



## John Paul II Highlights Humanity's Four Challenges In Annual Address to Diplomatic Corps Accredited to the Holy See

VATICAN CITY, JAN. 10, 2005 ([Zenit.org](http://Zenit.org))

- Life, food, peace and freedom are the four urgent challenges now facing humanity, according to John Paul II.

The Pope highlighted these challenges in a full analysis of the international situation, during his traditional new-year meeting today with ambassadors of the countries that have full diplomatic relations with the Holy See. The envoys, from 174 countries, were joined by representatives of the European Union, Russia, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and the Order of Malta.

**Life**—In his long address delivered in French, the Holy Father mentioned first of all "the challenge of life ... the first gift which God has given us," whose safeguarding and promotion is the "primary task" of the state.

"The challenge to life has grown in scale and urgency in recent years," he said. "It has involved particularly the beginning of human life, when human beings are at their weakest and most in need of protection. . ."

The challenge to defend life, John Paul II continued, also implies the defense of "the very sanctuary of life: the family..."

**Food**—The second challenge highlighted by John Paul II is that of food, in reference to the "hundreds of millions of human beings suffering from grave malnutrition" and the "million of children" who every year "die of hunger or its effects."

The Pontiff acknowledged that there are encouraging initia-

tives in this connection, from international organizations and states and civil society.

"Yet all this is not enough," he said. "An adequate response to this need, which is growing in scale and urgency, calls for a vast mobilization of public opinion; the same applies all the more to political leaders, especially in those countries enjoying a sufficient or even prosperous standard of living. . ."

**Peace**—"Peace" was the third challenge mentioned in the papal address.

"How many wars and armed conflicts," the Pope lamented, "continue to take place--between states, ethnic groups, peoples and groups living in the same territory. From one end of the world to the other, they are claiming countless innocent victims and spawning so many other evils!"

The Holy Father mentioned the conflicts in the Middle East, Africa, Asia and Latin America "where recourse to arms and violence has not only led to incalculable material damage, but also fomented hatred and increased causes of tension."

"In addition to these tragic evils there is the brutal, inhuman phenomenon of terrorism, a scourge which has taken on a global dimension unknown to previous generations," he said.

**Freedom**—Lastly, the Pontiff mentioned the "challenge of freedom," in particular, that of religious freedom, after a year that has witnessed in numerous countries a lively debate about the concept of secularism.

"There need be no fear that legitimate religious freedom would limit other freedoms or be injurious to the life of civil society," he contended. "On the contrary: together with religious freedom, all other freedoms develop and thrive, inasmuch as freedom is an indivisible good, the prerogative of the human person and his dignity."

Neither should there be a fear that religious freedom, once granted to the Catholic Church, would intrude upon the realm of political freedom and the competencies proper to the state."

### *Prayer for the Decade of Nonviolence*

I bow to the sacred in all creation.  
May my spirit fill the world with beauty and wonder.  
May my mind seek truth with humility and openness.  
May my heart forgive without limit.  
May my love for friend, enemy and outcast be without measure.  
May my needs be few and my living simple.  
May my actions bear witness to the suffering of others.  
May my hands never harm a living being.  
May my steps stay on the journey of justice.  
May my tongue speak for those who are poor without fear of the powerful.  
May my prayer rise with patient discontent until no child is hungry.  
May my life's work be a passion for peace and nonviolence.  
May my soul rejoice in the present moment.  
May my imagination overcome death and despair with new possibility.  
And may I risk reputation, comfort and security to bring this hope to the children.



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## From the Director

As I begin to formulate this newsletter, I have one constant on my mind. I want winter over. I heard the other day on the television news that Cleveland's snowfall this year ranks in the top five years of total snowfall. I don't want any more snow. The record is not important to me. Still, I am beginning to see some hope. The days are definitely getting longer. I really enjoy the light at dinnertime. The sun even seems to shine a bit warmer in the daytime. We are on the brink of Spring and an Easter people.

