

Ad Veritatem

Volume 11 Issue 9

St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

SEPTEMBER 2006

*"In all that he did, More sought to
befriend his children and lead them
to the divine Teacher within."*

*Thomas More:
A Portrait of Courage
Gerard Wegemer*

SEPTEMBER MEETING:

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 20, 2006 NOON

SPEAKER: CHARLES S. LIMANDRI, ESQ.

**TOPIC: "DEFENDING THE CROSS:
THE MT. SOLEDAD MEMORIAL LAWSUIT"**

DETAILS ON PAGE 3



"Ad Veritatem" is Latin for "Toward the truth."



WHO WE ARE

In 1966, the movie *A Man For All Seasons* inspired the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to recognize this film as the Picture of the Year. This was one of the few occasions in the history of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences where the life of a religious figure won the hearts of the motion picture industry's elite. The central figure portrayed in *Man For All Seasons* was, of course, St. Thomas More, the great lawyer, statesman, apologist, husband, father and faithful Catholic. In 2000, St. Thomas was honored as the Lawyer of the Millennium by a secular panel of historians for the British Commonwealth. Shortly thereafter, John Paul II declared St. Thomas as the Patron Saint of Statesmen.

Inspired by a homily given by Bishop Norman McFarland at the 1995 Red Mass of Orange County, five "fearless" members of the Orange County bar met shortly thereafter at the law offices of Rutan and Tucker in Costa Mesa. These lawyers all shared the realization that the legal practice takes a severe toll on the personal and spiritual lives of those involved in it and that many in the legal profession had become too focused on the material life with the natural consequence being the de-emphasis on their spiritual life. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the formation of a new organization for lawyers and judges in the County of Orange with its mission being to publicly support and encourage the spiritual development of its members in their Catholic faith. The group chose as its patron St. Thomas More, the greatest lawyer of his time, who was a dedicated husband and father with a deep and profound commitment to his Catholic faith, his profession and his fellow man. Thus the St. Thomas More Society of Orange County was born.

Attendance at the monthly meetings in the early years was sporadic. Our spiritual director, Fr Hugh Barbour, wisely advised us not to worry about numbers because it was more important "to be than to do or say." He encouraged the virtues of patience and perseverance. His sage advice, together with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and St. Thomas More, has led us to our current level of a fourteen member Board of Directors of lawyers and judges and a mailing list for the monthly newsletter of over 970.

The goal of the Society is to inspire and lift up the minds and hearts of the legal community of Orange County to follow the example of St. Thomas More by integrating God in every aspect of their professional and personal lives. The Society seeks to accomplish this goal through inspirational speakers at monthly meetings, this newsletter, the Red Mass, a website, an annual spiritual retreat and other events. The St. Thomas More Society also seeks to provide a haven where those who are committed to their Catholic faith as well as those who are seeking to learn more about the Church, can find fellowship and encouragement in the face of overwhelming media and cultural forces working against that pursuit.

St. Thomas More, please pray for us. ☩

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE at www.stthomasmore.net

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SEPTEMBER

MEETING

CHARLES S. LiMANDRI

Defending the Cross: The Mt Soledad Memorial Lawsuit



WHEN:

NOON

Wed. Sept. 20th

WHERE:

**First American
Title Ins. Co.
5 First American
Way, Santa Ana**

**FOR DIRECTIONS
CALL (714) 800-3000**

Attorney Charles S. LiMandri is the lead attorney in the Mt Soledad lawsuit defending the presence of a cross at the federal cemetery in San Diego.

In addition to his own active litigation practice, Charles is also the West Coast Director of the Thomas More Law Center (www.thomasmore.org) which is a non profit public interest law firm dedicated to defense and promotion of religious freedom of Christians, time-honored family values and the sanctity of human life. Charles graduated from Georgetown University Law Center in 1983. He was a summa cum laude graduate with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the University of San Diego in 1977. He also received a Diploma in International Law & Relations in 1980. Charles is AV rated by his peers and is a member of the Million Dollar Advocates Circle, American Board of Trial Advocacy, Bar Register of Preeminent Lawyers, and has received numerous awards and recognitions.

COST:

\$10 for lunch

For more information, please contact either Don Hunsberger (714) 663-8000 or dah@hunsbergerlaw.com or Anne Lanphar at (714) 250-8605 alanphar@firstam.com ☩

STM MONTHLY MTGS:

3RD WEDNESDAY OF MONTH:

**SEPTEMBER 20
OCTOBER 18
NOVEMBER 15
DECEMBER 20
JANUARY 17 ☩**

RESERVE THE DATE!

RED MASS

**MONDAY SEPT 25, 2006
HOLY FAMILY CATHEDRAL
6:00 PM MASS
RECEPTION FOLLOWING
FOR DETAILS, SEE PAGE 13 ☩**

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THE CHURCH AND ARTIFICIAL CONTRACEPTION

FR. HUGH BAROUR, O. PRAEM, PH.D.

OUR CHAPLAIN

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN



TRIUMPH OF
ST THOMAS AQUINAS

Benozzo Gozzoli
(1471)

QUESTION: *Someone told me that the Church's stand on artificial contraception might change. She gave me the example of the Church's change in teaching on usury - what she called the taking of interest on loans. What exactly is "usury" and did the Church's teaching on it change?*

ANSWER:

"Usury" means the acceptance of a premium for a pure loan of money or goods. The Natural Law, as well as Sacred Scripture, forbids usury. In the Sermon on the Mount, our Lord tells us to loan or give our goods away without looking for a profit. But let's analyze what exactly constitutes usury.

First, to require that another pay back more than the amount he has borrowed is unjust. This is a principle which can never change. Indeed, the Gospel norm assumes the opposite, that the lender will give more than he is asked to, rather than that the borrower will pay back more than he received.

For many centuries, the Church forbade Christians from taking any profit on loans; many European states, following the Church's lead, also decreed usury to be illegal. However, it was always permitted by the Church for the lender to hold something as collateral in case the loan was not repaid. From this reasonable practice developed the acceptable practice of taking interest on loans for some reason other than the loan itself, for example: damage to the property loaned, loss of profit due to loaning, a reasonable risk of loss, and the borrower's delay in repaying. Exacting interest on a loan for these reasons was not viewed by the Church as usury since all these factors are part of the property of the lender, and he was not charging interest simply to get back more money than he loaned out. All of this was worked out theologically by the great moral theologian St. Antoninus of Florence, in the 1400s, as the age of bankers and the high-risk industry of world exploration began.

Prominent theologians who explained why interest may be licitly earned on certain kinds of loans, but not on others, include St. Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, Luis de Molina, and Pope Benedict XIV, in his encyclical **Vix Pervenit** (1745).

In the case of contraception a similar development (not change) in Church teaching occurred over the years. The Church has always taught that contraception is a grave offense against the law of God. Gradually, however, it accepted the use of periodic continence, or what is now known as "*natural family planning*," because abstinence during the wife's fertile time does not involve a perversion of the nature of the conjugal act. The Church's principle that the only morally acceptable way to avoid conception is to refrain from marital relations has always obtained, though it developed in sophistication as scientific knowledge of human physiology progressed. As Pope Paul VI pointed out in his encyclical **Humanae Vitae**, the Church has never changed its teaching on the sinfulness of contraception. ✚

CONTRACEPTION: THE TROJAN HORSE

GREG WEILER, ESQ.

