



FOR LIFE

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Pope's Concerns for 2007

—Expressed in speech VATICAN CITY, JAN. 8, 2007

"The worsening scandal of hunger is unacceptable in a world which has the resources, the knowledge and the means available to bring it to an end."

There are "difficulties in negotiations over conventional weapons and weapons of mass destruction" and "the rise in global military expenditure."

Support is needed for organizations dealing with "humanitarian crises...to provide protection and assistance to the victims."

"It is an illusion to think that migration can be blocked or checked simply by force. Migration and the problems to which it gives rise must be addressed humanely, with justice and compassion... "

"...continuous attacks on life, from conception to natural death," which take place in the world.

"...mounting threats to the natural composition of the family based on the marriage of a man and a woman."

"...a growing conviction that research is subject only to the laws that it chooses for itself and that it is limited only by its own possibilities...for example, in attempts to legitimize human cloning for supposedly therapeutic ends."

Lenten Message from Oscar Romero

Because of this, salvation begins with the human person, with human dignity, with saving every person from sin. And in Lent this is God's call: Be converted! Individually there are among us here no two sinners alike. Each one has committed his or her own shameful deeds, and yet we want to cast our guilt on the other and hide our own sin. I must take off my mask; I, too, am one of them, and I need to beg God's pardon because I have offended God and society. This is the call of Christ: Before all else, the human person! . . .

—Oscar Romero
An excerpt from his last homily

Migration Is Boon for Society, Says Pope

—VATICAN CITY, JAN. 14, 2007, Zenit.org

The migrant family should not be seen as a problem, but rather as a resource for humanity, Benedict XVI said on World Day of Migrants and Refugees. . .

The Pope recalled that the Holy Family of Nazareth was also a migrant family. They emigrated from their home country to Egypt to flee Herod's persecution.

The Pontiff said: "In the drama of the family of Nazareth we can perceive the painful condition of so many migrants, especially refugees, the exiled, the displaced and the persecuted. . .

The Pope appealed for the care of "migrants and their families through the help of specific legislative, juridical and administrative protections, as well as through a network of services, listening centers and structures of social and pastoral assistance."

"I hope that soon a balanced management will be established of the migratory flows and of human mobility in general, so that it will bring benefits to the whole human family, beginning with concrete measures that favor regular migration and family regrouping, paying special attention to women and minors," the Pontiff said.

Benedict XVI emphasized that "the human person must always be placed at the center," and illustrated the key to the integration of immigrants in a society. . .

—ZE07011403

My concerns are no different from those of any mother or father, or teacher, or responsible citizen. We all recognize that "beauty, a kind of mirror of the divine, inspires and vivifies young hearts and minds, while ugliness and coarseness have a depressing impact on attitudes and behavior."
—Pope Benedict XVI

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From the Director

"I have long supported legal abortion. And I don't believe that life—meaning the attributes and protections of personhood—begins at conception. Yet many secularly inclined people such as myself have great trepidation about the inherent dangers of wanton and unrestricted manipulation—to the point of dismemberment—of human embryos." ([Charles Krauthammer](#) Op-Ed Columnist)

It is comments like these, about embryonic stem cell research, that lead me to fret about the monumental task of building a culture of life. For a person who spends a lot of time trying to understand, this statement sends my brain into a whirlwind. It just makes no sense. This is a regular columnist for one of the most influential newspapers in our country and his statement is, to me, illogical. Yet, this is the kind of statement made when individuals try to parcel out life issues; one, right and the next one, wrong. Conversely, coming to a position of consistent ethic of life resonates with my intellectual as well as spiritual analysis of life issues. If one life is important, then all life is important.

I heard another conflict in a Catholic publication that regularly publishes articles and opinions about the importance of non-violence and Jesus' teachings on non-violence. From this publication I read, "Whatever his current beliefs may be, Scorsese is one of the most Catholic of artists, whose oeuvre paints a convincing portrait of the effects of sin, grace and redemption." This commentary is about the director of this year's Academy Award winning film, The Departed. Here's what the USCCB's movie reviewers said about the winning movie; "there's predictably a high quotient of violence, with the nonstop barrage of expletives excessive even for the underworld environment. [The movie contains] pervasive rough language, racial epithets, profanity, extremely crude expressions, heavy violence, grisly images, non-graphic sexual situations and encounters, [and] irreverent remarks about the church." Again, do you sense a contradiction? Can we find entertainment in violence against people, yet call on the world to stop all the violence? "Disrespect for human life is engendered when

individuals or masses of people are pictured being gruesomely slaughtered to provide an audience with a thrill (*Renewing the Mind of the Media: Statement on Overcoming the Exploitation of Sex and Violence in Communications*).