It seems that the climate of Pro Life and the dignity of the human person is much the same as this end of the winter. Now I am sure that the winter here in Cleveland will end much sooner than the winter of Pro Life, but it is a winter just the same. We continue to endure more bad news about life that's not valued even when we think we've heard enough. Reports on execution, abortion, euthanasia, battles and starvation weigh us down. Even the weather report says three days of snow ahead as the news reports are full of lives ended.

I still have hope. When I see light like the sunshine, I remind myself that we keep moving forward. We are a people of life. We are a Resurrection people. We know that, in time, life will prevail. God's love will prevail. God's love is prevailing. We have had some sunny days, already, while striving to help others live out a Consistent Ethic of Life. Just recently the United States abolished the death penalty for juveniles. Maybe we are beginning to see that killing someone is not valuing God's creation. That very same week the United Nations recommended to the General Assembly the adoption of a declaration on human cloning by which Member States would be called on to prohibit all forms of human cloning inasmuch as they are incompatible with human dignity and the protection of human life. The declaration passed 71-35-43. Wow, the world does value human dignity and life.

I have been reading a book about the spirituality of winter to help me cope. In an essay called "Winter," by Donald Hall, he says, "In January he harvested another winter crop, the crop that people forget . . . the harvest of ice . . . packed against warm weather, six months hence" Years ago in the dead of winter people harvested their ice. When ice was the hardship they were enduring, they looked to the future when ice would be a celebration in their dry mouths and a cooling

on their hot perspiring skin. They had hope amid their hardship. For those of us committed to furthering the dignity of the human person, it seems we are in the end of a long winter. We have no idea how long it will be until our world respects all life, but we know it will happen. We have certainty in our faith in the Paschal Mystery. Life wins over death. Summer comes after winter. All will be reconciled in the Kingdom. When we truly live as one Body of Christ, all the parts will be valued for what they bring to the whole. Those that are lost will find their way home. Those that are oppressed will have their voice, their rights. Those who need others to speak for them will have the voice of dignity on their side.

So we continue on our walk from winter to spring, from devaluing to dignity and from forgotten to upheld. We continue to look to the great history of our Church in its efforts to love the unlovable and value the devalued. From the writers of the Gospels, to the innumerable encyclicals, to the people working one on one with the oppressed, to the countless intercessions prayed each day for life, to the people using their financial resources in pursuit of life, our Church has a long, consistent history of supporting the dignity of the human person. We continue to see this in so many ways in the life of our Church today.

I hope my efforts in this ministry of Pro Life may be of assistance to you in your own work towards life. I am using the medium of the Internet more and more to provide information that I value. I have been using the Pro Life website to publish Action Alerts. In the past month I have added about five alerts. I have also begun to use the Diocesan E-Newsletter to post Pro Life messages for anyone in the diocese with access to the Internet. Within Catholic Charities, I am working to inform employees about the Consistent Ethic of Life teaching of the Church and how we can live it out. I also try to make myself available for email and phone consultation with individuals. Occasionally, I am able to speak to groups throughout the diocese. Most importantly, I am committed to keep on top of issues through constant research and unending prayer. As I open my mind to the signs of Spring, like the harvest of maple syrup and the slow retreat of the piles of snow, I pray that my mind might be opened more and more. I pray that I might see and respect the dignity of all life. And I pray I might also find my place in transforming our world to "a people for life."

—Peggy Gerovac

Nothing is more practical than finding God,  
that is than falling in love in a quite absolute, final way.  
What you are in love with, what seizes your imagination,  
will affect everything.

It will decide what will get you out of bed in the morning,  
what you will do with your evenings, how you spend your weekends,  
what you read, Who you know, what breaks your heart,  
and what amazes you with joy and gratitude.

Fall in love, stay in love, and it will decide everything.

—Fr. Pedro Arrupe, S.J.



