



THE GOSPEL OF LIFE AND A NEW EVANGELIZATION

Introduction

First of all, I wish to thank Dr. Vice John Batarelo, President of the Vigilare Foundation, for the invitation to speak at your annual celebration of the fundamental goods of life, marriage and the family, and religious freedom, as they come to us from the hand of God. I also thank Dr. Luke Popov, Vice-President, and all who have helped to make possible my time with you this evening. In a particular way, I recall the memory of Blessed Alojzije Viktor Stepinac, Bishop and Martyr, that, following his example and invoking his intercession, we may be faithful and tireless co-workers of Christ in teaching and living the truth of the moral law. It is my hope that my presence and my words will confirm and encourage you in the essential apostolate promoting respect for the inviolable dignity of human life, the integrity of marriage and the family as the cradle of human life, and the freedom of religion.

The opening words of the Pope Saint John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Evangelium Vitae* underline the fundamental place of the apostolate of the respect for human life in Christian life:

The Gospel of life is at the heart of Jesus' message. Lovingly received day after day by the Church, it is to be preached with dauntless fidelity as "good news" to the people of every age and



culture.¹

The first and most fundamental way of radiating the truth which Our Lord Jesus unfailingly teaches us in the Church is a strong witness to the inviolable dignity of all human life, from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death. Our personal conversion and the transformation of the world to which our Christian faith is directed must, first of all, find expression in the safeguarding and fostering of every human life, especially of “the least of these my brethren,” in accord with Our Lord’s teaching in the Parable on the Last Judgment.²

Writing about the mission of the Church in the world, Pope John Paul II underlined the heart of the mission, declaring:

Every individual precisely by reason of the mystery of the Word of God who was made flesh (cf. *Jn* 1:14), is entrusted to the maternal care of the Church. Therefore every threat to human dignity and life must necessarily be felt in the Church’s very heart; it cannot but affect her at the core of her faith in the Redemptive Incarnation of the Son of God, and engage her in her mission of proclaiming the *Gospel of life* in all the world and to every creature (cf. *Mk* 16:15).³

The Church, the Mystical Body of Christ, at the very core of Her being expresses the unconditional, immeasurable, and unceasing love of God the Father for every man. The pierced Heart of Jesus and the blood which flowed therefrom is a sign of the “rivers of living water” which never cease to flow from the glorious Heart of Jesus into the hearts of all believers, and from their hearts to the hearts of all men.⁴

Pope John Paul II recalled the profound and enduring effect of the piercing of the Heart of Jesus after He had died on the cross for the salvation of all men:

¹ “Evangelium vitae penitus implicatum insidet in Iesu nuntio. Ab Ecclesia amanter cotidie susceptum animosa id oportet fidelitate enuntietur velut redditum nuntium hominibus cuiusve aetatis et cuiuslibet cultus humani formae.” Ioannes Paulus PP. II, Litterae encyclicae *Evangelium vitae*, “De vitae humanae inviolabili bono”, 25 Martii 1995, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 87 (1995), 401, n. 1. [Hereafter, EV] English translation: Pope John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Evangelium Vitae*, “On the Value and Inviolability of Human Life,” 25 March 1995 (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995), p. 3, no. 1. [Hereafter, EVEng]

² Cf. *Mt* 25, 40, 45.

³ “Maternis Ecclesiae curis committitur idcirco quisque homo propter Verbi Dei mysterium quod est caro factum (cfr *Io* 1, 14). Quam ob rem fieri non potest quin omnis dignitatis hominum vitaeque ipsius minatio tamquam vocis imaginem in Ecclesiae intimo excitet animo, quin eam intra propriam fidem de redimente Filii Dei incarnatione percutiat, quin implicet illam suo in officio *Evangelium vitae* universum per orbem omnique proferendi creaturae (cfr *Mc* 16, 15).” EV, 403, n. 3. English translation: EVEng, p. 6, no. 3.



The blood of Christ, while it reveals the grandeur of the Father's love, *shows how treasured man is in God's eyes and how inestimable is the good of his life.*⁵

He went on to explain how the blood of Christ reveals the call of every man to care unconditionally for his fellow man:

Furthermore, Christ's blood reveals to man that his greatness, and therefore his vocation, consists in *the sincere gift of self*. Precisely because it is poured out as the gift of life, the blood of Christ is no longer a sign of death, of definitive separation from the brethren, but the instrument of a communion which is richness of life for all. Whoever in the Sacrament of the Eucharist drinks this blood and abides in Jesus (cf. *Jn 6:56*) is drawn into the dynamism of his love and gift of life, in order to bring to its fullness the original vocation to love which belongs to everyone (cf. *Gen 1:27; 2:18-24*).⁶

Participation in the Eucharistic Sacrifice, the highest and most perfect expression of life in Christ, of communion with the Holy Trinity, is the ultimate and unfailing source of the inspiration and strength to safeguard and foster human life. In the words of Pope John Paul II,

It is from the blood of Christ that all draw *the strength to commit themselves to promoting life*. It is precisely this blood that is *the most powerful source of hope, indeed it is the foundation of the*

⁴ Cf. *Jn 7, 38*.

⁵ "Christi sanguis, dum permagnam Patris dilectionem revelat, *ostendit simul quemadmodum pretiosus sit ante Dei oculos homo et inaestimabile sit eius vitae bonum.*" EV, p. 429, n. 25. English translation: EVEng, p. 45, no. 25. Note: The English translation has been corrected throughout by the Author in what regards the translation of the word "*bonum*", which expresses the metaphysical goodness of human life. The official English version translates "*bonum*" with the English word "value" which comes from the language of economics and expresses a relative, subjective assessment. In the passage above, the words "treasured" and "inestimable" have been used by the Author to translate the Latin "*pretiosus*" and "*inaestimabile*", which the official English version renders as "precious" and "priceless."

⁶ "Christi sanguis, praeterea, homini ipsi revelat eius granditatem, ideoque eius vocationem, in *sincera sui donatione* collocari. Propterea quod ut vitae donum funditur, Christi sanguis iam non est mortis signum, decretoriae a fratribus seijunctionis, sed communionis instrumentum omnibus divitias afferentis. Qui in Eucharistiae sacramento sanguinem hunc bibit et in Christo manet (cfr *Io 6, 56*) in ipsius eadem amoris vi vitaeque donatione conglobatur, ut primigeniam amoris vocationem consummet cuique homini propriam (cfr *Gn 1, 27; 2, 18-24*)." EV, 429, n. 25. English translation: EVEng, pp. 45-46, no. 25.