(REVIEWED AND APPROVED BY BISHOP NORMAN F. MCFARLAND)

Is there a more controversial subject within the Catholic Church than obedience to the Church's teaching on artificial contraception? Which of us has not at sometime or other utilized some means of contraception, the pill, IUD, condoms [this article will not address the abortifacient attributes of many forms of contraception]? How many readers have had vasectomies or tubal ligations? Statistics show that a vast majority of those reading this article believe their view on contraception and the sexual relationship of man and woman is superior to that of the Church. Otherwise orthodox Catholics believe that on at least this one issue, individual conscience reigns supreme, even in the face of unambiguous teaching of the Church. (Contraception is "*intrinsically evil*," Catechism of the Catholic Church, hereinafter "CCC," 2370).

Sadly it must be a premise to a discussion of contraception, based upon the actual conduct of Catholics in the West, that Church teaching alone is insufficient to affect conduct, to warrant obedience. It causes one to wonder if the Church's teaching on the Trinity, the Resurrection, the Real Presence of Christ in the Eucharist, the Communion of Saints, or other basic dogmas would be discarded in like manner if they affected our relationships at such a basic level. No, something beyond obedience is necessary for today's "enlightened" Catholic to accept the Church's teaching on contraception.

We do not have to look beyond our divorce rate, 1 million plus abortions per annum, pandemic use of pornography, high rate of co-habitation, out of wedlock births, fatherless families, and other related social developments (these things are bad right?) which have occurred in the second half of the 20th Century to seriously question whether with contraception we have been sold a bill of goods -- have welcomed a Trojan Horse into the protected confines of our marriages and are now reaping the whirlwind.

So what is this bogeyman - this incredible harm suffered by individuals and couples when they elect to ignore the Church's (Christ's) teaching on contraception?

THE BEGINNINGS

Modern contraception really dawned in the late 1950's and 1960's. Couples were "liberated" from unwanted pregnancy, were free to plan their lives, free from what had hitherto been their responsibility which often accompanied sexual relations. Sexual relations and child bearing were separated - what a deal. It was in the late 1960's that Pope Paul VI was forced to address the issue of contraception in his famous encyclical *Humane Vitae*. *Humane Vitae* is both the most prophetic and ignored encyclical of the modern Church (although largely ignored and much criticized, I have found that most Catholics have never read the encyclical). Under the sure protection of the Holy Spirit and against incredible modern policy pressures, Pope Paul VI anticipated with chilling accuracy the result of severing the intimacy of the beautiful union of husband and wife and openness to child bearing. He predicted greatly increased sexual infidelity, pre-marital and extramarital sex, vastly increased abortion, sexual exploitation of women, pornography and increased divorce. Nonetheless, from *Humane Vitae* to 2001 American culture has steadfastly maintained that contraception, abortion when convenient, divorce on demand, pre-marital sex, even the availability of sexually explicit material, are either



*What is the
Church's role in
guiding our lives?
How extensive is it?
Does it extend to a
couple's bedroom?
How do we apply
Church teachings to
popular trends or
widely accepted
practices? How do
we genuinely
measure our
willingness to
conform our lives to
the teaching of
Christ in this day
and age?*

Contraception: The Trojan Horse (Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5) **Contraception: The Trojan Horse**

good things or evils necessary for a free and progressive society.

CONTRACEPTION, WHY NOT?

Well, the question remains, why can't I be a faithful, loving, giving Catholic Christian in a happy marriage and use contraception to responsibly determine our family's size?

1. HUMAN SEXUALITY IS UNIQUE.

Are sexual relations between husband and wife the same as sex between dogs, cattle, animals in general? While many would argue basically yes, we Catholics know that the love between spouses exceeds the biology between animals, to the same extent that humanity in general was created to a transcendent relationship with our Heavenly Father, i.e. we are children of God! (CCC 2367) The "reason" behind the Church's proscription on artificial contraception is based upon our unique status as God's children and even more specifically by reason of the incredibly wonderful relationship between spouses and God in the sacrament of marriage. The triune God is the source of eternal life, the Church on earth through its sacraments is a source of eternal life (Baptism and Eucharist) and husband and wife share the creative power and fatherhood of God and become with God a source of eternal life in a child. (CCC 2367)

The Church teaches that our marriages are called to mirror God's love for us. We are created to love not use one another. Does God give half way? Did God withhold any part of himself at Gethsemane or Golgotha? No, God gives fully and unconditionally. He communicates Himself to us not part way, not just spiritually, not just symbolically but entirely, body, blood, soul and even divinity. Obviously we reject and debase His love in manifold ways. But the Church teaches, in fact beseeches us not to debase our marriages by introducing in the marital relationship what Steve Woods, a nationally renown Catholic social commentator, calls contraception the "great marriage buster." Simply put, contraception is selfishness manifest: "We need time for ourselves before kids," "we need time to get on our feet financially," "two kids are all we want or can afford," "we want to travel," "we want to retire at 55," "I'm too tired or old," "I want the intense physical pleasure of sexual relations without worrying about a baby." Please note the extreme "self focus" of these reasons for contraception. Kids are viewed as a means or impediment to our happiness, something to be managed, rather than a blessing (Children are the "supreme gift of marriage." CCC 2378) Married couples are called to a sacramental relationship which includes but transcends mutual sexual pleasure. To artificially sever sexual relations from childbearing introduces "self" at the most basic level in a relationship. Selfishness, like any toxin is not easily controlled once introduced to a marriage.

2. LAW OF THE GIFT

Pope John Paul II beautifully articulates the proper relationship between Christians in the world and in particular the Christ imitating relationship between husband and wife: Paraphrasing Vatican II's Pastoral Constitution on the Church In the Modern World (Gaudium et Spes 24) the Holy Father teaches that the meaning of human life is to be found in self-giving, not self-assertion. To become a Father is to be liberated from the "terrible" freedom of self-centeredness and to be "conquered by love" (Karol Wojtyla, Radiation of Fatherhood).

"The Law of the Gift written on the human heart is an expression of the self-giving love that constitutes the interior life of God--Father, Son and Holy Spirit. To live the law of the gift is to enter, by way of anticipation, into the communion with God for which all humanity was created from the beginning" (George Weigel, *Witness To Hope*, a Biography of Pope John Paul II, 1999).

Simply put, a marital relationship should be based on the "law of the gift," a relationship in which each spouse gives to the other completely, without reserve, emotionally, financially, physically - yes, even our fertility. Whenever any component of the human person is withheld, the relationship suffers. Where is intimacy when one spouse withholds financial resources? emotional support? companionship? spiritual support?

Selfishness in any form erodes a marital union and leads to the many manifestations of marital disunion. With contraception, even strong marriages are deprived of the level of intimacy intended by our Heavenly Father. Weaker relationships are scourged by selfishness which results at best in weak and graceless marriages. At worst, children witness a legal divorce which merely mirrors the failed intimacy which each spouse inadvertently withheld when such couple was using contraception.