### **Words for quite moments . . .**

*How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and strong.*

*Because someday in your life you will have been all of these.*

—George Washington Carver

# Message for World Communications Day

## “At the Service of Understanding Among Peoples”

VATICAN CITY, JAN. 24, 2005 ([Zenit.org](http://Zenit.org)). John Paul II



Dear Brothers and Sisters,

1. We read in the Letter of Saint James, "From the same mouth come blessing and cursing. My brothers and sisters, this ought not to be so" (James 3:10). The Sacred Scriptures remind us that words have an extraordinary power to bring people together or to divide them, to forge bonds of friendship or to provoke hostility.

Not only is this true of words spoken by one person to another: It applies equally to communication taking place at any level. Modern technology places at our disposal unprecedented possibilities for good, for spreading the truth of our salvation in Jesus Christ and for fostering harmony and reconciliation. Yet its misuse can do untold harm, giving rise to misunderstanding, prejudice and even conflict...

2. One important way of achieving this end is through education. The media can teach billions of people about other parts of the world and other cultures. . . . Accurate knowledge promotes understanding, dispels prejudice, and awakens the desire to learn more. Images especially have the power to convey lasting impressions and to shape attitudes. They teach people how to regard members of other groups and nations, subtly influencing whether they are considered as friends or enemies, allies or potential adversaries.

When others are portrayed in hostile terms, seeds of conflict are sown which can all too easily escalate into violence, war, or even genocide. Instead of building unity and under-

standing, the media can be used to demonize other social, ethnic and religious groups, fomenting fear and hatred. Those responsible for the style and content of what is communicated have a grave duty to ensure that this does not happen. Indeed, the media have enormous potential for promoting peace and building bridges between peoples, breaking the fatal cycle of violence, reprisal, and fresh violence that is so widespread today...

3. If such a contribution to peace-making is one of the significant ways the media can bring people together, its influence in favor of the swift mobilization of aid in response to natural disasters is another. It was heartening to see how quickly the international community responded to the recent tsunami that claimed countless victims.

4. The Second Vatican Council reminded us: "If the media are to be correctly employed, it is essential that all who use them know the principles of the moral order and apply them faithfully" ("Inter Mirifica," 4).

The fundamental ethical principle is this: "The human person and the human community are the end and measure of the use of the media of social communication; communication should be by persons to persons for the integral development of persons" ("Ethics in Communications," 21)...

*From the Vatican, 24 January 2005, the Feast of Saint Francis de Sales*

## Ambassadors for Life

Over thirty eighth grade students from St. Hilary School in Akron are involved in a very special pro life ministry. The students meet to discuss and learn about pro life issues. Then the small groups interview professionals in related fields. The interviews involve different types of professionals involved in the same issue, but from different perspectives. When they interviewed me about Project Rachel, I was so impressed. They were interested in why someone needs post abortion support, how Project Rachel helps them and how I personally am inspired to help. They told me about their conversation with a judge about her connection to abortion. In the past they have even spoken with a physician who performs abortions. The students said they got involved with the Ambassadors for Life to learn more and also as a preparation for high school. We had a very enjoyable dialogue. I really was awed by the program, the adult support and wonderful way the youth are taught a very strong method of moral decision making including studying and understanding the issues. Congratulations Ambassadors for Life for valuing the sanctity of life and becoming informed about how life can be respected.

by Peggy Gerovac

"We will take care of the child. It is very difficult to love a janjaweed, but we will try to accept him as our own."

MOHAMMAD, whose sister Ashta gave birth after being raped by a janjaweed militia fighter in Darfur, Sudan. *NY Times Online, February 11, 2005*

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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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## Upcoming Events . . .

**Saturday, April 16, 2005—Pax Christi-Cleveland West** will welcome Mr. Michael Reiling, theology teacher from St. Edward H.S. Topic: Embryonic stem cell research and morality issues. Location: Annunciation Catholic Church Rectory, 4697 W. 130th St., Cleveland. Shared supper at 6 pm; meeting at 7 pm. For more info., call Tim Musser (216) 749-5223.