*absolute certitude that in God's plan life will be victorious.*⁷

The first and most important component of the apostolate of respect for human life is communion with Christ Who is the Gospel of life, through the Holy Eucharist and Penance, and through their extension by means of daily prayer and devotion.

I now offer three reflections on the Gospel of life and a new evangelization. First, I reflect on the relationship of a new evangelization and the Gospel of life. Next, I reflect on the constitutive elements of the Gospel of life, especially as they pertain to the beginning of human life. Lastly, I reflect on the principal means of proclaiming the Gospel of life. The heart of these reflections is drawn from Pope Saint John Paul II's Encyclical Letter *Evangelium Vitae*.

A New Evangelization and the Gospel of Life

Blessed Pope Paul VI, on December 8, 1975, called the Church to a new evangelization by his Apostolic Exhortation *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, "On Evangelization in the Modern World." He described evangelization as the Church's "... deepest inspiration, that which comes to her directly from the Lord: To the whole world! To all creation! Right to the ends of the earth!"⁸ After reflecting on the first proclamation of the Gospel, which "... is addressed to those who have never heard the Good News of Jesus, or to children,"⁹ he declared:

But, as a result of the frequent situations of dechristianization in our day, it also proves equally necessary for innumerable people who have been baptized but who live quite outside Christian life, for simple people who have a certain faith but an imperfect knowledge of the foundations of that faith, for intellectuals who feel the need to

⁷ "Ex eodem Christi sanguine hauriunt omnes homines vim, ut operam navent pro vita. Hic ipse sanguis spei est solidior causa, immo est fundamentum absolutae certitudinis ex Dei consilio vitae victoriam esse futuram." EV, 429, n. 25. English translation: EEng, p. 46, no. 25.

⁸ "... altissimum mentis instinctum in se excitat, qui ad eam proxime a divino Magistro proficiscitur, hisce verbis resonantibus: mundo universo! omni creaturae! usque ad ultimum terrae!" Paulus PP. VI, Adhortatio Apostolica *Evangelii nuntiandi*, "De Evangelizatione in mundo huius temporis", 8 Decembris 1975, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 68 (1976), 40, n. 50. [Hereafter, EN] English translation: Pope Paul VI, On Evangelization in the Modern World (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, nd), p. 35, n. 50. [Hereafter, ENEng]

⁹ "... ad eos praesertim habetur, qui Bonum Iesu Nuntium numquam audierunt, aut pueris..." EN, 40, n. 52. English translation: ENEng, p. 35, n. 52.



know Jesus Christ in a light different from the instruction they received as children, and for many others.¹⁰

The degree of secularization to which Pope Paul VI referred with concern in 1975 has only increased exponentially, also due to a grave impoverishment or even lack of adequate catechesis in the Church during the past four decades.

Pope Saint John Paul II addressed the increasing gravity of this situation with steadfast vigor. The pontificate of Pope John Paul II, in fact, may be rightly described as a tireless call to recognize the Church's challenge to be faithful to her divinely given mission in a completely secularized society and to respond to the challenge by means of a new evangelization. A new evangelization consists in teaching the faith through preaching, catechesis and all forms of Catholic education, in celebrating the faith by means of the Sacraments and by means of prayer and devotion which are their extension, and in living the faith by the practice of the virtues – all as if for the first time, that is, with the engagement and energy of the first disciples and of the first missionaries to our native place.

In his Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, “On the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World,” Pope John Paul II described the contemporary situation of the Church in a world which is increasingly secularized, marked by a pervasive and constant spread of relativism, which “inspires and sustains a life lived ‘as if God did not exist’.”¹¹ Not by chance, in *Evangelium Vitae*, addressing the culture of death which tragically marks a totally secularized society, he made reference to such a way of living in ignorance of God and of the order with which He has created the world and, above all, man. He declared:

By living “as if God did not exist”, man not only loses sight of the mystery of God, but also of the mystery of the world and the

¹⁰ “... cum crebro hodie eae invaluerint condiciones, quibus a lege christiana prorsus disceditur – plurimis hominibus, qui sacro quidem tincti sunt baptisate, sed extra quamvis formam vitae christianae degunt, plebi simplici, quae quandam possidet fidem, sed eius fundamenta vix cognoscit, viris studia colentibus, qui opus sibi esse sentiunt, ut Iesum Christum agnoscant alia ratione sibi propositum quam institutione, quae puerili aetate tradi solet, necnon aliis multis.” EN, 40-41, n. 52. English translation: ENEng, p. 36, no. 52.

¹¹ “...inhiant ac proclamant ita esse vivendum «etsi Deus non daretur».” Ioannes Paulus PP. II, Adhortatio Apostolica *Christifideles Laici*, “De vocatione et missione Laicorum in Ecclesia et in mundo,” 30 Decembris 1988, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 81 (1989), 454, no. 34. [Hereafter, CL]. English translation: Pope John Paul II, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Christifideles Laici*, 30 December 1988, “On the Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World” (Vatican City State: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, nd), p. 95, no. 34. [Hereafter, CLEng].



mystery of his own being.¹²

He went on to describe the situation which “inevitably leads to a *practical materialism*, which breeds individualism, utilitarianism and hedonism,”¹³ and in which man exchanges his very being for material possessions and pleasures, rejects suffering as meaningless, and views his body and sexuality in abstraction from his person.

The consequences for the proclamation of the Gospel of life are evident. Having described the philosophical foundations of the culture of death, Pope John Paul II drew this powerful conclusion:

In the materialistic perspective described so far, *interpersonal relations are seriously impoverished*. The first to be harmed are women, children, the sick or suffering, and the elderly. The criterion of personal dignity – which demands respect, generosity and service – is replaced by the criterion of efficiency, functionality and usefulness: others are considered not for who they “are”, but for what they “have, do and produce”. This is the supremacy of the strong over the weak.¹⁴

For instance, the world today is increasingly witness to the supremacy of powerful economic and political forces, which make the pretense to define man, and the relationship between man and woman, apart from the truth of the nature of man, male and female.

