



FOR LIFE

Volume 13, Issue 1

First Quarter
2007

World Day of Peace 2007

The Human Person, the Heart of Peace

—Benedict XVI's Second Message for the World Day of Peace

Extracts from the Message are given below:



"As one created in the image of God, each individual human being has the dignity of a person; he or she is not just something, but someone, capable of self-knowledge, self-possession, free self-giving and entering into communion with others."

"Likewise, peace is both gift and task. If it is true that peace between individuals and peoples - the ability to live together and to build relationships of justice and solidarity - calls for unfailing commitment on our part, it is also true, and indeed more so, that peace is a gift from God."

"The body of rules for individual action and the reciprocal relationships of persons in accordance with justice and solidarity, is inscribed on human consciences, in which the wise plan of God is reflected. ... Peace is thus also a task demanding of everyone a personal response consistent with God's plan. The criterion inspiring this response can only be respect for the 'grammar' written on human hearts by the divine Creator. . .

"The duty to respect the dignity of each human being, in whose nature the image of the Creator is reflected, means in consequence that the person can not be disposed of at will. Those with greater political, technical, or economic power may not use that power to violate the rights of others who are less fortunate. Peace is based on respect for the rights of all. Conscious of this, the Church champions the fundamental rights of each person.

"In particular she promotes and defends respect for the life and the religious freedom of everyone. Respect for the right to life at every stage firmly establishes a principle of decisive importance: life is a gift which is not completely at the disposal of the subject. ... The right to life and to the free expression of personal faith in God is not subject to the power of man.

"As far as the right to life is concerned, we must denounce its widespread violation in our society: alongside the victims of armed conflicts, terrorism and the different forms of violence, there are the silent deaths caused by hunger, abortion, experimentation on human embryos and euthanasia. How can we fail to see in all this an attack on peace? Abortion and embryonic experimentation constitute a direct denial of that attitude of acceptance of others which is indispensable for establishing lasting relationships of peace. . .

"At the origin of many tensions that threaten peace are surely the many unjust inequalities still tragically present in our world. Particularly insidious among these are, on the one hand, inequality in access to essential goods like food, water, shelter, health; on the other hand, there are persistent inequalities between men and women in the exercise of basic human rights.

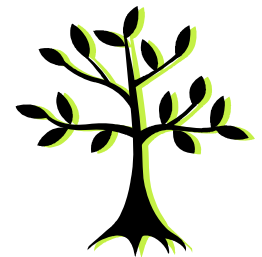
"Similarly, inadequate consideration for the condition of women helps to create instability in the fabric of society. I think of the exploitation of women who are treated as objects, and of the many ways that a lack of respect is shown for their dignity; I also think - in a different context - of the mindset persisting in some cultures, where women are still firmly subordinated to the arbitrary decisions of men, with grave consequences for their personal dignity and for the exercise of their fundamental freedoms. There can be no illusion of a secure peace until these forms of discrimination are also overcome, since they injure the personal dignity impressed by the Creator upon every human being."

(Continued on page 2)

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WHENEVER PEOPLE SEEK THE GOOD,
JUSTICE, HUMANITARIAN LOVE,
SOLIDARITY COMMUNION
AND UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN PEOPLE, . . .
THERE WE CAN SAY, WITH
ALL CERTAINTY THAT
THE RESURRECTED ONE IS PRESENT.
BECAUSE THE CAUSE FOR WHICH HE LIVED,
SUFFERED, WAS TRIED AND EXECUTED
IS BEING CARRIED FORWARD.



—LEONARDO BOFF 1978

Please copy and distribute freely.

From the Director

At this time of the year we often spend time in reflection of our lives, so it seems suitable that I reflect with you on the status of **For Life**. In our last issue, we sent out postcards to gain ideas of the effect of the publication on the status of pro life ministry in the diocese. We received a very good response. I am pleased to say it seems **For Life** is a ministry valued by its recipients and there is some room for improvement in the future. I would like to share with you some of what we heard and some responses that I have.

Postcard Responses

Has this publication been of assistance to you in your ministry? Yes = 101; No = 11; Blank = 4

I pass this publication on to others as a resource of authentic Catholic Social Teaching? Yes = 78; No = 26; Blank = 12

First I would like to thank the members of The Catholic Coalition of Parish Pro Life Representatives who are the dedicated volunteers who assemble and prepare **For Life** for mailing. Every quarter they spend a full morning working expediently to prepare the mailing. This is a blessing to each and every person who receives **For Life** as well as Catholic Charities. The cooperation and dedication of these volunteer's is first rate.