**Saturday, May 7, 2005—Appreciation and Education Dinner** sponsored by the Right to Life of Summit County. Topic: Stem cell presentation by Dr. Ventosa. Doors open at 6 pm; dinner at 7 pm at the Cuyahoga Falls Natatorium. For \$250 you can reserve a booth and receive 4 dinner tickets. See website for more information: [www.SummitRTL.com](http://www.SummitRTL.com).



## Websites of Interest . . .

### Pro Life Office

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

### Bethesda House of Mercy

*A community of hope and healing for those suffering after abortion.*

[www.bethesdathehouseofmercy.org](http://www.bethesdathehouseofmercy.org)

### Catholic Campaign to End the Death Penalty

[www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/deathpenalty/index.shtml](http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/deathpenalty/index.shtml)

### Her Choice

*Pregnant? Scared? Confused? Alone?*

[www.herchoice.org](http://www.herchoice.org)

### Teaching About Poverty

[www.povertyusa.org](http://www.povertyusa.org)

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



## Special Needs . . .

**Alternaterm Pregnancy Services—Change for Life**—This is a special fundraising opportunity for churches to help support our new ultrasound program. We provide decorated baby bottles, and church members take them home and fill them with change. Call (216) 371-4848 for more info.

**Catholic Worker** is in need of items, such as toilet/facial tissue, cleaners, coffee, sugar, salt, dish liquid, blankets, razors, deodorant, bath/face towels, peanut butter, jelly, sanitary napkins, playing cards, etc. Donations can be dropped off at the Worker House: 3601 Whitman Ave. (behind St. Pat's Church). Please call ahead (216) 631-3059. Donations also accepted at 4241 Lorain Ave., M-T-W-TH 7-9 pm and Sat-Sun 9:30-11:30 am.

**The Michael Abdenour House and Gurnick Place** provides housing for approx. 20 Aids Taskforce of Greater Cleveland clients. They are presently in need of personal hygiene needs (*unused/packaged*) and household furnishings & supplies (*new or nearly new*). Contact Michael Fisher (216) 621-0766, x 225.



## Did you know?

- Africa is a vast continent, with more than 50 countries and a wide variety of peoples and cultures.
- Most national boundaries were drawn by European colonial powers with no regard to the tribal allegiances of the people. This led directly to many of Africa's current problems.
- Sudan, a creation of English colonialism, has two identities. In the north, the people are principally Arabic and practice Islam. In the south, people are mostly black African and practice Christianity and traditional African religions.

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## Catholic Bishops Urge Congress To Decide Budget On How It Enhances Lives, Dignity Of Needy Here, Abroad

WASHINGTON (February 15, 2005) —

In the coming weeks, Congress will be called upon to adopt a budget resolution for the United States government, setting priorities for our nation. These decisions will reflect not only economic policies but moral choices as well. As President of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, I urge you to give priority attention in the budget to the needs of poor and vulnerable people both here and abroad.

The nation's budget priorities should include social investments that promote the well-being of the poor in our country and around the world, investments in the health of our nation and the peace of the world. Preserving an adequate safety net for the poor and vulnerable at home, protecting refugees fleeing persecution abroad, and promoting human development in

poor countries are fundamental moral obligations of a responsible society that must be met alongside other priorities like homeland security and military expenditures.

One of the basic functions of government is to raise sufficient resources so that it can undertake efforts to promote the common good. When the basic requirements of human life and dignity for many in our country and throughout the world go unmet, we must insist that adequate federal revenues be available to help meet these basic needs. The deficits, which result from inadequate revenues, can be justified as a necessary response to serious circumstances. However, if government continues to spend far more money than it takes in year after year, it could seriously limit its ability to meet our moral obligations to respond to basic human needs now and in the future. Any new tax proposals should be evaluated in that light before being adopted.