To remedy the situation of a totally secularized culture, the saintly Pontiff observed, “a mending of the Christian fabric of society is urgently needed in all parts of the world.”¹⁵ He hastened to add that, if the remedy is to be effected, the Church Herself must be evangelized anew. Fundamental to understanding the radical secularization of our culture is

¹² “Vivens reapse «perinde ac si Deus non sit», non modo a Dei mysterio, verum etiam a mundi ipsius arcano suaeque vitae aberrat.” EV, 426, n. 22. English translation: EEng, p. 40, no. 22.

¹³ “...necessario ad *materialismum practicum* ducit, in quo individualismus, utilitarismus et hedonismus grassantur.” EV, 426, n. 23. English translation: EEng, p. 40, no. 23.

¹⁴ “In materialistico ambitu hucusque proposito, *inter personas necessitudines magnam imminutionem experiuntur*. Detrimentum primi accipiunt mulier, puer, aegrotus vel patiens, senex. Iudicium dignitatis personalis proprium – scilicet observantiae, gratuitatis et servitii -- substituitur efficientiae, functionalitatis utilitatisque iudicio: alter aestimatur non prout sic «est», sed prout aliquid «habet, facit et efficit». De dominatu agitur fortioris in debiliorem.” EV, 427, n. 23. English translation: EEng, p. 42, no. 23. The English translation has been slightly modified by the Author.

¹⁵ “... consortium humanum spiritu christiano ubique denuo imbuendum est.” CL, 455, no. 34. English translation: CEng, p. 96, no. 34.



to understand also how much this secularization has entered into the life of the Church Herself. Pope John Paul II declared:

But for this [the mending of the Christian fabric of society] to come about what is needed is to *first remake the Christian fabric of the ecclesial community itself* present in these countries and nations.¹⁶

Pope John Paul II, therefore, called upon the lay faithful to fulfill their particular responsibility, that is, “to testify how the Christian faith constitutes the only fully valid response – consciously perceived and stated by all in varying degrees – to the problems and hopes that life poses to every person and society.”¹⁷ Making more specific the call, he clarified that the fulfillment of the responsibility of the lay faithful requires that they “know how to overcome in themselves the separation of the Gospel from life, to take up again in their daily activities in family, work and society, an integrated approach to life that is fully brought about by the inspiration and strength of the Gospel.”¹⁸ In our time, in a particular way, we must call upon the help of divine grace for overcoming any separation of the Gospel from life, especially in what pertains to the heart of the Gospel: the safeguarding and promoting of human life.

Constitutive Elements of the Gospel of Life

What are the constitutive elements of the Gospel of life which the Church is called to teach, celebrate, and live, in accord with the demands of a new evangelization?

The Natural Moral Law

The first constitutive element is the truth about the inviolability of innocent human life written in every human heart. In other words, the first constitutive element of the Gospel

¹⁶ “Id [consortium humanum spiritu christiano imbuendum] tamen possibile erit, si *christianus communitatum ipsarum ecclesialium contextus*, quae his in regionibus et nationibus degunt, *renovetur*.” CL, 455, no. 34. English translation: CLEng, p. 96, no. 34.

¹⁷ “...testari quomodo christiana fides responsum constituat unice plene validum, ab omnibus plus minusve conscie agnitum et invocatum, ad quaestiones et exspectationes, quas vita ipsa homini et societatibus imponit singulis.” CL, 455, no. 34. English translation: CLEng, p. 96, no. 34.

¹⁸ “...hiatum inter Evangelium et vitam in seipsis superare valeant, in quotidianis familiae navitatibus, in labore et in societate unitatem vitae componentes, quae in Evangelio lucem et vim pro sua plena invenit adimplerione.” CL, p. 455, no. 34. English translation: CLEng, p. 96, no. 34.



of life is the natural moral law, of which the first precept is the safeguarding and promotion of human life.¹⁹ At the very beginning of the *Evangelium Vitae*, Pope John Paul II made clear the relationship of the Church's teaching regarding human life to the moral law which can be known by reason. He declared:

The Church knows that this *Gospel of life*, which she has received from her Lord, has a profound and persuasive echo in the heart of every person – believer and non-believer alike – because it marvellously fulfils all the heart's expectations while infinitely surpassing them. Even in the midst of difficulties and uncertainties, every person sincerely open to truth and goodness can, by the light of reason and the hidden action of grace, come to recognize in the natural law written in the heart (cf. *Rom 2:14-15*) the sacred good of human life from its very beginning until its end, and can affirm the right of every human being to have this primary good respected to the highest decree. Upon the recognition of this right, every human community and the political community itself are founded.²⁰

What then is the relationship between the natural moral law and the Church's moral teaching? While God, by the Creation, has first revealed to every human heart the truth about human life, He has perfectly revealed the truth in the fullness of its splendor by the Redemptive Incarnation of His only-begotten Son. What is more, the coming of God the Son as man into the world, His saving Passion, Death, Resurrection, and Ascension, and His abiding presence in the Church through the outpouring of the Holy Spirit give man the grace to live fully in accord with the truth. Pope John Paul II explained the relationship thus:

Through the words, the actions and the very person of Jesus, man is given the possibility of “knowing” *the complete truth* concerning

¹⁹ Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 94, art. 2.

²⁰ “Novit Ecclesia illud *Evangelium vitae* sibi a Domino suo commendatum intus resonare permovereque unumquemque hominem sive credit sive non, quandoquidem admirabili modo ei respondet, dum eius simul expectationes infinita quadam ratione excedit. Valet enim quilibet homo, inter difficultates licet ac dubitationes, ad veritatem tamen ex animo apertus adque bonitatem, adiutus rationis ipsius lumine et arcana gratiae impulsione, pervenire eo quidem usque ut legem naturalem in corde inscriptam (cfr *Rom 2, 14-15*) agnoscat, sacrum vitae humanae bonum a primis initiis ad finem ipsum, necnon ius cuiusque adserat hominis ut hoc suum principale bonum summopere observatum videat. In eiusdem ideo iuris agnitione hominum nititur consortio ipsaque politica communitas.” EV, 402, n. 2. English translation: EVEng, pp. 4-5, n. 2.



the good of human life. From this “source” he receives, in particular, the capacity to “accomplish” this truth perfectly (cf. *Jn* 3:21), that is, to accept and fulfil completely the responsibility of loving and serving, of defending and promoting human life. In Christ, the *Gospel of life* is definitively proclaimed and fully given. This is the Gospel which, already present in the Revelation of the Old Testament, and indeed written in the heart of every man and woman, has echoed in every conscience “from the beginning”, from the time of creation itself, in such a way that, despite the negative consequences of sin, *it can also be known in its essential traits by human reason.*²¹

The human conscience, if it has not been corrupted by grave confusion and error, naturally recognizes the inviolable dignity of every human life and commands that it be safeguarded and promoted.