So here's the rub. Can we be fully engaged Catholics respecting the human dignity of all people? Can we live in the continuum that calls us to stop contradicting our ideals about the importance of life? Sometimes it takes work to acknowledge where our beliefs and attitudes are falling off the course. We may need internal work through prayer to help us lose poor judgment of others. We may need a certain perseverance to stand up when someone states some lives are expendable. No one's life should be ended because they fall short of our expectations. No one's life can be terminated because they may cause hardship to another person or society. No one's life is expendable because supporting them inconveniences me.

It is our task as Catholic Christians to stand up when a person's life is at stake. It is also our task to ensure all of society is working together to uphold every life. We can leave the living and dying decisions for God our Creator.

"As I live, says the Lord God, I swear I take no pleasure in the death of the wicked man, but rather in the wicked man's conversion, that he may live."

—Ezekiel 33:11

So you won't be taking anyone to have an abortion and you won't be producing a violence inducing film. You may, however, prayerfully reflect on your challenges to living out a consistent ethic of life. You may see contradictions in messages that we've never heard before. In prayer and discernment, we may decipher two things. First, we might become aware of the ways in which our circumstances contribute to the destruction of life in indirect ways. Secondly, we may find new ways to uphold life so that others might live out their God given human dignity. As Desmond Tutu said, "*At a tender age I discovered that it isn't doing spectacular things that makes you remarkable in the eyes of God, but instead, it is when you light just one candle to dispel a little bit of darkness that you are doing something tremendous. And if, as a global people, we put all the little bits of good together, we will overwhelm the world.*"

—Peggy Gerovac

Prayer Corner

Prayer for Life

Eternal God,
creator and sustainer of life,
bless us with the courage to defend all life
from conception to natural death.
Bless us with the strength to respect
all peoples from east to west, from north to south,
so that we may truly follow
the call of Jesus to be neighbor.



—Bill Appleby Purcell

Being Neighbor: The Catechism and Social Justice

GIVE US YOUR EMAIL

Several requests have been made for more timely updates about pro life issues. In some instances, I have not been able to inform you of action alerts because of timing problems with the issuance of *For Life*. In order to facilitate this notification, we will begin an **email alert system**. Each time an update is posted to the pro life website, a notification email will be sent to all those who have requested email alerts. This means you will be notified with updates not only for action alerts, but events, catholic articles regarding life issues and new links for pro life websites. If you would like to receive these email alerts, please send a request to pmgerovac@clevelandcatholiccharities.org.



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Living the Gospel of Life

—an excerpt from #22 USCCB

Pope John Paul II has reminded us that we must respect every life, even that of criminals and unjust aggressors. It is increasingly clear in modern society that **capital punishment** is unnecessary to protect people's safety and the public order, so that cases where it may be justified are "very rare, if not practically non-existent." No matter how serious the crime, punishment that does not take life is "more in conformity with the dignity of the human person" (*Evangelium Vitae*, 56-7). Our witness to respect for life shines most brightly when we demand respect for each and every human life, including the lives of those who fail to show that respect for others. The antidote to violence is love, not more violence.

—an excerpt from #5 USCCB

The nature and urgency of this threat should not be misunderstood. Respect for the dignity of the human person demands a commitment to human rights across a broad spectrum: "Both as Americans and as followers of Christ, American Catholics must be committed to the defense of life in all its stages and in every condition." The culture of death extends beyond our shores: famine and starvation, denial of health care and development around the world, the deadly violence of armed conflict and the scandalous arms trade that spawns such conflict. Our nation is witness to domestic violence, the spread of drugs, sexual activity which poses a threat to lives, and a reckless tampering with the world's ecological balance. Respect for human life calls us to defend life from these and other threats. It calls us as well to enhance the conditions for human living by helping to provide food, shelter and meaningful employment, beginning with those who are most in need. We live the Gospel of Life when we live in solidarity with the poor of the world, standing up for their lives and dignity. Yet abortion and euthanasia have become preeminent threats to human dignity because they directly attack life itself, the most fundamental human good and the condition for all others. They are committed against those who are weakest and most defenseless, those who are genuinely "the poorest of the poor." They are endorsed increasingly without the veil of euphemism, as supporters of abortion and euthanasia freely concede these are killing even as they promote them. Sadly, they are practiced in those communities which ordinarily provide a safe haven for the weak—the family and the healing professions. Such direct attacks on human life, once crimes, are today legitimized by governments sworn to protect the weak and marginalized.