I was happily surprised to hear some of the ways **For Life** has been a help to ministry within the diocese. Several priests said they used something from **For Life** in the preparation of a homily. Bulletin announcements were created by several parishes from the contents of the publication. Some parish and school newsletters were also able to use life information received. Extra copies of the entire **For Life** publication are made available in some parishes or to Respect Life/Pro Life parish groups. Bulletin boards seem to be a good place for both parishes and schools to post **For Life**. Within the Diocese and Catholic Charities it seems the publication gets passed on to employees. Finally, people ministering in both schools and parishes expressed their use of **For Life** to assist them in providing Catholic teaching.

Positive and negative comments were received sometimes on the same topic. For instance, some people

were happy of the publication of events in the diocese. Others felt that events in their area were not listed. I receive lots of information in the Pro Life Office via post office and email. When I receive an event notice, I save it for the issue that best applies. If you are not seeing events published that you feel should be published, it is probably because I have not been notified. In the future, I will put a short request in each issue of **For Life** soliciting information for the next publication (Can you find it in this issue?). Some people have also asked for bulletin suitable articles. We may publish some bulletin specific columns in the future.

There were a number of items people felt were missing from **For Life**. I am often asked to publish Action Alerts related to life issues legislation. In my tenure I have only done this once. My policy to publish alerts either endorsed by the Diocese or The Catholic Conference of Ohio. Most of these alerts come to me with only a couple of days or even hours before the bill goes before the house or senate. As appropriate, I will include them in **For Life**. I have been trying to plan for an email alert system. This could also facilitate a distribution of **For Life** by email for those who desire an electronic version. What I can say for now is that an email distribution is in development.

I must again thank all of you who took the time to complete the evaluation and offer your very helpful comments. It was an aid to the assessment of **For Life** and also a planning guide for our future. What I am most excited and pleased about is the wonderful pro life ministry in your personal lives, your schools, your parishes and many other places in the diocese. Thank you all for your dedication to the dignity and sacredness of life. May God bless you and all the ways you honor and uphold life in our world.

—Peggy Gerovac

World Day of Peace (Continued from page 1)

"The destruction of the environment, its improper or selfish use, and the violent hoarding of the earth's resources cause grievances, conflicts and wars, precisely because they are the consequences of an inhumane concept of development..."

"The new shape of conflicts, especially since the terrorist threat unleashed completely new forms of violence, demand that the international community reaffirm international humanitarian law, and apply it to all present-day situations of armed conflict, including those not currently provided for by international law.

"Unfortunately, threatening clouds continue to gather on humanity's horizon. The way to ensure a future of peace for everyone is found not only in international accords for the non-proliferation of nuclear weapons, but also in the determined commitment to seek their reduction and definitive dismantling. ... The fate of the whole human family is at stake!"

"Finally, I wish to make an urgent appeal to the People of God: let every Christian be committed to tireless peace-making and strenuous defense of the dignity of the human person and his inalienable rights. ... In Christ we can find the ultimate reason for becoming staunch champions of human dignity and courageous builders of peace."

—VIS 061212 (1770)

Prayer Corner

*Good and Gracious God,
Source of all life,
All creation is charged with your Divine Energy.*

*Ignite your Spark within us,
that we may know ourselves
as truly human and holy,
irrevocably part of the Web of life.*

*A Prayer for Global Restoration
—Pax Christi USA*



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Curing Illness Must Not Involve Suppressing Human Life

“Stem cells, what future for therapy?”

—VATICAN CITY, SEP 16, 2006 (VIS)

. . . Benedict XVI mentioned the promising horizons being opened in the cure of illnesses involving "the degeneration of tissues with consequent risks of invalidity and death for those affected."

The Holy Father encouraged those working in Catholic-inspired scientific institutions to increase research in this field and "to establish closer contact among themselves and with others who seek, using appropriate methods, to relieve human suffering."

"In the face of the frequent and unjust accusations of insensitivity directed against the Church," he added, "I would like to underline the constant support she has given over the course of her two thousand-year history to research aimed at the cure of illnesses and at the good of humanity. If there has been - and there still is - resistance, it was and is against those forms of research that involve the planned suppression of human beings who are already alive, though they may not yet have been born."