Ultimately, intimacy is trust and in a truly selfless marriage there must be trust between husband, wife and

(Continued from page 6) **Contraception: The Trojan Horse**

God our Father. The Church teaches that true intimacy in a marriage requires this radical three party trust. Wife to Husband: "*Here is my body, my life, I give you and God my being for if I conceive, our children are forever.*" Husband to Wife: "*I give you myself, I'll always be here to care for you and our children - I'll love you always.*" Husband and Wife to God: "*We trust You to care for us, to guard us, provide for us and our (Your) children, to lead us to You.*"

3. SELFISHNESS.

While it would take pages to detail the manifold negative results of introducing selfishness into human sexual relationships, one does not have to be a rocket scientist to identify certain causes and effects. Extramarital sex prior to effective contraception was not pandemic; likewise, abortion absent societal acceptance of contraception was a rarity; sexual exploitation of women in the form of pornography and unwed pregnancies (an unfortunate byproduct is the fact that contraception is not foolproof) are now rampant.

While most couples would protest that contraception in their marriage doesn't foster selfishness, but rather liberation from unwanted and unneeded responsibility, the Church teaches that such beliefs are disingenuous. Selfishness is an inevitable consequence of contra-ception and its mere use an obstacle to the intimate relationship between husband and wife and divine participation in their marriage (*Humanae Vitae* §14 and CCC 2370). Contraception is a refusal to recognize children as a gift from God, a refusal of the self sacrifice necessary when raising children, a lack of trust that God will provide for the needs of additional children and a refusal to accept the burdens inherent in childbearing. It is this type of selfishness which fosters a materialism which the Holy Father has identified as a great evil facing this country. Is it not a culture that views children as a burden, a culture that views them as something to be prevented, a culture that views them as an obstacle to happiness, a culture which also can tolerate their destruction? Hence the term "*contraceptive mentality*," a cornerstone of what the Holy Father calls the "*Culture of Death*."

4. PARENTHOOD, A MODEL OF CHRISTIAN LIFE.

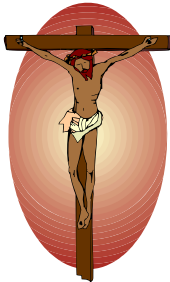
The Church teaches that fertility, fruitfulness, children are both a gift and end of marriage (CCC 2366). Children are the living proof of the Church's central teaching that we are fully human when we give of ourselves totally. What better example of the joy of complete self donation than that of a parent's love for their children, usually the first time in a couple's life that they are willing to give everything to another, even unto death. It is no accident that the Creator of the universe charges us to marry and multiply. For it is in the love between spouses, manifest in children, that we transcend ourselves and glimpse the love achieved in Christ's sacrifice for us. What greater gift than parents giving their lives for their children. Every parent knows of the exhausting joy of caring for their children, the late nights, the seemingly endless diapers, the toil of feeding, clothing, and transporting, the ever present sense of responsibility, the labor of love for our offspring. Parenthood is the grandest object lesson in the Paschal mystery, the realization of the basic paradox of Christianity: We are filled when we are emptied.

Contraception is the naked exertion of human will over the divine goodness and gift of children. Western culture teaches that children are valuable only if they are wanted, or only if they can enjoy our Western culture's degree of affluence and education. The Church teaches that each child is a marvelous gift of God, notwithstanding circumstances, e.g. handicaps, poverty, lack of education etc. As Catholics we are confronted with a choice of viewing children as either Mother Theresa did, or as Planned Parenthood does.

CONCLUSION

God has a plan for marriage, a beautiful transcendent life of fruitfulness, self donation and radical trust between spouses and God. Contraception simply conflicts with "*the Plan*," by introducing selfishness into marital relations. Like the unwitting defenders of Troy, statistics show that a majority of Catholic couples embrace contraception as a gift without realizing the harm of the "*great marriage buster*." This article was intended as an articulation of the reasons underlying the Church's teaching on contraception. Ironically, notwithstanding the reasoning, the issue really boils down to whether Western culture 2001 or the Church of Christ is correct on the issue of contraception. As a Catholic committed at a basic level to the way, the truth and the life, which do you trust with your happiness, your marriage, and your salvation? Read *Humanae Vitae*, read *Evangelium Vitae*, pray over the "*Law of the Gift*" and above all, trust God as a vital participant in your marriage. ✚

PRAYER PETITIONS



*Heavenly Father, I offer you this day
all that I shall think, do or say,
uniting it with what was done
by Jesus Christ, your only Son.
Amen*

*We all need prayers—at some times
more than others. If you have a special
need for prayer, please let us know so we
can join in prayer for each other. Leave
a message on Anne Lanphar's voicemail
(714) 250-8605 or email your request to
alanphar@firstam.com*

- ♦ Susan Keenan (serious illness)
- ♦ Melissa DiFelice (serious illness)
- ♦ Fr. George M. Luznicky (deceased)
- ♦ Madeline McKimmey (birth problems)
- ♦ Ellie Shonefelt & Her Children (divorce)
 - ♦ Janet Pahl (illness)
 - ♦ Lindsay Stevens (illness)
 - ♦ Douglas Kniec (illness)
- ♦ Anne Lanphar (special intention)
- ♦ Eleanor Kott & Family (illness)
 - ♦ Jeff Weber (serious illness)
 - ♦ David Macdonald (illness)
 - ♦ Eric & Marie Bessem
- ♦ Charles Godwin (serious illness)
 - ♦ Kevin Guice (serious illness)
 - ♦ Julia Nelson (serious illness)
 - ♦ Sean Nelson (illness)
- ♦ Kallie Townsend-3yr old (serious illness)
- ♦ Mary Keelan (illness)
- ♦ Karl Abeyta (serious illness)
- ♦ Lauri B Kalinowski (serious illness)
- ♦ John Thompson (employment)
- ♦ Duain Cruzat (serious disease)
- ♦ Keith Wilson (serious illness)
- ♦ Milos & Edith Myrik (serious illness)
 - ♦ Scott Smith (illness)
 - ♦ Ryan Ronk (serious injury)
- ♦ Kristin Burkett (serious illness)
- ♦ Darren M (questioning the Faith)
- ♦ Fr. Matt Munoz (special intention)
 - ♦ Cindie Burnes (serious illness)
- ♦ John Flynn & his wife (serious illness)
 - ♦ Ron Gable (special intention)
 - ♦ Earle Nelson (epiphany)
 - ♦ Joan Hansen (conversion) †



“WHEN I WAS HUNGRY, YOU FED ME”

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AT O.C. CATHOLIC WORKER**

† **THIRD SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH 3—6 PM**

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PETITIONING FOR LIFE*

JULIA GORIN

The Web site of Ms. Magazine--yes, it still exists--is calling on readers to sign a petition: "I have had an abortion. I publicly join the millions of women in the United States who have had an abortion in demanding a repeal of laws that restrict women's reproductive freedom."

Well, so much for the right to privacy. If Ms. readers hadn't had so many abortions, there might be more Ms. readers. As for the rest of us, here's a petition we could all sign: "I wasn't aborted."

Having narrowly escaped being aborted, I'd be the first in line.

Like most Soviet-era fetuses conceived in Russia by couples who were already parents, I was scheduled for abortion as a matter of course. In a society where abortion was the only form of birth control, it wasn't uncommon to meet women who had double-digit abortion counts. Often a couple would schedule the appointment before they even stopped to remember that they wanted a second child.