Natural Moral Law and Conscience

Essentially connected with the discussion of the natural moral law is the correct understanding of conscience. Pope John Paul II, relating the intent of his Encyclical Letter, drew particular attention to the relationship of the Gospel of life with conscience. He wrote:

I wish *to meditate upon once more and proclaim the Gospel of life*, the splendour of truth which enlightens consciences, the clear light which corrects the darkened gaze, and the unfailing source of faithfulness and steadfastness in facing the ever new challenges which we meet along the path.²²

²¹ “Ideo ex verbo, ex operibus, ex ipsa Iesu persona facultas tribuitur homini ut *omnem veritatem* de humanae vitae bono «cognoscere possit»; et ex illo «fonte» peculiari modo provenit facultas adamussim talem veritatem faciendi (cfr *Io* 3, 21), id est, suscipiendi necnon funditus exsequendi officium vitam humanam amandi, ei serviendi, eamque tuendi et promovendi. In Christo enim absolute nuntiatur et plene traditur illud *Evangelium vitae* quod iam traditum in revelatione Veteris Testamenti, immo scriptum quodam modo in ipso corde cuiusque hominis et mulieris, in unaquaque conscientia morali resonat «ab initio», hoc est ab ipsa creatione, ita ut, adversis peccati vinculis non officientibus, *suis in essentialibus rationibus humana quoque mente percipi possit.*” EV, 434, n. 29. English translation: EEng, p. 53, n. 24.

²² “... *iterum Evangelium vitae ponderare cupimus atque enuntiare*, quod veritatis splendor est conscientias irradians, praeclarum lumen sanans obscuratum prospectum, fons firmitudinis ac fortitudinis inexhaustus nos



He reflected upon the situation of the conscience which “is today subjected, also as a result of the penetrating influence of the media, to an *extremely serious and mortal danger*: that of *confusion between good and evil*, precisely in relation to the fundamental right to life.”²³ He did not fail to warn about the gravity of the situation, declaring:

When conscience, this bright lamp of the soul (cf. *Mt 6:22-23*), calls “evil good and good evil” (*Is 5:20*), it is already on the path to the most alarming corruption and the darkest moral blindness.²⁴

At the same time, the very existence of the conscience gives hope of a transformation of the situation. Pope John Paul II observed:

And yet all the conditioning and efforts to enforce silence fail to stifle the voice of the Lord echoing in the conscience of every individual: it is always from this intimate sanctuary of the conscience that a new journey of love, openness and service to human life can begin.²⁵

Notwithstanding pervasive confusion and error regarding the fundamental truth of the inviolable dignity of human life, the Gospel of life corresponds always to the deepest desire of man, which is to know and live the truth in love.

It is the conscience, the voice of God speaking to souls, which is, in the words of Blessed John Henry Cardinal Newman, “the aboriginal Vicar of Christ.”²⁶ As such, the conscience is ever attuned to Christ Himself Who instructs and informs it through His Vicar, the Roman Pontiff, and the Bishops in communion with the Roman Pontiff. Blessed Cardinal Newman observed that conscience “is a messenger of him, who, both in nature and in grace,

hortans ut novis semper obviam procedamus nostro in itinere occurrentibus provocationibus.” EV, 407, n. 6. English translation: EEng, p. 11, no. 6.

²³ “... etiam ob instrumentorum socialis communicationis praepotentes virtutes, *pergravi mortiferoque* periculo hodie subditur: *permixtionis* scilicet *boni malique*, quod attinet ad idem fundamentale vitae ius.” EV, 427, n. 24. English translation: EEng, p. 43, no. 24.

²⁴ “Cum conscientia, lucens scilicet animae oculus (cfr *Mt 6, 22-23*), dicit «malum bonum et bonum malum» (*Is 5, 20*), iter persollicitae depravationis et caliginosissimae moralis caecitatis iam est ingressa.” EV, 428, n. 24. English translation: EEng, p. 43, no. 24.

²⁵ “Verum condiciones et conatus ad silentium iniungendum Domini vocem includere non valent quae in cuiusque hominis conscientia insonat: hoc ipso ex intimo conscientiae sacrario novum amoris iter explicari potest, ad vitam humanam accipiendam et ministrandam.” EV, 428, n. 24. English translation: EEng, p. 43, no. 24.



speaks to us behind a veil, and teaches and rules us by his representatives.”²⁷

Today, one must be attentive to a false notion of conscience, which would actually use the conscience to justify sinful acts. Conscience does not set individuals apart from one another as arbiters of what is right and good, but unites them in the pursuit of the one truth, ultimately Our Lord Jesus Christ Who is the only arbiter of the right and good, so that their thoughts, words and actions put that truth into practice. A text of Blessed Cardinal Newman is used, in fact, to promote the erroneous subjective notion of conscience. Pope Benedict XVI referred to the misuse of this text, while commenting on Newman’s teaching regarding conscience:

In support of the claim that Newman’s concept of conscience matched the modern subjective understanding, people often quote a letter in which he said – should he have to propose a toast – that he would drink first to conscience and then to the Pope. But in this statement, “conscience” does not signify the ultimately binding quality of subjective intuition. It is an expression of the accessibility and the binding force of truth: on this its primacy is based. The second toast can be addressed to the Pope because it is his task to demand obedience to the truth.²⁸

In other words, there can never be a contrast between what the conscience demands of us and what the truth of the faith, as enunciated by the Holy Father, demands of us. The conscience, in fact, is drawing us into an ever deeper understanding of the truth and adherence to it in our thoughts, words and actions.

²⁶ John Henry Cardinal Newman, “Letter to the Duke of Norfolk,” V, in *Certain Difficulties felt by Anglicans in Catholic Teaching* II, (London: Longmans Green, 1885), p. 248. Quoted in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 1778.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 248.