Congress should structure a budget that guarantees adequate funding to assist those trying to escape joblessness or move beyond welfare, educate their children, gain access to health care, or overcome hunger and homelessness. Our nation also has international responsibilities that require increased investments in promoting peace and security as well as international development. Such investments and assistance could well improve dramatically our nation's response to relief, development, and health needs in Africa and other underdeveloped parts of the world and to provide urgently needed assistance and protection to refugees.

In January, Pope John Paul II reminded us of our obligation to the common good: "Each person, in some way, is called to work for the common good, constantly looking out for the good of others as if it were his own. This responsibility belongs in a particular way to political authorities at every level, since they are called to create that sum of social conditions which permit and foster in human beings the integral development of their person." (World Day Of Peace Message, January 2005)

As pastors, we believe that a fundamental moral measure of our nation's budget policy is whether it enhances or undermines the lives and dignity of those most in need. Sadly, political pressure frequently has left poor children and families missing in the national debate and without a place at the table. Our nation needs a genuinely bipartisan commitment to focus on the common good of all and on the special needs of the poor and vulnerable in particular. These are tough times. There are few easy choices. But there are some "right" choices. In a time of war, mounting deficits, and growing needs, our nation's leaders must ensure that there are adequate resources to protect people who are poor and vulnerable both at home and around the world.

*Office of Media Relations, Washington, D.C.*

## "Myths" In the Debate About Stem Cells

*Excerpt from Origins, November 18, 2004, Vol. 34, No. 23.*

- **Stem cells can only come from embryos.** Stem cells can come from many sources such as umbilical cords, the placenta, amniotic fluid, adult tissue and organs such as bone marrow.
- **The Catholic Church is against stem cell research.** The Catholic Church opposes only one form of stem cell research, ie., embryonic stem cell research, but sustains no moral problems with three other forms of this research.
- **Embryonic research has the greatest promise.** Adult stem cells have already been shown to be sources for cure.
- **Therapeutic and reproductive cloning are fundamentally different.** The creation of cloned embryos can be used to harvest cells or to create a baby. The same series of technical steps are used. The difference lies with what will be done with the cloned human embryo.
- **Somatic cell nuclear transfer can be done without cloning an embryo.** Somatic cell nuclear transfer is the process by which the nucleus of an egg is taken out (enucleated) and replaced with a nucleus from an adult cell. At the present time, scientists cannot bypass the creation of a human embryo in the production of tissues and organs. In the future "de-differentiation" might be possible...There would be no moral objection in this process.



## Sister Peter Claver Spent Life Working for Poor and Forgotten

A fledgling ballerina in New York City, 20 year old Hannah Fahy asked God to make her life worthwhile. She spent the rest of her 105 years as Sister Peter Claver, ministering to prisoners.

by Rosemary Fielding

In 1923, at age 24, Sister Peter Claver Fahy of the Precious Blood prayed, "Make my life worthwhile." At 95, she said, "Things keep bobbing up for me to do for God." When she died last month at the age of 105, Sister Peter Claver's work as a Sister of the *Missionary Servants of the Most Blessed Trinity* had spanned eight decades. She worked tirelessly, successfully and loving on behalf of the poor, destitute and outcasts.

In 1933 in New York, Sister Peter Claver gave Dorothy Day a one dollar donation that helped pay for the first edition of the *Catholic Worker*. Later she gave Dorothy the retreat notes from the "famous retreat" of Father Onesimus Lacourture, S.J. "This is what I've been looking for since I became a Catholic," Dorothy told Sister Peter Claver. The two of them would go on to make the retreat fourteen times together and become close friends with a priest most-associated with the retreat, the late *Father John J. Hugo* of Pittsburgh. (*Weapons of the Spirit: Selected Writings of Father John Hugo*, ed. By David Scott and Mike Aquilina, *Our Sunday Visitor* Publishing Division). Today the Catholic Worker House in Philadelphia is named after Sister Peter Claver.