The Pope then highlighted how history "has condemned such science in the past, and will condemn it in the future, not only because it is devoid of the light of God, but also because it is devoid of humanity." . . .

VIS 060918 (410)

Cinema Urged to Uphold Human's Dignity

—ROME, NOV. 15, 2006 (Zenit.org)



The cinema must "knock down the wall of indifference" to violations of the human being's dignity, says the president of the Pontifical Council for Social Communications. . . .

The Vatican official said that the cinema "can be, above all, the means to which the historic memory of all these forgotten, silent realities can be entrusted, thanks in part to the extraordinary power of the image, the universal language that is able to reach the heart and cannot leave one indifferent."

The archbishop added: "The dignity of the human being must not be suffocated."

After reminding that young people can learn from the cinema "how dangerous hatred is, how unacceptable racism is, how destructive religious ignorance is," he also reminded that the Church "is always on the side of the weak and the forgotten," and that the cinema "has been able to give a voice to many who have been rejected."

—ZE06111505

Living the Gospel of Life

—an excerpt from #23 USCCB



As we stressed in our 1995 statement *Political Responsibility*: "The application of Gospel values to real situations is an essential work of the Christian community." Adopting a consistent ethic of life, the Catholic Church promotes a broad spectrum of issues "seeking to protect human life and promote human dignity from the inception of life to its final moment."⁹ Opposition to abortion and euthanasia does not excuse indifference to those who suffer from poverty, violence and injustice. Any politics of human life must work to resist the violence of war and the scandal of capital punishment. Any politics of human dignity must seriously address issues of racism, poverty, hunger, employment, education, housing, and health care. Therefore, Catholics should eagerly involve themselves as advocates for the weak and marginalized in all these areas. Catholic public officials are obliged to address each of these issues as they seek to build consistent policies which promote respect for the human person at all stages of life. *But being 'right' in such matters can never excuse a wrong choice regarding direct attacks on innocent human life.* Indeed, the failure to protect and defend life in its most vulnerable stages renders suspect any claims to the 'rightness' of positions in other matters affecting the poorest and least powerful of the human community.

After reading this issue of "For Life":



1. What is one way you are currently honoring the sacredness of another in your daily life?
2. Consider one new way you will pay attention

Volume 13

Issue 1

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

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Upcoming Events

Sun., Jan. 7, 2007—34th Annual *Justice March for Preborn Children* will begin at 2 pm. Meet at Great Lakes Mall, near the Barnes & Noble entrance. Signs and warm refreshments will be provided. For more info, contact Lake County Right to Life at lcrtl@ncweb.com or 440-255-5257.

Sun.-Mon., Jan. 21-22—*March for Life* sponsored by S.W. Cuyahoga Right to Life. Bus Departs St. John Bosco, 6480 Pearl Rd, Parma Hts. at 9 pm. Sunday. Rally in Washington, DC at noon. March at 1:15 pm from Washington Monument to the US Capitol and Supreme Court. For Reservations call 216-362-6091.

Sun.-Mon., Jan. 21-22—34th *Annual March for Life* in Washington, DC. Pro Life Commission of Immaculate Conception Church in Willoughby is chartering a bus. First come, first serve—\$50 per person. Bus will leave Sunday at 10 am from church parking lot. Contact Chuck or Jan at 440-257-7835 for reservations.

Mon., Jan. 22—27th *Annual Youth Rally for Life* will begin at noon on Cleveland's Public Square. Hear young people speak out on pro life social justice issues. For more information, contact 216-226-6663 or visit the website at: www.rallyforlife.org.

Sun., Mar. 4—*West Side Catholic Center*, Friends Benefit at Westwood Country Club. For ticket info, please contact Evelyn at evelynallen6681@sbcglobal.net or 440-871-6681.



Wish List . . .

St. Augustine Health Campus, 7801 Detroit Avenue, Cleveland requests the following items. Your support directed to our wish list or in kind donations not only provides for the ongoing needs of residents but dramatically reduces our expenses. Contact Dana at 216-939-7602 for info and/or to donate items.