²⁸ “Per poter asserire l’identità tra il concetto che Newman aveva della coscienza e la moderna comprensione soggettiva della coscienza, si ama far riferimento alla sua parola secondo cui egli – nel caso avesse dovuto fare un brindisi – avrebbe brindato prima alla coscienza e poi al Papa. Ma in questa affermazione, «coscienza» non significa l’ultima obbligatorietà dell’intuizione soggettiva. È espressione dell’accessibilità e della forza vincolante della verità: in ciò si fonda il suo primato. Al Papa può essere dedicato il secondo brindisi, perché è compito suo esigere l’obbedienza nei confronti della verità.” Benedictus PP. XVI, Allocutio, “Omina Nativitatis novique Anni Curiae Romanae significantur”, 20 Decembris 2010, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 103 (2011), 40-41. English translation: Pope Benedict XVI, “Benedict XVI’s Christmas greeting to the College of Cardinals, the Roman Curia and the Governorate: Resolved in faith and in doing good,” *L’Osservatore Romano*, weekly edition in English, 22-29 December 2010, p. 14.



The proclamation of the Gospel of life should be marked by a profound confidence in the human heart upon which the moral law has been inscribed. At the same time, it should be ready to refute the false claim that unconditional respect for the inviolable dignity of innocent human life is merely a confessional matter and to illustrate how it is at the very foundation of the common good.

Inviolable Dignity of Innocent Human Life

Having set forth clearly the natural moral law and its relationship with Catholic teaching, Pope John Paul II made three authoritative declarations of the content of the moral law in what pertains to the Gospel of life. The first statement reads:

Therefore, by the authority which Christ conferred upon Peter and his Successors, and in communion with the Bishops of the Catholic Church, *I confirm that the direct and voluntary killing of an innocent human being is always gravely immoral.* This doctrine, based upon that unwritten law which man, in the light of reason, finds in his own heart (cf. Rom 2:14-15), is reaffirmed by Sacred Scripture, transmitted by the Tradition of the Church and taught by the ordinary and universal Magisterium.²⁹

Having stated the perennial teaching of the Church regarding the inviolable dignity of innocent human life, Pope John Paul II made clear that the conscious and deliberate destruction of an innocent human life is always and everywhere evil “and can never be licit either as an end in itself or as a means to a good end.”³⁰ Such an act is, in the words of Pope John Paul II, “a grave act of disobedience to the moral law, and indeed to God himself, the author and guarantor of that law; it contradicts the fundamental virtues of justice and

²⁹ “Quapropter Nos auctoritate usi Petro eiusque Successoribus a Cristo collata, coniuncti cum Ecclesiae catholicae Episcopis, *confirmamus directam voluntariamque hominis innocentis interfectionem graviter inhonestam esse semper.* Doctrina haec, cuius innituntur radices illa in non scripta lege quam, praeunte rationis lumine, quivis homo suo reperit in animo (cfr *Rom* 2, 14-15), inculcatur denuo Sacris in Litteris, Ecclesiae Traditione commendatur atque ordinario e universali Magisterio explanatur.” EV, 465, n. 57. English translation: EEng, pp. 101-102, no. 57

³⁰ “... nec potest licitum haberi umquam nec uti finis neque ut via ab bonum propositum.” EV, 465, n. 57. English translation: EEng, p. 102, no. 57.



charity.”³¹

Destruction of Innocent Human Life and Procured Abortion

The next two authoritative statements are applications of the first. The second applies the truth of the inviolable dignity of innocent human life to the question of procured abortion. Pope John Paul II declared:

Therefore, by the authority which Christ conferred upon Peter and his Successors, in communion with the Bishops – who on various occasions have condemned abortion and who ... albeit dispersed throughout the world, have shown unanimous agreement concerning this doctrine – *I declare that direct abortion, that is, abortion willed as an end or as a means, always constitutes a grave moral disorder, since it is the deliberate killing of an innocent human being. This doctrine is based upon the natural law and upon the written Word of God, is transmitted by the Church’s Tradition and taught by the ordinary and universal Magisterium.*³²

Although time does not permit the treatment of a number of moral issues directly related to procured abortion, Pope John Paul II makes clear that practices like experimentation on human embryos and selective, so-called “eugenic,” abortion utilizing prenatal diagnostic techniques are always and everywhere evil.³³

Destruction of Innocent Human Life and Euthanasia

The third authoritative statement applies the truth of the inviolable dignity of innocent human life to the practice of euthanasia. After having distinguished “an action or omission

³¹ “Gravis namque inoboedientia est morali legi, immo ipsi Deo eius auctori ac vindici; primariae praeterea virtuti iustitiae contradicit et caritatis.” EV, 465, n. 57. English translation: EVEng, p. 102, no. 57.

³² “Auctoritate proinde utentes Nos a Christo Beato Petro eiusque Successoribus collata, consentientes cum Episcopis qui abortum crebrius respuerunt quique ... licet per orbem disseminati una mente tamen de hac ipsa concinuerunt doctrina – *declaramus abortum recta via procuratum, sive uti finem intentum seu ut instrumentum, semper gravem prae se ferre ordinis moralis turbationem*, quippe qui deliberata existat innocentis hominis occisio. Haec doctrina naturali innititur lege Deique scripto Verbo, transmittitur Ecclesiae Traditione atque ab ordinario et universali Magisterio exponitur.” EV, 472, n. 62. English translation: EVEng, p. 112, no. 62.

³³ Cf. EV, 472-474, n. 63.



which of itself and by intention causes death, with the purpose of eliminating all suffering,”³⁴ from “the decision to forego so-called ‘aggressive medical treatment’, in other words, medical procedures which no longer correspond to the real situation of the patient, either because they are by now disproportionate to any expected results or because they impose an excessive burden on the patient and his family,”³⁵ Pope John Paul II declared:

Taking into account these distinctions, in harmony with the Magisterium of my Predecessors and in communion with the Bishops of the Catholic Church, *I confirm that euthanasia is a grave violation of the law of God*, since it is the deliberate and morally unacceptable killing of a human person. This doctrine is based upon the natural law and upon the written word of God, is transmitted by the Church’s Tradition and taught by the ordinary and universal Magisterium.³⁶

Our time together today does not permit the discussion of the moral issues directly related to euthanasia, for example, so-called assisted suicide, which Pope John Paul II addresses after having enunciated the authoritative teaching in the matter.³⁷

Principal Means of Proclaiming the Gospel of Life

What then are the principal means of proclaiming the Gospel of life? The fundamental locus of the proclamation of the Gospel of life is the family, in which the children witness the Gospel of life in the relationship of their parents with one another and in the relationship of the parents with them. Such witness pertains not only to the beginning of human life, in the correct understanding and living of human sexuality, but also to the end of life in the

³⁴ “... actio vel omissio quae suapte natura et consilio mentis mortem affert ut hoc modo omnis dolor removeatur.” EV, 475, n. 65. English translation: EVEng, p. 117, no. 65.