My husband, also a second-born, and I were lucky to have been two such afterthoughts, each brought into the world thanks to one of two parents' change of heart. (Actually it was Anya Isaakovna, my mother's usual doctor at the public clinic, who sensed a tinge of reservation and kicked her out.) Coincidentally, both my husband and I were to be the third abortions, each of us having had two siblings who weren't so lucky, which unfortunately was lucky for us.

Not quite so for my parents. Life's turns dealt them a hand they couldn't have foreseen 30 years ago while aborting, an act that people living in a nation of misérables can't exactly be judged for. Indeed, among Soviet émigrés from the 1970s and '80s, it's very rare to see families with more than two children, the self-imposed quota among Russians of that wave. But in hindsight, as my mother said a few months after my newlywed elder sister and her husband died in a five-vehicle collision in 2000, had she known she would outlive one of her only two children, she would have had more.

In America there is room to judge, despite what the "sanctity of choice" crowd wants us to believe. Yet rather than do that, my intention is to plant a seed of consideration that may otherwise never occur to America's reluctant with-child women and even girls. It's a consideration that, for all our endless debating, goes unspoken, but that could alleviate heartache in later life and enrich our lives in ways we can't predict.

My father was another abortion-to-be. In 1941, my then 17-year-old aunt Dina barely managed to convince my grandparents that the invading Germans meant to kill Jews and that the family needed to evacuate from Odessa. They got onto literally the last ship out of the city, an overcrowded barge that had no food or clean water. Dina's 2-year-old brother, Rudik, didn't survive the journey to Uzbekistan. Heartbroken and shunning the idea of any "replacements" for Rudik, Grandma didn't think twice before setting out for an abortion when she became pregnant at 42. But through very insistent implorations, her Uzbek landlady talked her out of it.

That fetus went on to become a world-class violinist, first for the Bolshoi Symphony Orchestra and later the Baltimore Symphony. He blazed one of the earlier trails out from behind the Iron Curtain to America, inspiring and facilitating many relatives and friends to abandon Russia for the free world.

Soon after arriving in Israel, a family friend named Zoya discovered she was preg-



CREATION OF ADAM
(DETAIL)

Michelangelo
(1510)

***"I had an
abortion,"
Ms. Magazine
urges its
readers to
declare.
How about
"I wasn't
aborted"?"***

** Reprinted from the
Opinion Section of the
Wall Street Journal
August 17, 2006*

Petitioning for Life (Continued on page 10)

(Continued from page 9) Petitioning for Life

nant with a second child and went in for the abortion routine. She was dumbfounded to encounter the following whispered line of questioning from the admitting nurse: "Do you not have a roof over your head?" There was a roof. "Do you not have enough food on the table?" There was plenty of food. Then an altogether alien concept to Zoya: "So why kill it?"

"I was shocked," Zoya recalled. "No one had ever told me I was *killing* anything. I'd never thought of it as a person. As soon as someone told me I was killing something, I didn't even consider it. I left." Much like my grandmother, today Zoya is the mother of a master violinist.

Even in the case of teen mothers-to-be, for all the ruination and dead dreams we are told will be visited upon their lives if they keep the baby, if someone has ambition to begin with, nothing has to stand in her way. Consider the story of Beverly D'Onofrio, dramatized in the 2001 Penny Marshall movie, "Riding in Cars with Boys." Beverly, played by Drew Barrymore, gets knocked up at 15. She marries the father, an older boy, only to discover that he is a drug addict. Over the next few years, things at home fall apart and the two separate, with Beverly retaining custody.

While for a time her opportunities are more limited than they would otherwise be (a chance to get into an elite writing program at New York University is dashed when she has to bring the kid with her to the interview), ultimately her dreams stay intact and her personal story paves a way to literary and cinematic success--not an easy feat even for the privileged. Beverly D'Onofrio got to have her cake and eat it too, and while the men in her life since no doubt have come and gone, she will always have her son.

Rather than debate what it is we're killing, we should consider what we may be saving--for our sakes as much as for "its" own. When you choose to abort, you alter the course of history. While the child up for abortion may or may not be the next Einstein, saving his life could one day save yours.

Every day of my mother's parental life was lived with a dread fear that something might happen to either of her children, and the reality of this possibility loomed large in our lives. In 1982, my father's aunt lost her only daughter and son-in-law in a plane crash that killed 50 and orphaned my cousin, whom our family adopted. In 1990, my older cousin lost her teenage firstborn in a car accident. Looking at my own family, and at our circle of acquaintances, I estimate that at least one in three couples has outlived a child.

Common wisdom in Russia--subsequently confirmed by science--was that you always keep the first child, since not doing so could affect your ability to bear children in the future. The apparent lesson in my family has been also to keep as many of the others as possible, since that firstborn's fate isn't assured.

My mother today aches to have more "close people," as she calls immediate family, and mourns how few are those whose love is unconditional. Every time I get into a car or plane, I'm paranoid about my safety for her sake. Every time I think of taking a foreign writing assignment, I think of her and don't. Every time I imagine moving to another city, I think of my parents' desolation.

We don't have a crystal ball, but there's someone who does, and there is a reason for every stork He sends along. I am religiously illiterate, but I have come to understand on the most visceral level why pregnancies are called "blessings"--even if, as often as not, the blessing comes in disguise.

For all the reluctant mothers-to-be out there, you should know that when you're having even a momentary second thought, someone you can't see is whispering in your ear. Fortunately for my husband's and my families, on the third occasion our parents listened. †



A SURVIVOR'S TESTIMONY

Testimony of abortion survivor Gianna Jessen before the Constitution Subcommittee of the House Judiciary Committee on April 22, 1996.

My name is Gianna Jessen. I am 19 years of age. I am originally from California, but now reside in Franklin, Tennessee. I am adopted. I have cerebral palsy. My biological mother was 17 years old and seven and one-half months pregnant when she made the decision to have a saline abortion. I am the person she aborted. I lived instead of died.

Fortunately for me the abortionist was not in the clinic when I arrived alive, instead of dead, at 6:00 a.m. on the morning of April 6, 1977. I was early, my death was not expected to be seen until about 9 a.m., when he would probably be arriving for his office hours. I am sure I would not be here today if the abortionist would have been in the clinic as his job is to take life, not sustain it. Some have said I am a "botched abortion", a result of a job not well done.

There were many witnesses to my entry into this world. My biological mother and other young girls in the clinic, who also awaited the death of their babies, were the first to greet me. I am told this was a hysterical moment. Next was a staff nurse who apparently called emergency medical services and had me transferred to a hospital.

I remained in the hospital for almost three months. There was not much hope for me in the beginning. I weighed only two pounds. Today, babies smaller than I have survived.

A doctor once said I had a great will to live and that I fought for my life. I eventually was able to leave the hospital and be placed in foster care. I was diagnosed with cerebral palsy as a result of the abortion.

My foster mother was told that it was doubtful that I would ever crawl or walk. I could not sit up independently. Through the prayers and dedication of my foster mother, and later many other people, I eventually learned to sit up, crawl, then stand. I walked with leg braces and a walker shortly before I turned age four. I was legally adopted by my foster mother's daughter, Diana De Paul, a few months after I began to walk. The Department of Social Services would not release me any earlier for adoption.