- BP Gas Cards for Resident Vans (Towers & Manor)
- Travel size hand lotions & tissues for residents
- New men's/ladies' underwear/short sleeve T-shirts (S,M,L)
- Copy paper (white and colored)
- Sponsor a resident visit to the hair salon (\$11)

West Side Catholic Center, 3135 Lorain Ave., Cleveland, is in need of the following items. Call 216-631-4741 to donate.

- Baby cribs in good condition (will pick up)
- Clothing (men's pants, coats, gloves, boots)—large sizes
- Household goods (towels, sheets, blankets, pots, etc.)
- Kitchen (coffee, sugar, creamer, large garbage bags)
- Toiletries (soap, toothpaste/toothbrushes, deodorant, etc.)

Birthright International recently honored Director Bernice Wilson in recognition of her 35 years of service to the unborn babies and their mothers. Bernice was the founding director of the first office, which opened in Lakewood in 1971. All of Birthright's funding is from donations. To volunteer or to donate baby/maternity items, call 216-228-5998—Lakewood; 216-486-2800—Cleveland; 216-661-6400—Parma.

WEBSITE OF INTEREST

Center of Concern
Promoting Global Justice and Peace
www.coc.org



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

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Catholic Social Teaching and Environmental Ethics

—from “Renewing the Earth,” Pastoral Statement of the USCCB, 1992

The tradition of Catholic Social teaching offers a developing and distinctive perspective on environmental issues. We believe that the following themes drawn from this tradition are integral dimensions of ecological responsibility:

- ◆ a God-centered and sacramental view of the universe, which grounds human accountability for the fate of the earth;
- ◆ a consistent respect for human life, which extends to respect for all creation;
- ◆ a worldview affirming the ethical significance of *global interdependence and the common good*;
- ◆ an ethics of solidarity promoting cooperation and a just structure of sharing in the world community;
- ◆ an understanding of *the universal purpose of created things*, which requires equitable use of the earth’s resources;
- ◆ an option for the poor, which gives passion to the quest for an equitable and sustainable world;
- ◆ a conception of *authentic development*, which offers a direction for progress that respects human dignity and the limits of material growth.

The human being is not a disposable object, but every single individual represents God's presence in the world (cf. J. Ratzinger, “God and the Word,” Ignatius Press, 2002.)

Highlights of a Papal Address on Stem-Cell Research

—Benedict XVI, Sept. 16, 2006



“When science is applied to the alleviation of suffering and when it discovers on its way new resources, it shows two faces rich in humanity: through the sustained ingenuity invested in research, and through the benefit announced to all who are afflicted by sickness.”

“Those who provide financial means and encourage the necessary structures for study share in the merit of this progress on the path of civilization.”

“Somatic stem-cell research also deserves approval and encouragement when it felicitously combines scientific knowledge, the most advanced technology in the biological field and ethics that postulate respect for the human being at every stage of his or her existence.”

“The prospects opened by this new chapter in research are fascinating in themselves, for they give a glimpse of the possible cure of degenerative tissue diseases that subsequently threaten those affected with disability and death.”

The Church has constantly supported research dedicated to the cure of diseases and to the good of humanity throughout her 2,000-year-old history. “If there has been resistance -- and if there still is -- it was and is to those forms of research that provide for the planned suppression of human beings who already exist, even if they have not yet been born.”

“The good of human beings should not only be sought in universally valid goals, but also in the methods used to achieve them.”

“Just as a century ago it was the working classes which were oppressed in their fundamental rights, and the Church very courageously came to their defense by proclaiming the sacrosanct rights of the worker as a person, so now, when another category of persons is being oppressed in the fundamental right to life, the Church feels in duty bound to speak out with the same courage on be-

U.S. Bishops Press Amnesty International

—WASHINGTON, D.C., NOV. 22, 2006 (Zenit.org)



The U.S. bishops' conference appealed again to Amnesty International to reject a proposal to abandon its neutral stance on abortion for a policy that would promote abortion as a human right.

Deirdre McQuade, spokeswoman of the Pro-Life Activities Secretariat of the USCCB, reiterated the request ...

Bishop William Skylstad, president of the U.S. bishops' conference, made the first appeal on Sept. 15 in a letter to Amnesty International.

McQuade said during the press conference: “The right to life itself is fundamental. It is the prior condition of all the other human rights and its integrity depends on its being recognized by every member of the human family regardless of race, age, gender, condition or state of development.