³⁵ “... consilium illud, quo quis tractionem reiciat sic dictam «*vehementiam therapeuticam*», aliquos nempe medicos interventus non amplius aegrotantis statui congruentes, quia impares iam sunt iis effectibus quos sperari liceret vel etiam quia nimis omnino ipsi aegroto eiusque familiae molesti.” EV, 475, n. 65. English translation: EVEng, p. 117, no. 65.

³⁶ “His rite interpositis distinctionibus, Magisterium Nos Decessorum Nostrorum iterantes atque in communionem cum catholicae Ecclesiae Episcopis *confirmamus euthanasiam gravem divinae Legis esse violationem*, quatenus est conscia necatio personae humanae, quae moraliter probari non potest. Haec doctrina lege naturali atque Verbo Dei scripto adnixa, Ecclesiae Traditione traducitur atque Magisterio ordinario et universali explicatur.” EV, 477, n. 65. English translation: EVEng, p. 119, no. 65.

³⁷ Cf. EV, 477-478, n. 66.



acceptance of human suffering as the way of unconditional love of others, in accord with the teaching of the Lord which Saint Paul masterfully articulates in the first chapter of his Letter to the Colossians.³⁸

The Gospel of life is integral to the spiritual worship at the heart of the family. Lifting up their hearts to the glorious pierced Heart of Jesus in the Eucharistic sacrifice, parents and children are purified and strengthened to live Christ's pure and selfless love in their relationships with each other. Pope John Paul II declared:

As part of the spiritual worship acceptable to God (cf. *Rom* 12:1), the *Gospel of life* is to be celebrated above all in *daily living*, which should be filled with self-giving love for others. In this way, our lives will become a genuine and responsible acceptance of the gift of life and a heartfelt song of praise and gratitude to God who has given us this gift. This is already happening in the many different acts of selfless generosity, often humble and hidden, carried out by men and women, children and adults, the young and the old, the healthy and the sick.³⁹

In no. 92 of *Evangelium Vitae*, Pope John Paul II treated at length the “*decisive responsibility*” of the family for the proclamation of the Gospel of life.⁴⁰ He illustrated at some length the critical role of the family not only in teaching the welcome due to new human life but also in teaching the meaning of suffering and death. As he observed, “[t]he family has a special role to play throughout the life of its members, from birth to death.”⁴¹

Pope John Paul II, quoting from his homily on the occasion of the beatification of Saint Gianna Beretta Molla, the heroic apostle of life of the present time, gave special attention to “brave mothers who devote themselves to their own family without reserve, who

³⁸ Cf. Col 1, 24.

³⁹ “In ratione spiritalis cultus Deo grati (cfr *Rom* 12, 1), Evangelii vitae celebratio suam postulat effectiorem praesertim in cotidiana exsistentia, quae in caritate erga alios agitur atque sui ipsius oblatione. Hac ratione tota nostra exsistentia fiet vera et officii conscia acceptio doni vitae atque sincera grataque laus in Deum qui nobis talem tribuit donationem. Quod iam accidit plurimis in signis donationis, modestae saepe et absconditae, quae primos exhibent actores viros et mulieres, parvulos et adultos, iuvenes et seniors, sanos et aegrotos.” EV, 498, n. 86. English translation: EEng, p. 152, no. 86.

⁴⁰ “... *decretoria ... responsalitas*.” EV, 505, n. 92. English translation: EEng, p. 163, n. 92.

⁴¹ “Familia provocatur per totum vitae ipsius sodalium spatium, ab oriente vita ad mortem.” EV, 506, n. 92. English translation: EEng, p. 164, no. 92.



suffer in giving birth to their children and who are ready to make any effort, to face any sacrifice, in order to pass on to them the best of themselves.”⁴² Without in any way diminishing the dignity of the husband and father in the family, the Gospel of life in the present time particularly requires a new understanding and lived appreciation of Christian wives and mothers.

Later on in the Encyclical Letter, Pope John Paul II devoted special attention to the “unique and decisive” role of women in the new evangelization and, therefore, in the proclamation of the Gospel of life.⁴³ He declared:

It depends on them to promote a “new feminism” which rejects the temptation of imitating models of “male domination”, in order to acknowledge and affirm the true genius of women in every aspect of the life of society, and overcome all discrimination, violence and exploitation.⁴⁴

Reflecting upon motherhood, he further observed:

A mother welcomes and carries in herself another human being, enabling it to grow inside her, giving it room, respecting it in its otherness. Women first learn and then teach others that human relations are authentic if they are open to accepting the other person: a person who is recognized and loved because of the dignity which comes from being a person and not from other considerations, such as usefulness, strength, intelligence, beauty or health. This is the fundamental contribution which the Church and humanity expect from women. And it is the indispensable requisite for an authentic cultural change.⁴⁵

⁴² “... «omnium matrum fortium, quae suae familiae sine condicione se dedunt, quae in dolore pariunt filios suos, quaeque expeditae sunt ad quemlibet laborem aggrediendum, ad quodlibet sacrificium obeundum, ut eis referant quidquid optimum in se custodiant».” EV, 498, n. 86. English translation: EVEng, p. 153, no. 86.

⁴³ “... prorsus singulare fortasse et decretorium...” EV, 514, n. 99. English translation: EVEng, p. 176, no. 99.

⁴⁴ “... ipsarum enim est promovere «novum feminismum» qui agnoscere valeat et proferre veram indolem femininam in quolibet convictus civilis gestu, quin in temptationem incurratur imitandi exemplaria «cultus nimii virilitatis», dum opera datur, ut omnino quodvis genus amoveatur discriminationis violentiae et abusus.” EV, 514, n. 99. English translation: EVEng, p. 176, no. 99.