I have continued in physical therapy for my disability, and after a total of four surgeries, I can now walk without assistance. It is not always easy. Sometimes I fall, but I have learned how to fall gracefully after falling 19 years.

I am happy to be alive. I almost died. Every day I thank God for life. I do not consider myself a by-product of conception, a clump of tissue, or any other of the titles given to a child in the womb. I do not consider any person conceived to be any of those things.

I have met other survivors of abortion. They are all thankful for life. Only a few months ago I met another saline abortion survivor. Her name is Sarah. She is two years old. Sarah also has cerebral palsy, but her diagnosis is not good. She is blind and has severe seizures. The abortionist, besides injecting the mother with



**Abortion Survivor
Gianna Jessen**

A Survivor's Testimony (Continued on page 12)

(Continued from page 11) **A Survivor's Testimony**

saline, also injects the baby victims. Sarah was injected in the head. I saw the place on her head where this was done. When I speak, I speak not only for myself, but for the other survivors, like Sarah, and also for those who cannot yet speak ...

Today, a baby is a baby when convenient. It is tissue or otherwise when the time is not right. A baby is a baby when miscarriage takes place at two, three, four months. A baby is called a tissue or clumps of cells when an abortion takes place at two, three, four months. Why is that? I see no difference. What are you seeing? Many close their eyes...

The best thing I can show you to defend life is my life. It has been a great gift. Killing is not the answer to any question or situation. Show me how it is the answer.

There is a quote which is etched into the high ceilings of one of our state's capitol buildings. The quote says, "Whatever is morally wrong, is not politically correct." Abortion is morally wrong. Our country is shedding the blood of the innocent. America is killing its future.

All life is valuable. All life is a gift from our Creator. We must receive and cherish the gifts we are given. We must honor the right to life. ✚

PSALM 139: 13-16



*For thou didst form my inward parts,
Thou didst knit me together in my mother's womb.
I praise thee, for thou art fearful and wonderful.
Wonderful are thy works!
Thou knowest me right well;
my frame was not hidden from thee,
when I was being made in secret,
intricately wrought in the depths of the earth.
Thy eyes beheld my unformed substance;
In thy book were written, every one of them,
the days that were formed for me,
when as yet there was none of them.*

Comment from the Navarre Bible:*

God also intervenes in the life of the individual—in his conception (v. 13) and in all the good things that happen to him in the course of his life. The psalmist is very conscious of this (v. 14), as he explains again, emphasizing God's omniscience (vv. 15-16). The poetic expressions in v. 15 used to describe a person's origin in the womb of his mother (in secret", "in the depths of the earth") take it as read that man comes from the earth and will return there (cf. Gen 2:7); elsewhere the same expressions refer to the place of the dead where man will go at the end of his days (f. Ps 63:9; Job 14:13; etc.). The Lord knows all man's days and keeps count of them (v. 16). To man, it is all a mystery beyond his grasp (vv. 17-18). St Clement of Rome, commenting on the words of this psalm wrote: "Knowing then that everything is present to his eyes, and that he sees all things, we should go in fear of offending him and uproot any desire to commit sin, so that his mercy may protect us on the day of judgment. For who among us could escape the power of his hand? What world could give refuge to one who betrayed God? [...] In what place could a traitor hide from the one who sees everything around him? Let us draw closer to the Lord with a purified soul, lifting up to him our clean and unstained hands; let us love with all our strength the one who is our Father, who is filled with love and mercy, and who has made of us a chosen people" (*Ad Corinthios*, 27, 1-29, 5) ✚

SCRIPTURAL CORNER

**The Navarre Bible,
a renowned edition of Sacred
Scripture prepared by
members of the
Faculty of Theology
of Navarre University,
consisting of the New
Vulgate, the Revised
Standard Version and
commentaries.*



*St. Thomas More Society of Orange County
Invites the Entire Legal Community to the*



Red Mass

HOLY FAMILY CATHEDRAL

ORANGE, CALIFORNIA

MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2006

EUCCHARISTIC CELEBRATION AT 6:00 P.M.

Reception with Dinner following in the Holy Family Cathedral Hall

JURISTS WISHING TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROCESSION, PLEASE CONTACT HON. WILLIAM MONROE

HISTORY OF THE RED MASS

The first recorded Red Mass, a special Mass for the Bench and Bar, was celebrated in Paris in 1245. For many centuries it was held in the chapel of the Order of Advocates, La Sainte Chapelle, which was built by Louis IX. In certain localities of France, the Red Mass was celebrated in honor of St. Ives, the patron saint of lawyers. In England, the tradition began about 1310, during the reign of Edward I. The entire Bench and Bar attended the Red Mass together at the opening of each term of Court. The priest and the judges of the High Court wore red robes, thus the Eucharistic celebration became popularly known as the Red Mass.

The tradition of the Red Mass has continued in the United States. Each year in Washington, D.C., the members of the United States Supreme Court join the President and members of Congress in the celebration of the Red Mass at St. Matthew's Cathedral. The Red Mass is also celebrated in Sacramento and most other state capitals and major cities throughout the United States. The first Red Mass in Orange County was celebrated in 1988 and has become as much a tradition in Orange County as it is in the United States and other parts of the world.

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ANONYMOUS (3)

Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem*



*Latin for "To turn truth into laughter"

NEW OLD PROVERBS

A first grade teacher collected old, well known proverbs. She gave each student in her class the first half of a proverb, and had them come up with the rest. This is the result:



- As You Shall Make Your Bed So Shall You... Mess It Up.
- Better Be Safe Than... Punch A 5th Grader.
- Strike While The... Bug Is Close.
- It's Always Darkest Before... Daylight Savings Time.
- Never Under Estimate The Power Of... Termites.
- Don't Bite The Hand That... Looks Dirty.
- No News Is... Impossible.
- If You Lie Down With The Dogs, You'll... Stink In The Morning.
- The Pen Is Mightier Than The... Pigs.
- An Idle Mind Is... The Best Way To Relax.
- Happy The Bride Who... Gets All The Presents!
- A Penny Saved Is... Not Much.
- Two's Company, Three's... The Musketeers.
- Laugh And The Whole World Laughs With You, Cry And... You Have To Blow Your Nose.
- None Are So Blind As... Helen Keller.
- Children Should Be Seen And Not... Spanked Or Grounded.
- If At First You Don't Succeed... Get New Batteries.
- You Get Out Of Something What You... See Pictured On The Box.
- When The Blind Leadeth The Blind... Get Out Of The Way.
- There Is No Fool Like... Aunt Edie. ☚



THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS MORE

MORE ON HELPING ONE ANOTHER

More's favorite literary form in these early years was the epigram, a short poem with an unexpected twist...One of the most surprising and original of these political poems is about two beggars, one lame, one blind. The English prose translation, unfortunately, does not communicate the subtlety and artistry of the Latin poem.

"There can be nothing more helpful than a loyal friend, who by his own efforts assuages your hurts. Two beggars formed an alliance of firm friendship—a blind man and a lame one. The blind man said to the lame one, "You must ride upon my shoulders." The latter answered, "You, blind friend, must find your way by means of my eyes." The love which unites shuns the castles of proud kings and prevails in the humble hut."

