being diagnosed with breast cancer. The study found that abortion raises breast cancer risk by 40 percent.

—excerpt from *Our Sunday Visitor*, Feb. 21, 2010  
by Teresa Tomeo, "Ignoring the Evidence"

## US Prelate Addresses Anti-Nuclear Weapon Summit

### Underlines Church's Just War Teaching

Archbishop Edwin O'Brien, a member of the U.S. bishops' conference Committee on International Justice and Peace of Baltimore, Maryland, underlined Church's reasons for opposing nuclear war, and stressing the next steps for eliminating these weapons. The Anti-Nuclear Weapon Summit brought together 200 international leaders to develop strategies to eliminate nuclear weapons.

The archbishop underlined the Church's moral teaching on nuclear weapons, based in its commitment to protect human life. He noted that "as a Permanent Observer to the United Nations, the Holy See has ratified the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty and actively participated in the treaty's review conferences over the past four decades."

The prelate affirmed that on a national level, the U.S. bishops have issued pastoral letters and public statement on the country's nuclear policy, and are continually involved in dialogue with public officials on this topic. "The real risks inherent in nuclear war make the probability of success elusive," he said.

Drawing on the principles of just war teaching, Archbishop O'Brien stated, "Nuclear war-fighting is rejected in Church teaching because it cannot ensure noncombatant immunity and the likely destruction and lingering radiation would violate the principle of proportionality."

—PARIS, FEB. 4, 2010 ([Zenit.org](http://www.zenit.org))

## "PERSONHOOD"

Only with the Incarnation of Christ was the personhood of man fully revealed, a revelation with profound import for the earthly dignity and spiritual destiny of every human being.

—excerpt from *The National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*, Vol. 9, No. 4, Winter 2009

**Notice:**  
See Insert for the U.S. Bishops'  
Response to the Passage of Health  
Care Legislation



# The Absurd Fate of Frozen Embryos

Interview With Law Professor Brian Scarnecchia

John Paul II pleaded with fertility technicians to stop creating them. "Donum Vitae," issued in 1997 by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, spoke of the "absurd fate" they were condemned to. The Snowflake Baby Program, launched in 1997, facilitated their adoption or "rescue." Over 400,000 tiny human embryos created through in vitro fertilization exist today, their lives suspended in containers of liquid nitrogen, dubbed "concentration cans" by the late president of the Pontifical Academy for Life, Dr. Jerome Lejeune.

Because the Catholic Church's plea to not create this bioethical dilemma went unheeded by many biopharmaceutical companies, the Vatican is now forced to make a moral judgment on the fate of hundreds of thousands of frozen lives. . .

In 1987, "Donum Vitae" principally addressed the coming to be of a human being through a conception that was not the fruit of a conjugal act of love between a husband and a wife, but occurred in vitro, that is, in a glass petri dish. This procedure was clearly condemned as was the freezing of "extra" or "spare" embryos. Nonetheless, thousands of frozen embryos have been created and the question was asked by many well intentioned persons -- can a woman, other than the mother, have a frozen embryo transplanted into her womb without becoming a surrogate mother? . . .

In 2008, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued "Dignitas Personae." [Paragraph 19](#) offered some resolution to this debate. . . [Paragraph 19](#) said that those who are genetic strangers to the embryo, who through heterologous embryo transfer, become pregnant with a child genetically not their own, have engaged in acts similar to heterologous in vitro fertilization and/or surrogacy, and it was not a licit act. So it is not licit to adopt an embryo to fill out your family size.



In the United States, there is the Snowflake Baby Program, promoted by National Right to Life as an alternative to embryo destructive research on these embryos. Certainly, this was a well-intentioned movement. At the time, between "Donum Vitae" and "Dignitas Personae," Catholics could in good conscience, after weighing

both sides of the debate, adopt a frozen embryo. Following the publication of Dignitas Personae this would no longer seem to be an option a Catholic can in good faith pursue.

—by Andrea Kirk Assaf  
ROME, Feb. 25, 2010 ([Zenit.org](#))

## Social sin (and what it isn't)

That is a call to conscience for all Catholics. Social sin, the pope wrote, "is a case of the very personal sins of those who cause or support evil or who exploit it; of those who are in a position to avoid, eliminate or at least limit certain social evils but who fail to do so out of laziness, fear or the conspiracy of silence, through secret complicity or indifference; of those who take refuge in the supposed impossibility of changing the world and also of those who sidestep the effort and sacrifice required, producing specious reasons of higher order. The real responsibility, then, lies with individuals."

—excerpt from *Our Sunday Visitor*, February 21, 2010



## Makes you go hmmm....

(A Column of Quotes)

"If a society is so willing to screen aggressively to find these genes and then to potentially to have to abort the fetuses, what does that say about the value of the lives of those people living with the diseases?"

—Alfred J. Lerner  
Columbia University historian  
*New England Journal of Medicine*

♦♦♦

"I renew the appeal I made most recently at Christmas for a consensus to end the death penalty, which is both cruel and unnecessary."

—John Paul II  
St. Louis, Missouri, January 1999

♦♦♦

"The use of the death penalty cannot really be mended: it should be ended."

—Cardinal McCarrick

♦♦♦

"Our Church's teaching exhorts us to respect human life in all its stages, and in all circumstances. As Catholics, we combine our pro-life and social-justice convictions in defense of human life and we proclaim that the penalty of death is never the answer to a difficult pregnancy, a prolonged illness or a violent crime."

—Tom Grenchik, Executive Director  
USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities

♦♦♦

I will not give a lethal drug to anyone if I am asked, nor will I advise such a plan... I will keep them from harm and injustice.

—Hippocratic Oath, 400 B.C.

♦♦♦

Pope Benedict XVI told the bishops of Scotland that the Church has a "positive and inspiring vision of human life," which must not be presented as a list of things the Church opposes. The comment to the bishops during their Feb. 5 visit to the Vatican came after a bill was introduced in the Scottish Parliament which allows assisted suicide for the terminally ill.

—excerpt from *Our Sunday Visitor*,  
Feb. 21, 2010