⁴⁵ “Mater enim excipit secumque fert alterum, ei modum intra se crescendo largitur, spatium tribuit illi ipsum veneratione prosequens in ipsius alteritate. Ita mulier percipit et docet humanum consortium solummodo authenticum esse cum aperitur ad receptionem alterius personae, agnitae et dilectae ob dignitatem quae illi



It is clear that the new evangelization regarding the inviolable dignity of innocent human life, from the moment of conception to the moment of natural death, depends upon a new proclamation of the truth regarding woman and motherhood.⁴⁶

A new evangelization makes clear the relationship between the practice of the virtues of purity, chastity and modesty, that is the living of the truth regarding human sexuality and human life, and the practice of justice. Respect for human life is related essentially to respect for the integrity of marriage and the family. The attack on the innocent and defenseless life of the unborn has its origin in an erroneous view of human sexuality, which attempts to eliminate, by mechanical or chemical means, the essentially procreative nature of the conjugal act. This error maintains that the artificially altered act retains its integrity. The claim is that the act remains unitive or loving, even though the procreative nature of the act has been radically violated. In fact, it is not unitive, for one or both of the partners withholds an essential part of the gift of self, which is the essence of the conjugal union. The so-called “contraceptive mentality” is essentially anti-life. Many forms of what is called contraception

provenit ex eo quod est persona, non vero aliis de causis, uti sunt: commoditas, robur, intellegentia, pulchritudo, valetudo. Hoc est enim praecipuum adiumentum quod Ecclesia humanumque genus a mulieribus exspectant. Haec necessaria est ad authenticam conversionem culturalem praeparatio.” EV, 515, n. 99. English translation: EVEng, p. 177, no. 99.

⁴⁶ At the end of no. 99 of *Evangelium vitae*, Pope John Paul II devoted “a special word to women who have had an abortion.” Acknowledging the complexity of factors involved in the decision to procure an abortion, the gravity of the evil involved in the act, and the enduring “wound” which the deed leaves in the “heart,” he urged them to have hope, honestly acknowledging what they have done and abandoning themselves with trust to divine mercy, especially by means of the Sacrament of Penance. He reminded them that they in fact “can be among the most eloquent defenders of everyone’s right to life.” Referring to the aborted child, he wrote, in the English version found on the Vatican website: “To the same Father and his mercy you can with sure hope entrust your child.” The definitive Latin text reads: “Infantem autem vestrum potestis Eidem Patri Eiusque misericordiae cum spe committere.” (EV, 515, n. 99). The English translation adds to the word “hope” the qualifier “sure”, which is not found in the Latin text. The Latin text does not explain the meaning of “hope” as used in the context.

In an edition of the Latin original published by the Libreria Editrice Vaticana in 1995, there is a different and problematic text which reads: “Tunc percipietis nihil periisse et licebit vobis etiam ab infante vestro veniam petere, qui nunc in Domino vivit.” (Ioannis Pauli PP II, Litterae encyclicae «*Evangelium vitae*», [Città del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1995], p. 123, n. 99). The same text is found in translation in the edition of the English version of *Evangelium vitae* also printed by the Libreria Editrice Vaticana and used throughout this text. It reads: “You will come to understand that nothing is definitively lost and you will also be able to ask forgiveness from your child, who is now living in the Lord.” (EVEng, 178, no. 99). The text is very problematic inasmuch as it seems to declare as a fact that such children enjoy the Beatific Vision, a position which has virtually no support in the Church’s tradition. While the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, in no. 1261, states: “As regards children who have died without Baptism, the Church can only entrust them to the mercy of God, as she does in her funeral rites for them,” it earlier declares, in no. 1257: “The Church does not know of any means other than Baptism that assures entry into eternal beatitude; this is why she takes care not to neglect the mission she has received from the Lord to see that all who can be baptized are ‘reborn of water and the Spirit’.”



are in fact abortifacient, that is, they destroy a life which has already been conceived, has already begun.

The manipulation of the conjugal act, as Pope Paul VI courageously observed, has led to many forms of violence against marriage and family life.⁴⁷ Through the spread of the contraceptive mentality, especially among the young, human sexuality is no longer seen as the gift of God which draws a man and a woman together in a bond of lifelong and faithful love, crowned by the gift of new human life, but, rather, as a tool for personal gratification.⁴⁸ Once sexual union is no longer seen to be procreative by its very nature, human sexuality is abused in ways that are profoundly harmful and indeed destructive of individuals and of society itself. One has only to think of the devastation which is daily wrought in our world by the multi-billion dollar industry of pornography. Fundamental to the transformation of Western culture is the proclamation of the truth about the conjugal union in its fullness and the correction of the contraceptive thinking which fears life, which fears procreation.

Evangelium Vitae refers to many more agents and means of the proclamation of the Gospel of life, such as healthcare workers, volunteers, educators, civil leaders and legislators, hospitals, clinics, convalescent homes, Catholic schools and universities, and other institutions and services which assist individuals and families in living the truth of the Gospel of life.⁴⁹ Time does not permit an adequate treatment of all of them. I wish, however, to treat briefly two.

In advancing the respect for the inviolable dignity of innocent human life, proper attention must be given to the laws which govern the life of society. While the transformation of hearts is the most fundamental means of the new evangelization, Catholics and all persons of good will must be attentive to promote laws which safeguard the dignity of human life. At the same time, one cannot ignore the irreplaceable role which law plays in culture. Pope John Paul II observed:

Although laws are not the only means of protecting human life, nevertheless they do play a very important and sometimes decisive role in influencing patterns of thought and behavior. I repeat once

⁴⁷ Cf. Paulus PP. VI, Litterae encyclicae *Humanae vitae*, “De propagatione humanae prolis recte ordinanda”, 25 Iulii 1968, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 60 (1968), 493-494, n. 17.

⁴⁸ Cf. EV, 414-415, n. 13; and 511-512, n. 97.



more that a law which violates an innocent person's natural right to life is unjust and, as such, is not valid as a law. For this reason I urgently appeal once more to all political leaders not to pass laws which, by disregarding the dignity of the person, undermine the very fabric of society.⁵⁰

In this regard, involvement in political life is essential to the advancement of the cause of life.