This thought-provoking poem draws attention to the radical insufficiency of our fallen human nature. More seems to suggest that only a loving and graceful acceptance of human limitations, along with a conscious attempt to strengthen the bonds of human solidarity, can give rise to true harmony. The proud are their own worst enemies, and everyone else's. ☚

Thomas More: A Portrait of Courage

Gerard Wegemer

Pg 41 ☚

CRISIS PREGNANCY LED WOMAN TO DEEPER FAITH*

ALWEN BLEDSOE

Jennifer Pipp was a college junior when she was raped and discovered that she was pregnant. But today Pipp tells her story which began in despair, as a story of faith.

In 1996 Jennifer Pipp, a Denver woman, was raped. A few weeks later she discovered she was pregnant. Then a junior at Franciscan University in Steubenville, Ohio, Pipp's next few weeks were "very difficult," she said. Overwhelmed by grief and anger, she prayed for a miscarriage. "I know now why people get abortions," she said. "However, it wasn't an option for me because it was an unfortunate thing that happened, but it wasn't the baby's fault. If you're pro-life, either you take a stance or you don't."

Her own mother became pregnant with her before marriage, said Pipp, "and I just kind of always thought, 'if she had had an abortion, I wouldn't be here.' So to do that to someone else—I just couldn't do that." That decision, though, meant nine months of facing the reality of the rape as well as the agony of finding an adoptive family and birthing a child she could not keep. "You don't know what the future holds," she said. "You don't know how this will all work out. It's a horrible situation to be put in."

Now, five years later, Pipp is telling her story publicly, and though it begins in despair, she tells it as a story of redemption. "It's very clear to me that even though there's a situation like that that's so horrible, it is amazing what God can bring out of it if you let Him," she said. The first of 30-some "mothers in crisis" to live with the Sisters of Life in New York, Pipp said it was through them that her faith and healing first came alive.

John Cardinal O'Connor founded the Sisters of Life in June 1991 with eight women who took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience in addition to their charism of protecting the sanctity of life. Taking the advice of a religious sister living in her dorm, Pipp contacted the Sisters of Life for counsel after she discovered she was pregnant. Instead of counsel, she received an invitation to live with the sisters. She accepted, and spent the summer trying to come to grips with the rape and pregnancy.

"You have to be totally honest with yourself and with everyone around you and with God," said Pipp. "If there's any of those missing, then somehow the healing process can be hindered. That's also the scariest thing—that you have to be honest. It's scary just growing and looking more deeply at the things that have hurt you."

On her way to healing, Pipp passed through extraordinary anger as well as "a real sadness" at the thought of having chosen to birth the baby, "but not being able to be her mom and be there for her day in and day out." She felt guilty and wondered, "Was it my fault? Could I have prevented it?" Often she thought, "God, I know that you do everything for the good, but I don't see what good you have in store for me in this situation."

That began to change, though, as the sisters' unconditional love and commitment to prayer began to seep into her. "They made it possible for her to hope," said Pipp's mother Kathleen Fleming. "It was very grim. She'd kind of had it with men, had it with life in general, and the sisters very sweetly and gently said 'You know, it's OK. You'll get through this.'" More than anything, said Pipp, the sisters helped her to be at peace with her decision to place her baby for adoption as they taught her to pray and "surrender totally to God." Though Pipp was not required to participate in the sisters' life of prayer, said Sister Lucy Marie Vasile, S.V., she would arise at 5 a.m. and join them for all of



**JOHN CARDINAL
O'CONNOR,
ARCHBISHOP OF
NEW YORK,
FOUNDER OF THE
SISTERS OF LIFE**

***"Go pick up the
pieces lest
they be lost."***

John 6:12

*** From the Denver
Catholic Register
August 1, 2001**

Crisis Pregnancy (Continued on page 16)



*Our Lady
of Guadalupe
As Miraculously
Appeared on the
Tilma (cloth) of
St Juan Diego*

1531

**Located at
the Basilica
of Our Lady
of Guadalupe,
Mexico City**

(Continued from page 15) ***Crisis Pregnancy***

their community prayer—about four hours a day. She began to grow in “a deepening peace and a joy in coming to understand God’s love for her and then in being able to give that love to others, (especially) her daughter whom she was carrying in her womb,” said Sister Vasile.

“You have to be able to love your daughter deeply to surrender her to another family,” she said. Pipp had found an adoptive Catholic family committed to raising her baby in the faith after she prayed before a traveling image of Our Lady of Guadalupe that had come to Steubenville. “You have to find a family — it’s too hard,” she prayed. Soon after, she received a letter from a Catholic family and a picture of the family around that same image of Our Lady of Guadalupe, said Pipp. The adoptive family was present for the birth in September. The next day, said Pipp, “I sat in the room (holding the baby) and just cried.” She told the child, “I love you so much that this is what’s best for you.”

Closure had begun to come in two ways: in the letter she wrote to the baby so she would someday know who her biological mother was, that she loved her, and why she placed her for adoption; and in confronting the rapist who Catholic Charities located when the baby was placed for adoption.

“I’ll never forget that day,” said Pipp, remembering talking with him on the phone in the Catholic Charities office. “I was really shaky and there was a lot of anger there, too, that I had to work through.”

She asked him, “Why did you do this to me? I had plans. I didn’t need this obstacle.”

He cried through the entire conversation and apologized, she said, and though he couldn’t provide her with an answer, the confrontation gave her the freedom to move on. Perhaps the greatest closure and healing has come in her marriage and in the births of her two sons.

Though she and David Pipp were best friends, she kept her pregnancy a secret until she was in her fourth month. “It was really one of those things where she was having a hard time with who she was,” said David. “When she told me she was pregnant, we were sitting in a restaurant at two or three in the morning. She said, ‘What’s so rough about this,’ to quote her, ‘is that I’ve been used. I have baggage and no one’s going to want to be with me.’” But, he proved her wrong, and the two began to date that March.

“There was just a real openness there and a real friendship, and he stayed with me the whole time,” said Pipp. The two were married the following July and recently celebrated their fourth anniversary. They have two boys — David, 3, and John, 1.

“Working through this piece by piece has made me a better mom and a better wife because I’m not carrying excess baggage from my past,” said Pipp.

Pipp first went public with her story in June when the Sisters of Life awarded her the first-ever John Cardinal O’Connor Award for her courage and personal sacrifice for life. “It was very humbling,” said Pipp, especially because the cardinal had become a father figure for her, often placing his hands on her stomach and praying for the child, or simply bringing a hug when she most needed it. “He also just accepted me where I was and just loved me, and that was just a freedom to allow me to grow. I can get through this because I’m loved just because of me.” Pipp’s story, said Sister Vasile, taught the community “that we can love in the midst of making a very difficult decision which entails suffering. We can do that because God aids us in that, but we also need other people. Christ called us to live with other people in community. We became her family and she became our sister in Christ.”

“It was sheer joy to watch God unfold in a young life as courageous as hers,” she said. “We were the privileged bystanders of God’s miraculous grace working in her life and the lives of those she touched.” ✚

THE PRICE OF CHILDREN

The government recently calculated the cost of raising a child from birth to 18 and came up with \$160,140.00 for a middle income family. Talk about price shock! That doesn't even touch college tuition.