—Pope John Paul II
World Day of Peace Message, Jan. 1, 1990



WAR = POVERTY

"Wars not only bring poverty, they also breed famine by forcing massive displacements of peoples and render their land either unsafe or unsuitable for growing food," Cardinal Renato Martino, president of the Pontifical Council for Justice and Peace, said Nov. 4 at the Rome headquarters of the U.N. Food and Agriculture Organization. He said, "If the world is to have sustainable agriculture, the international community must acknowledge that peace is a prior and fundamental condition." There is a need to admit "that in our day there exist what the late Pope John Paul II once called 'structures of famine,' which can only be overcome with an attitude of solidarity touching on every aspect of development," the cardinal said.



—excerpt from *Catholic Trends*
Dec, 2, 2006, Vol.37: No. 9

After reading this issue of "For Life":



1. What Pro Life issues were covered? Did anything surprise you as a life is-

In Zimbabwe about 3,500 die each week from a "unique convergence of malnutrition, poverty and AIDS," said Archbishop Pius Ncube of Bulawayo, Zimbabwe. More people are dying in that country from starvation and disease than are killed in the war in Iraq or the conflict in the Darfur region of Sudan, he said in remarks during a London meeting. Ncube blamed the crisis on mismanagement of the nation under President Robert Mugabe. "We remain in the grip of a dictator. ... We cannot compete for attention in a world

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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

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Upcoming Events

Sat., April 14, 2007—Pro-Life Dinner sponsored by Life Initiatives for Education and Right to Life of Summit Co.; Crowne Plaza Hotel, Downtown Akron. Doors open 5 pm; dinner at 6:30 pm. Speakers: Pam Stenzel, internationally recognized abstinence speaker, and Jonathon Flora, writer and director of *A Distant Thunder*. No charge for this dinner; however, sponsors from churches, organizations, and businesses greatly appreciated. Visit www.summitrtl.com or call 330-762-2785 for reservation forms, info and details.

April 16, 23, 30, 2007—Cleveland Pregnancy Center-Volunteer Orientation—Held from 7-9 pm at the Cleveland Pregnancy Center. Pressing needs at this time: Mentors to work 1:1 with clients; After Hours Phone Line; Child-birth Educators. To RSVP or for more info, contact Patsy Brodie at 440-243-2520 or at cpcpatsy@sbcglobal.net.

Sat., April 21—Cleveland Pregnancy Center Annual Banquet, "He's got the whole world in His hands," at LaCentre in Westlake, 6:30-9:30 p.m. Dick Russ, emcee. Stephanie Fast, keynote speaker. Contact 440-243-2520 or visit www.clevelandpregnancyhelp.org. Tickets \$45.

Sat., June 9, 2007—2nd Annual 5K Run/1Mile Walk and Pancake Breakfast begins 9 am; sponsored by the West Side Catholic Center. Mail-in and on-line registration by June 6 at www.hermescleveland.com or contact 216-631-4741 for more information.

Wed., June 27, 2007—Womankind 11th Annual Golf Outing at Little Mountain Country Club, Concord, Ohio. Registration at 11 am; shotgun start, 12:30 pm; dinner/raffle begins at 6:30 pm. For more info, call 216-662-5700.

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



Announcements . . .

National Catholic AIDS Network

After nearly 20 years of service, the National Catholic AIDS Network will cease staffing and office operations by September 2007. The Board of Directors has deliberated extensively and dedicated much time and effort in strategic planning to determine the best course of action for the Network. The Network is not able to continue with the budget deficits with which it has been faced during the last few years.

Faith House Opens Second Facility in Lorain

Faith House II, located at E. 30th St. and Vine Ave., a permanent supportive housing program designed to meet the needs of homeless single-parent families with disabilities, has been developed by the Humility of Mary Housing Ministry and was dedicated in Lorain on December 8, 2006. Humility of Mary Housing is looking to raise \$185,000 to complete this project. Contributions can be sent to Dana Murphy, program director, Faith House, 1561 E. 30th St., Lorain, OH 44056.

