**THE UNBORN**

*A Day of Prayer and Reparation for the Murder and Abuse of Unborn Children*

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“In the proclamation of this Gospel, we must not fear hostility or unpopularity, and we must refuse any compromise or ambiguity which might conform us to the world’s way of thinking (cf. Rom 12:2). We must be in the world but not of the world (cf. Jn 15:19; 17:16), drawing our strength from Christ, who by his Death and Resurrection has overcome the world (cf. Jn 16:33).” *Evangelium Vitae*, no. 82

We face a prevailing violence, “a conspiracy against human life” in our day. The culture of death “is actively fostered by powerful cultural, economic and political currents which encourage an idea of society excessively concerned with efficiency” (*EV*, no. 12). A preoccupation with the pleasures of earthly life has provoked a war of the powerful against the vulnerable. And once people identify the purpose of human existence as limited to this temporal world, anyone – i.e., the unborn child, elderly, sick, handicapped, and dying – who stands in their way is a threat and is to be eliminated.

This situation is enabled and emboldened by the progressive weakening in individual consciences and in society that has lost the sense of the incomparable worth of the human person. Consequently, many are unable to discern what is good, true, and beautiful from what is evil, false, and grotesque. The lines have become distorted. Many now declare what is good to be evil and what is evil to be good. Moreover, the moral weakening of our resistance to the culture of death has made most people insensitive, blind to the crimes and violence of abortion, euthanasia, embryonic stem cell research, human trafficking, pornography, and the exploitation and commercialization of unborn children.

Because of the widespread moral uncertainty and the hostile environment elicited, a fundamental truth is ignored – the intrinsic dignity of the human person, beginning from conception and enduring through to natural death. Catholics believe, “being in the image of God, the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. And he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead.” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 357)

Whenever a human person’s dignity is overlooked, devalued, or rejected, something essential is ignored, and the consequences of such an act to society and culture are far-reaching. Thus, the human person is the foundation of a moral vision for society, as enunciated by the *Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church*: “The origin of social life is therefore found in the human person, and society cannot refuse to recognize its active and responsible subject; every expression of society must be directed towards the human person.” (no. 106)

Therefore, **human beings***are* to be treated as “**ends**” and ***not***as “**means**.” Human life must be valued infinitely and *be treated with the respect due to a human person* – man (woman) is a person because of who he is, because of his being what he is, not because of what he can do or the functions that he can perform. Therefore, every person *is* of incomparable worth, more important than things, and *is* valuable, laying claim to certain fundamental rights in virtue of what he or she *is*. “Respect for the human person entails respect for the rights that flow from his dignity as a creature. These rights are prior to society and must be recognized by it” (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1930). And because human dignity is inherent, every human being of whatever age, size, degree of development, or physical or mental abilities has equal fundamental dignity. There is no moment or stage when a person’s life may be worthy and at another point be unworthy.

This understanding and belief must be the starting point of every decision and action; it should influence our behaviour, how we live, and the choices we make; it should give shape to how we relate to other people, create laws, and build societies and nations. Human beings as ends are to be *served* by governments and institutions – whose actions will be measured by whether they threaten or enhance the life and dignity of the human person.

But tragically, many governments and institutions do not pass the test. There is a “train” of crimes against human dignity (what some have labelled as a “chain of death”), beginning with the assault on the most vulnerable of the human family, the unborn – in their murder on an industrial scale and in the harvesting of their tissues and body parts for commercialization. Globally, every day over a hundred and fifty thousand unborn children are victim to the crime of abortion, fifty to sixty million annually. This means that in the last fifty years as many as 2.5 billion unborn children have been deliberately murdered, assassinated. The gravity of these crimes committed by the ever-expanding anti-life industry with its biomedical and pharmaceutical partners ***cannot***be ignored or allowed to continue.

The primary task before us, therefore, is to peel back the layers of obfuscation and deception and to *show* to the world *who* is at the centre of this debate: the human person.

To restore a Culture of Life, a society where human life is respected and served, is daunting and is not for the timid. And ejecting the anti-life machine, its lucrative industry, and its indoctrinated narrative will demand sacrifices, hardships, and heroic witnesses and actions. However, as Christians and as a people of life, ours is not to count the cost but to *fight the good fight*:

“Faced with so many opposing points of view, and a widespread rejection of sound doctrine concerning human life, we can feel that Paul’s entreaty to Timothy is also addressed to us: ‘Preach the word, be urgent in season and out of season, convince, rebuke, and exhort, be unfailing in patience and in teaching’ (2 Tim 4:2).” *Evangelium Vitae*, no. 82

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