But \$160,140.00 isn't so bad if you break it down. It translates into:

- \$8,896.66 a year,
- \$741.38 a month, or
- \$171.08 a week.
- That's a mere \$24.24 a day!
- Just over a dollar an hour.

Still, you might think the best financial advice is don't have children if you want to be "rich." Actually, it is just the opposite.

What do you get for your \$160,140?

- Naming rights. First, middle, and last!
- Glimpses of God every day.
- Giggles under the covers every night.
- More love than your heart can hold.
- Butterfly kisses and velcro hugs.
- Endless wonder over rocks, ants, clouds, and warm cookies.
- A hand to hold, usually covered with jelly or chocolate.
- A partner for blowing bubbles and flying kites.
- Someone to laugh yourself silly with, no matter what the boss said or how your stocks performed that day.

For \$160,140.00, you never have to grow up. You get to:

- finger-paint,
- carve pumpkins,
- play hide-and-seek,
- catch lightning bugs, and
- never stop believing in Santa Claus.

You have an excuse to:

- keep reading the Adventures of Piglet and Pooh,
- watch Saturday morning cartoons,
- go to Disney movies, and
- wish on stars.

You get to frame rainbows, hearts, and flowers under refrigerator magnets and collect spray painted noodle wreaths for Christmas, hand prints set in clay for Mother's Day, and cards with backward letters for Father's Day.

For a mere \$24.24 a day, there is no greater bang for your buck. You get to be a hero just for:

- retrieving a Frisbee off the garage roof,
- taking the training wheels off a bike,
- removing a splinter,
- filling a wading pool,
- coaxing a wad of gum out of bangs, and coaching a baseball team that never wins but always gets treated to ice cream regardless.

You get a front row seat in history to witness the:

- first step,



**THOUGHT
FOR
THE
DAY**



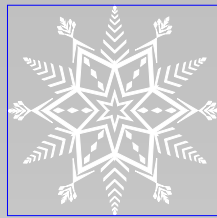
(Continued from page 17) **The Price of Children**

- first word,
- first bra,
- first date, and
- first time behind the wheel.

You get to be immortal. You get another branch added to your family tree, and if you're lucky, a long list of "branches" in your obituary called grandchildren and great grandchildren. You get an education in psychology, nursing, criminal justice, communications, and human sexuality that no college can match.

In the eyes of a child, you rank right up there under God. You have all the power to heal boo-boos, scare away the monsters under the bed, patch a broken heart, police a slumber party, ground them forever, and love them without limits, so one day they will, like you, love without counting the cost. That is quite a deal for the price! It's the best investment you'll make! †

SIMPLE TRUTHS



Fulton J. Sheen

"What is conscience? Conscience is a judgment of our reason telling us that we ought to do good and avoid evil. That brings up the question: What makes anything 'good?' A thing is good if it attains the end and the highest purpose for which it is made. A pencil is good if it writes, for that is the purpose of the pencil. But the pencil is 'not' good to open a can with, for it was not made to open cans. If we use a pencil to open a can, not only do we not open it, but we break the pencil. If we use our lives for other purposes than those given by God, not only do we miss happiness, but we actually hurt ourselves and beget in us queer little 'kinks...'

Apply that to man. When is man 'good?' A man is good when he attains the highest purpose for which he was made. This supreme goal cannot be to get the maximum pleasure out of life, because those who concentrate on having a good time rarely have it. Pleasure is only a bonus or a by-product of a duty. One does not eat ice cream to have pleasure; one has pleasure because one eats ice cream. If we set our affections not, say, on the family but on the pleasure a man hopes to have from having a family, the pleasure vanishes. Furthermore, our experience proves that we are most happy when we do not seek our own pleasure at all; the gluttoned, the jaded, the satiated are more miserable than the man who lives to serve his neighbor.

Fame, reputation, a full safety-deposit vault cannot be the supreme goal of life either, because all these things are extrinsic to man; it matters little how much one has on the *outside* if he is not happy on the *inside*." †

“IN HER FACE WE CAN TRULY PERCEIVE THE DIVINE LIGHT”

*Pope Benedict XVI's Sermon on the Solemnity of the Feast of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

*Venerable Brothers in the Episcopate and in the Priesthood,
Dear Brothers and Sisters,*

In the Magnificat, the great hymn of Our Lady that we have just heard in the Gospel, we find some surprising words. Mary says: “Henceforth all generations will call me blessed.”

The Mother of the Lord prophesies the Marian praises of the Church for all of the future, the Marian devotion of the people of God until the end of time.

In praising Mary, the Church did not invent something “adjacent” to Scripture: She responded to this prophecy which Mary made at that moment of grace.

And Mary's words were not only personal, perhaps arbitrary words. Elizabeth, filled with the Holy Spirit as St. Luke said, exclaimed with a loud cry: “Blessed is she who believed.” And Mary, also filled with the Holy Spirit, continues and completes what Elizabeth said, affirming: “All generations will call me blessed.”

It is a real prophecy, inspired by the Holy Spirit, and in venerating Mary, the Church responds to a command of the Holy Spirit; she does what she has to do.

We do not praise God sufficiently by keeping silent about his saints, especially Mary, “the holy one” who became his dwelling place on earth.

The simple and multiform light of God appears to us exactly in its variety and richness only in the countenance of the saints, who are the true mirrors of his light.

And it is precisely by looking at Mary's face that we can see more clearly than in any other way the beauty, goodness and mercy of God. In her face we can truly perceive the divine light.

“All generations will call me blessed.” We can praise Mary, we can venerate Mary for she is “blessed,” she is blessed for ever. And this is the subject of this feast. She is blessed because she is united to God, she lives with God and in God.

On the eve of his passion, taking leave of his disciples, the Lord said: “In my Father's house are many rooms ... I go to prepare a place for you.”

By saying, “I am the handmaid of the Lord; let it be done to me according to your word,” Mary prepared God's dwelling here on earth; with her body and soul, she became his dwelling place and thereby opened the earth to heaven.

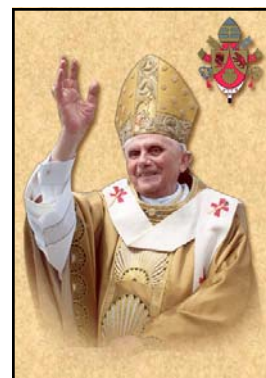
In the Gospel we have just heard, St. Luke, with various allusions, makes us understand that Mary is the true Ark of the Covenant, that the mystery of the temple -- God's dwelling place here on earth -- is fulfilled in Mary. God, who became present here on earth, truly dwells in Mary. Mary becomes his tent. What all the cultures desire -- that God dwells among us -- is brought about here.

St. Augustine says: “Before conceiving the Lord in her body she had already conceived him in her soul.” She had made room for the Lord in her soul and thus really became the true temple where God made himself incarnate, where he became present on this earth.

Thus, being God's dwelling place on earth, in her the eternal dwelling place has already been prepared; it has already been prepared for forever. And this constitutes the whole content of the dogma of the assumption of Mary, body and soul, into heav-



**FROM
PETER'S
SUCCESSOR,
POPE
BENEDICT XVI**



**Mass celebrated in the
parish church of
St. Thomas of Villanova in
Castel Gandolfo.*

Papal Message (Continued on page 20)

(Continued from page 19) Papal Message

only glory, expressed here in these words. Mary is “blessed” because -- totally, in body and soul and forever -- she became the Lord’s dwelling place.