Remembering the Call

Please save Tues., June 26, 2007 for the next *Remembering the Call* seminar entitled, "Catholic Americans voting Prophetically in a Politically Charged Environment." Speakers will be Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio, bishop of Brooklyn, NY, and Chair of the USCCB Committee on Domestic Policy, and Simone Campbell, SSS, Executive Director of NETWORK, the Catholic social justice lobby in Washington, DC. One of the main purposes of the conference is to help parish ministers prepare for the presidential election year with some inspirational, yet practical, wisdom on how to effectively preach and teach the Church's rich social doctrine in the face of partisan and often hostile reactions from parishioners. The conference will be held from 1:30-9 pm on Tues., June 26 at the Center for Pastoral Leadership.

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Holy See Will Not Sign U.N. Convention on Disabled People

—VATICAN CITY, FEB. 1, 2007 (VIS)

Made public today was a talk delivered by Archbishop Celestino Migliore, Holy See permanent observer to the United Nations in New York, concerning a Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, approved by the U.N. General Assembly on December 13, 2006 and due to be signed by member States on March 30.

In a note accompanying the talk, the archbishop recalls that, "since the beginning of work in July 2002, the Holy See has participated actively in the preparation of the document, collaborating in the insertion of explicit references to respect for the right to life and the recognition of the role of the family in the lives of disabled people. Nonetheless, in the final stage of the work, unacceptable references to 'reproductive health' have been introduced into articles 23 and 25 and, for that reason, the Holy See has decided not to adhere to the new convention."

In his English-language talk, Archbishop Migliore highlighted how "the Holy See has consistently called for disabled individuals to be completely and compassionately integrated into society, convinced that they possess full and inalienable human rights." ...

"Finally, and most importantly, regarding article 25 on health, and specifically the reference to sexual and reproductive health, the Holy See understands access to reproductive health as being a holistic concept that does not consider abortion or access to abortion as a dimension of those terms. ... We opposed the inclusion of such a phrase in this article, because in some countries reproductive health services include abortion, thus denying the inherent right to life of every human being, also affirmed by article 10 of the Convention. It is surely tragic that ... the same Convention created to protect persons with disabilities from all discrimination in the exercise of their rights, may be used to deny the very basic right to life of disabled unborn persons.

"For this reason," he concluded, "and despite the many helpful articles this convention contains, the Holy See is unable to sign it."

DELSS/DISABLED PEOPLE/UN:MIGLIORE
VIS 070201 (410)

"No to death! ... No to all that attacks the incomparable dignity of every human being, beginning with that of unborn children ... No to war! War is not always inevitable. It is always a defeat for humanity ... War itself is an attack on human life, since it brings in its wake suffering and death. The battle for peace is always a battle for life!

—Pope John Paul II, "The International Situation Today", Jan. 30, 2003

Make an environmental impact

Simple ways that you can help the environment by changing one or two everyday behaviors:



Walk or bike to the store instead of taking the car, or combine trips so that you use the car less frequently.



Turn down the thermostat in the winter, and turn it up in the summer.



Replace incandescent light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs.



Educate yourself about stewardship of the earth's resources. Visit the U.S. bishops' website on climate change at www.usccb.org/sdwp/ejp/climate

The amniotic fluid surrounding a child in the womb can be the source of medically useful stem cells,

according to a study by scientists at Wake Forest and Harvard universities released Jan. 7. Dr. Anthony Atala of the Wake Forest Institute for Regenerative Medicine in Winston-Salem, N.C., said he and his colleagues used stem cells derived from amniotic fluid to create muscle, bone, fat, blood, nerve and liver cells in the laboratory. Richard Doerflinger, deputy director of the U.S. bishops' Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, said this is the latest study showing the research value of the byproducts of live birth. Studies have shown that the placenta, cord blood, umbilical cord and other birth byproducts may "contain very versatile stem cells, with many of the advantages of embryonic stem cells without the practical disadvantages or moral problems," he said.



—from *Catholic Trends*, Jan. 13, 2007
Vol: 37, Issue 12

The most profound and serious indication of the moral implications underlying the ecological problem is the lack of respect for life evident in many of the patterns of environmental pollution. Often, the interests of production prevail over concern for the dignity of workers, while economic interests take priority over the good of individuals and even entire peoples.

—Pope John Paul II,
World Day of Peace Message, 1990

Sometimes in your life, hope that you might see one starved man, the look on his face when the bread finally arrives.

Hope that you might have baked it or bought it or even kneaded it yourself.

For that look on his face, for your meeting his eyes across a piece of bread, you might be willing to lose a lot, or suffer a lot, or die a little, even.