Sister Peter Claver worked in backwoods communities in Georgia and Alabama, with the Choctaw Indians in Mississippi; developed Houses of Prayer for the poor and homeless

and her fellow sisters in Georgia, New Jersey and Pennsylvania; taught elementary school; opened the medical library of Holy Name of Jesus Hospital in Alabama; helped to found the Chol-Chol Foundation for Human Development among the poor Indians of Chile.

After retirement in 1979 (to the Missionary Servants' Motherhouse in Northeast Philadelphia), she taught reading and writing to the prisoners at Holmesburg Prison in Philadelphia, taking special care for each inmate's "eternal soul." "The first thing I do is to trace the Sign of the Cross on their forehead," she said. The prisoners often asked her to instruct them in the Catholic faith. Her "driving force" resulted in the creation of Hannah House for women (named after her) and Hospital-ity House for men, both "Half-way Back" homes for prisoners just released from jail.

From 1999 until her death, when she could no longer visit the prisoners nor do her own correspondence, her secretary spent one day a week writing letters for Sister Peter Claver so that she could continue her work of "connecting people" to each other and to God. "You must say "Yes" to what God says, and "No, to yourself," Sister Peter Claver would tell the prisoners. Sister Peter Claver did just this. Her life produced "much fruit."

January 28, 2005

## Life Issues Forum—Roe: How Little We Know

by Gail Quinn, Executive Director of the Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, Washington, D.C.

Late in February, Harris released its latest poll on abortion. The results showed a bare majority of Americans still supporting *Roe v. Wade*, the U.S. Supreme Court decisions that legalized abortion nationwide (52%-47%). This is a significant drop from the 57% who indicated support for *Roe* as recently as 1998.

Do 52% of Americans really support legal abortion throughout the nine months of pregnancy? The simple answer is no. They don't. The same poll shows that 72 percent of Americans would ban abortion in the second trimester, and a whopping 86 percent (that's almost 9 out of 10 Americans) would do so in the third trimester.

So why do people indicate support for *Roe v. Wade*? Again, a simple answer: Most think they know about *Roe v. Wade*. That's the decision, they say, that legalized abortion in the first three months of pregnancy. It's not surprising that they think this. For more than three decades the media has reported that *Roe* legalized abortion in the first trimester of pregnancy. On January 23, 1973, the day after the Supreme Court released its abortion decision the *New York Times'* headline blared: "High court rules abortions legal the first three months."

That headline—and most to follow for three decades—only told part of the story. *Roe v. Wade* did legalize abortion in the first three months. It also legalized abortion in the second three months, and in the third three months as well.

*Roe* said abortion could not be restricted for any reason during the first three months of pregnancy. In the second trimester of pregnancy, abortion could be regulated, but only to protect the health of the mother. After viability (between 24 and 28 weeks gestation, the Court said), abortion must be allowed to protect the mother's life and health.

So abortion is, or can be, restricted later in pregnancy? Not really. In *Roe's* companion case, *Doe v. Bolton*, which the Supreme Court said must be read with *Roe*, "health"—only as it relates to abortion—was defined this way: "all factors—physical, emotional, psychological, familial, and the woman's age—relevant to the well-being of the patient."

By definition, abortion has to be legal even in the nine months of pregnancy, if the abortion doctor invokes any of these reasons for aborting the baby. In 2000 the U.S. Supreme Court said that a ban on partial-birth abortion could not be upheld because it had no "health" exception as demanded by *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton*. A reasonable question might be: how could it benefit a mother's health to kill an unborn child in the seventh month of pregnancy rather than complete a live delivery. The Court is not relying on reason; it is relying on *Roe*.

As long as *Roe* stands as the law of the land, there can be no meaningful limits on abortion at any time during the entire nine months of pregnancy. *Roe v. Wade* must be overturned.