“If Amnesty International were to affirm abortion as a human right, it would create inevitably a divergence with its Catholic members and would alienate many other people and organizations for whom the right to life is fundamental in the struggle for justice.” ...

Are we running out of space?

—from *Our Sunday Visitor*, October 29, 2006



Over the years, scientists and lobbyists have maintained that the U.S. population should be controlled lest we run out of space to put people. A report by the Center for Environment and Population released in August shows little threat to space:

- Each American occupies 20 percent more developed land—housing, schools, shopping and roads—than 20 years ago.
- Each American uses three times as much water as the world average; over half the original wetlands in the United States have been lost, mainly due to urban and suburban development and agriculture.
- Half the continental United States can no longer support its original vegetation; nearly 1,000 plant and animal species are listed as endangered or threatened, with 85 percent of those due to habitat loss or alteration.
- The United States consumes nearly 25 percent of the world's energy, though it has only 5 percent of the world's population, and has the highest per capita oil consumption worldwide.
- Each American produces about 5 pounds (2.3 kilogram) of trash a day, up from about 3 pounds (1.4 kilogram) in 1960; the current rate is about five times that in developing countries.

Source: Center for Environment and Population's "U.S. National Report on Population and the Environment" released August 2006, as reported by Reuters.

New Women's Health Science

Adapted from **Where Medicine, faith coexist**

—excerpts from Rob Stein, *The Washington Post*, Oct. 30, 2006

The Pope Paul VI Institute for the Study of Human Reproduction has become perhaps the most prominent women's health center serving Catholics and other doctors, medical students and patients who object for religious reasons to in vitro fertilization, contraceptives and other aspects of modern reproductive medicine.

"We have built a new women's health science," said Thomas W. Hilgers, who runs the institute. "Our system works cooperatively with the natural fertility cycle and enables doctors to treat women and married couples, especially Catholic married couples, in a way that allows them to live out their faith."

Hilgers and his supporters say the approach, called "natural procreative technology" or "NaPro Technology," can address a spectrum of women's health issues, including family planning, premenstrual syndrome, postpartum depression and infertility, without the use of birth control pills, sterilization, abortion or in vitro fertilization (IVF). Instead, Hilgers said he uses diagnostics, hormones and surgery to identify and treat underlying causes of reproductive ailments that other doctors often miss.

... Hilgers's work is endorsed by groups such as the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops and the Catholic Medical Association.

"Life is God's to create," Cami Carlson, a patient at the Institute, said, echoing the sentiment of half a dozen other women from around the United States and Mexico interviewed this month while being treated at the clinic. "It's a huge sense of peace knowing that we're going about things in a morally sound manner."

While most of the patients are Catholic, Hilgers accepts anyone. He said they are drawn by his holistic approach, attentive care and superior outcomes.

The institute also instructs laypeople on how to teach the Creighton system, and it has more than 1,000 "educators" and more than 100 centers offering the system around the United States and overseas.

In addition, it offers intensive seminars every fall and spring for doctors, residents, medical students and others.



Makes you go hmmm....

(A Column of Quotes)

"Even where abortion is publicly funded, the government does not insist on death. No officials are angry if funds previously allocated to subsidize abortion are left unused because women have freely chosen life. The abortion-related equivalent of embryonic stem cell funding would involve using taxes to pay women to abort their children, as part of scientific experiments aimed at distant and uncertain cures."

—Richard Stith, J.D., Ph.D.
Valparaiso University School of Law

"The gracious gift of likeness to God was not given to a mere section of humanity... it is a perfection that finds its way in equal measure to every member of the human race.

—St. Gregory of Nyssa

"An individual has not started living until he can rise above the narrow confines of his individualistic concerns to the broader concerns of all humanity."

—Martin Luther King, Jr.

"The Holy See is most appreciative of the documents that aim to intensify the struggle against human trafficking, with an approach that focuses on victims. The scourge of the sexual exploitation of children, often associated with human trafficking, calls for special action. For her part, the Catholic Church will not fail to arouse the world's conscience concerning the magnitude and seriousness of these scourges."

—VATICAN CITY, DEC. 6, 2006 (VIS)
Archbishop Mamberti

"A person is a person no matter how small."

—Dr. Seuss

"The first right of the human person, the right to life, entails a right to the means for the proper development of life, such as adequate health care."