—Daniel Berrigan

Changing society

—from *Our Sunday Visitor*, Jan. 21, 2007

Addressing poverty through sharing wealth means more than giving someone on the street money or taking unwanted clothing to the local St. Vincent de Paul store.



In his 1961 encyclical *Mater et Magistra* (On Christianity and Social Progress), Pope John XXIII wrote: "The solidarity which binds all persons and makes them ... members of the same family requires that nations enjoying an abundance of material goods should not remain indifferent to those nations whose citizens suffer from internal problems that result in poverty, hunger and an inability to enjoy even the more elementary human rights."

Pope John Paul II wrote in the encyclical *Centesimus Annus* ("The Hundredth Year") that the poor not only lack material goods, but also opportunities for education and training that lead to improving their situations.

"It is not merely a matter of 'giving from one's surplus', but of helping entire people which are presently excluded or marginalized to enter into the sphere of economic and human development."

According to Glenmary Home Missioner Father John Rausch, offering the help does not mean imposing an outside authority or will upon a group of people.

"Capitalism did not come down from heaven. It is not the only way of organizing economic life," he said, adding that when examining economic structures, we must ask the question: "How does this help the least of us?"

Economic inequality is not a problem isolated to individuals for a solution, but a problem rooted in how a society is structured, according to John Koval, senior research fellow at Msgr. John J. Egan Urban Center at DePaul University in Chicago. The structure includes laws regulating wages and how taxes are levied, upon whom and the changes within an economy, such as the American industrial society evolving into information and technology.

"How do we structure a society that allows people to develop economic equality without distress?" Koval asked. What we have is an enormously lopsided system. It was not an accident."

Darfur: An Ongoing Crisis, How to Help

—from *Our Sunday Visitor*, Dec. 10, 2006

Although the world's attention has largely drifted away from the crisis in Darfur, the situation on the ground is far from resolved.

Three years after the conflict began, millions of Darfuris still live in displacement and refugee camps. Thousands of people continue to die each month from malnutrition, disease and insecurity. Continuing assaults and violence perpetrated by the local Janjaweed militias have forced some humanitarian operations to be curtailed. Even the camps themselves are sometimes attacked.



Catholic Relief Services (CRS), the official international development and relief organization of the Catholic Church in the United States, continues to provide services including food, shelter, education, clean water and agricultural support in west Darfur. The dangerous conditions, however, have limited their access and their ability to meet the basic needs of those who suffer the most. It remains a very dangerous situation even for aid workers: As of October 2006, a dozen humanitarian workers have been killed in Darfur in incidents related to the conflict.

CRS has a special fund for providing aid to Darfur. To contribute, visit www.crs.org, phone (888) 277-7575 or (800) 736-3467 or send your check with "Darfur" in the memo line to Catholic Relief Services, P.O. Box 17090, Baltimore, MD 21203-7090.



Makes you go hmmm....

(A Column of Quotes)

"Once again we see that respect for human life, together with the capacity for research, leads in the right direction of healing and health."

—Neonatologist Carlo Valerio Bellieni
on the use of stem cells from amniotic fluid

"Young humans have now been reduced to biomedical waste. I believe if this discussion on frozen embryos goes to waste, we will have nothing left to stand on," he said, "and I truly believe that the true measure of greatness of a society is always measured by how it treats its weakest members."

—Father Tadeusz Pacholczyk, Director
National Catholic Bioethics Center in Philadelphia
cathnews.net

"Every believer in this world must be a spark of light, a core of love, life-giving leaven in the mass: and the more he is so, the more he will live, in his innermost depths, in communion with God."

—Pope John XXIII

Every child born into the world is a new thought of God, an ever fresh and radiant possibility.

—Kate Douglas Wiggin
wrote *Rebecca Of Sunnybrook Farm*

"The killing of the guilty is not the way to rebuild justice and reconcile society, rather there is a risk of nourishing the spirit of revenge and inciting fresh violence."

—Vatican spokesperson, Fr. Federico Lombardi
S.J.,
on the execution of Saddam Hussein
(Source: *Holy See Office Press*)

There are only two ways to live your life. One as though nothing is a miracle. The other as though everything is a miracle.

—Albert Einstein

Actually, one might blame cows for Kenya's lack of trade leverage. Cow's living in the

"Whatever we do for the poor and afflicted—or against them—we do for or against Christ. This is why we defend the dignity of the human person. ... This is why, even in a complicated, globalized economy, we work for laws that promote peace, justice, cultural and social reconciliation, and the love of our neighbors."

—Archbishop José Gómez, San Antonio