If this is true, Mary does not merely invite our admiration and veneration, but she guides us, shows us the way of life, shows us how we can become blessed, how to find the path of happiness.

Let us listen once again to Elizabeth's words fulfilled in Mary’s Magnificat: “Blessed is she who believed.” The first and fundamental act in order to become a dwelling place of God and thus find definitive happiness is to believe: It is faith, faith in God, in that God who showed himself in Jesus Christ and makes himself heard in the divine word of holy Scripture.

Believing is not adding an opinion to others. And the conviction, the belief that God exists, is not information like any other. Regarding most information, it makes no difference to us whether it is true or false; it does not change our lives. But if God does not exist, life is empty, the future is empty. And if God exists, everything changes, life is light, our future is light and we have guidance for how to live. Therefore, believing constitutes the fundamental orientation of our life.

To believe, to say: “Yes, I believe that you are God, I believe that you are present among us in the incarnate Son,” gives my life a direction, impels me to be attached to God, to unite with God and so to find my dwelling place, and the way to live. To believe is not only a way of thinking or an idea; as has already been mentioned, it is a way of acting, a manner of living. To believe means to follow the trail indicated to us by the word of God. In addition to this fundamental act of faith, which is an existential act, a position taken for the whole of life, Mary adds another word: “His mercy is on those who fear him.”

Together with the whole of Scripture, she is speaking of “fear of God.” Perhaps this is a phrase with which we are not very familiar or do not like very much. But “fear of God” is not anguish; it is something quite different. As children, we are not anxious about the Father but we have fear of God, the concern not to destroy the love on which our life is based.

Fear of God is that sense of responsibility that we are bound to possess, responsibility for the portion of the world that has been entrusted to us in our lives. It is responsibility for the good administration of this portion of the world and of history, and one thus helps the just building of the world, contributing to the victory of goodness and peace.

“All generations will call you blessed”: This means that the future, what is to come, belongs to God, it is in God’s hands, that it is God who conquers.

Nor does he conquer the mighty dragon of which today’s first reading speaks, the dragon that represents all the powers of violence in the world. They seem invincible but Mary tells us that they are not invincible.

The woman -- as the first reading and the Gospel show us -- is stronger, because God is stronger. Of course, in comparison with the dragon, so heavily armed, this woman who is Mary, who is the Church, seems vulnerable or defenseless.

And truly God is vulnerable in the world, because he is love and love is vulnerable. Yet he holds the future in his hands: It is love, not hatred, that triumphs; it is peace that is victorious in the end.

This is the great consolation contained in the dogma of Mary’s assumption body and soul into heavenly glory. Let us thank the Lord for this consolation but let us also see it as a commitment for us to take the side of good and peace. And let us pray to Mary, queen of peace, to help peace to be victorious today: “Queen of peace, pray for us!” Amen! ✠



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Learn about this popular young saint and why she is declared patron of missionaries, and why she was declared a doctor of the church by Pope John Paul II! Mike Mullard is an engaging presenter and a licensed psychologist. He learned about St. Therese as an adult from a Benedictine monk at Prince of Peace Abbey. He will include pictures from the 100-year celebration of St. Therese's Feast. This evening presentation will end with brief candlelight prayer.

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THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

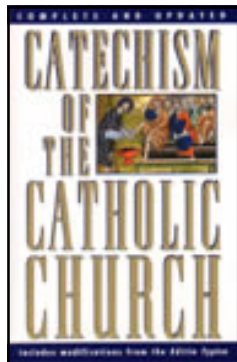
PART THREE: CHRISTIAN MYSTERY

SECTION TWO : THE TEN COMMANDMENTS

CHAPTER TWO: LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR AS YOURSELF

ARTICLE 5: THE FIFTH COMMANDMENT

I. RESPECT FOR HUMAN LIFE



CATECHISM CORNER



MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS

Guido Reni
(1611)

ABORTION

2270 Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person - among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life.

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you.

My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately wrought in the depths of the earth.

2271 Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable. Direct abortion, that is to say, abortion willed either as an end or a means, is gravely contrary to the moral law:

You shall not kill the embryo by abortion and shall not cause the newborn to perish.

God, the Lord of life, has entrusted to men the noble mission of safeguarding life, and men must carry it out in a manner worthy of themselves. Life must be protected with the utmost care from the moment of conception: abortion and infanticide are abominable crimes.

2272 Formal cooperation in an abortion constitutes a grave offense. The Church attaches the canonical penalty of excommunication to this crime against human life. "A person who procures a completed abortion incurs excommunication *latae sententiae*," "by the very commission of the offense," and subject to the conditions provided by Canon Law. The Church does not thereby intend to restrict the scope of mercy. Rather, she makes clear the gravity of the crime committed, the irreparable harm done to the innocent who is put to death, as well as to the parents and the whole of society.

2273 The inalienable right to life of every innocent human individual is a *constitutive element of a civil society and its legislation*:

"The inalienable rights of the person must be recognized and respected by civil society and the political authority. These human rights depend neither on single individuals nor on parents; nor do they represent a concession made by society and the state; they belong to human nature and are inherent in the person by virtue of the creative act from which the person took his origin. Among such fundamental rights one should mention in this regard every human being's right to life and physical integrity from the moment of conception until death."

"The moment a positive law deprives a category of human beings of the protection which civil legislation ought to accord them, the state is denying the equality of all before the law. When the state does not place its power at the service of the rights of each citizen, and in particular of the more vulnerable, the very foundations of a state based on law are undermined. . . . As a consequence of the respect and protection which must be ensured for the unborn child from the moment of conception, the law must provide appropriate penal sanctions for every deliberate violation of the child's rights."

2274 Since it must be treated from conception as a person, the embryo must be defended in its integrity, cared for, and healed, as far as possible, like any other human being.

Prenatal diagnosis is morally licit, "if it respects the life and integrity of the embryo and the human fetus and is directed toward its safe-guarding or healing as an individual. . . . It is gravely opposed to the moral law when this is done with the thought of possibly inducing an abortion, depending upon the results: a diagnosis must not be the equivalent of a death sentence."

2275 "One must hold as licit procedures carried out on the human embryo which respect the life and integrity of the embryo and do not involve disproportionate risks for it, but are directed toward its healing, the improvement of its condition of health, or its individual survival."

"It is immoral to produce human embryos intended for exploitation as disposable biological material."

"Certain attempts to influence chromosomic or genetic inheritance are not therapeutic but are aimed at producing human beings selected according to sex or other predetermined qualities. Such manipulations are contrary to the personal dignity of the human being and his integrity and identity" which are unique and unrepeatable. ☩

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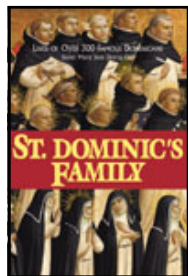
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Sister Mary Jean Dorcy, O.F.M.

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SPEAKER: Charles S. LiMandri, Esq.

TOPIC: "Defending the Cross: The Mt. Soledad Memorial Lawsuit"



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