Already in his Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, Pope John Paul II had declared:

The social role of families is called upon to find expression also in the form of *political intervention*: families should be the first to take steps to see that the laws and institutions of the State not only do not offend by support and positively defend the rights and duties of the family. Along these lines, families should grow in awareness of being “protagonists” of what is known as “family politics” and assume responsibility for transforming society; otherwise families will be the first victims of the evils that they have done no more than note with indifference.⁵¹

The Holy Father repeated the same exhortation to families in *Evangelium Vitae*.⁵²

Secondly, I underline the importance of developing and supporting truly pro-life and pro-family media, and of organizing and sustaining public manifestations in support of the inviolable dignity of innocent human life and the integrity of the family. The culture of death

⁴⁹ Cf. EV, 499-505, nn. 87-91.

⁵⁰ “Tametsi leges non unicum sunt instrumentum, quo vita humana defendatur, partes tamen magni momenti explicant, immo praegraves aliquando, in cuiusdam mentis consuetudinisque provectione. Iterum dicimus: norma quae naturalem legem violat ad vitam cuiusdam innocentis pertinentem, est iniusta ideoque legis momentum habere non potest. Quam ob rem fortiter iteramus exhortationem Nostram ad omnes viros politicos ne promulgent leges quae, personae dignitatem neglegentes, funditus ipsam civilem convictionem extenuent.” EV, 503-504, n. 90. English translation: EVEng, p. 160, no. 90.

⁵¹ “Sociale familiae munus etiam ratione *politici interventus* est procurandum: familias nempe eniti oportet imprimis ut leges institutionesque Civitatis non modo non laedant, verum fulciant ac defendant firmo modo iura familiae necnon officia. Ita profecto familiae magis consciae debent fieri se «primas partes agere» in «re politica familiari», quae vocatur, in seque recipere officium transformandae societatis: alioquin erunt familiae illorum malorum veluti victimae primae, quae indifferenti animo solum aspicere voluerunt.” Ioannes Paulus PP. II, Adhortatio Apostolica *Familiaris consortio*, “De Familiae Christianae muneribus in mundo huius temporis”, 22 Novembris 1981, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 74 (1982), 136, n. 44. English translation: Pope John Paul II, Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*, “Regarding the Role of the Christian Family in the Modern World,” 22 November 1981 (Vatican City State: Vatican Polyglot Press, nd), p. 85, n. 44.



advances, in large part, because of a lack of attention and information among the general public. What is more, the thoroughly galvanized anti-life and anti-family agenda of the pervasive mass media confuses and corrupts minds and hearts, and dulls consciences to the law written by God upon every human heart.

Pope John Paul II declared:

What is urgently called for is a *general mobilization of consciences* and a *united ethical effort* to activate a *great campaign in support of life*. *All together, we must build a new culture of life*: new, because it will be able to confront and solve today's unprecedented problems affecting human life; new, because it will be adopted with deeper and more dynamic conviction by all Christians; new, because it will be capable of bringing about a serious and courageous cultural dialogue among all parties. While the urgent need for such a cultural transformation is linked to the present historical situation, it is also rooted in the Church's mission of evangelization. The purpose of the Gospel, in fact, is "to transform humanity from within and to make it new." Like the yeast which leavens the whole measure of dough (cf. *Mt* 13:33), the Gospel is meant to permeate all cultures and give them life from within, so that they may express the full truth about the human person and about human life.⁵³

Pope John Paul II did not fail to note that such efforts must begin with "*the renewal of a culture of life within Christian communities themselves*."⁵⁴ The Church herself must address the situation of so many of her members who, even though they may be active in Church

⁵² Cf. EV, 507-508, n. 93.

⁵³ "Quam primum inducantur necesse est *generalis conscientiarum motus moralisque communis nisus*, qui excitare valeant *validum sane opus ad vitam tuendam: omnibus nobis simul coniunctis nova exstuenta est vitae cultura: nova*, quae scilicet possit hodiernas de vita hominis ineditas quaestiones suscipere atque solvere; nova, utpote quae acriore et alacriore ratione omnium christianorum conscientiam permoveat; nova demum, quae accommodata sit ad gravem animosamque culturalem suscitandam comparationem cum omnibus. Huius culturalis conversionis necessitas coniungitur cum aetatis nostrae historica rerum condicione, at praesertim inhaeret in ipso evangelizandi munere quod proprium est Ecclesiae. Evangelium enim eo spectat «ut perficiat interiorum mutationem» et «humanitatem novam efficiat»; est velut fermentum quo pasta tota fermentatur (cfr *Mt* 13, 33), atque, qua tale, perfundere debet omnes culturas easque intus pervadere, ut integram declarent de homine deque eius vita veritatem." EV, 509, n. 95. English translation: EEng, pp. 168-169, no. 95.



activities, “end up by separating their Christian faith from its ethical requirements regarding life, and thus fall into moral subjectivism and certain objectionable ways of acting.”⁵⁵

Conclusion

It is my hope that these reflections inspired by the Encyclical Letter *Evangelium Vitae* have helped to underscore the fundamental place of the Gospel of life in a new evangelization which will transform the life of the Church and, through the transformation of the life of the Church, will transform the life of society. Most of all, I hope that they will lead to a new reading of the Encyclical Letter as the inspiration and guide for all labors to overcome the culture of violence and death and to advance the civilization of life and love.

Before the daunting challenges of Christian living, of advancing the cause of life, the answer is the placing of hearts totally within the glorious pierced Heart of Christ. He will transform lives and, through the conversion of lives, He will transform the world. Christ gave the Blessed Virgin Mary, His Mother, to His disciples as their mother. She is constantly drawing hearts to her Immaculate Heart, so that faithful disciples, one with her, may give their hearts totally and forever to Christ.

I close with words taken from the prayer with which Pope John Paul II concludes *Evangelium Vitae*, invoking the intercession of Mary Immaculate:

Grant that all who believe in your Son may *proclaim the Gospel of life* with honesty and love to the people of our time. Obtain for them the grace to *accept that Gospel* as a gift ever new, the *joy of celebrating* it with gratitude throughout their lives and the courage to *bear witness to it* resolutely, in order to build, together with all people of good will, the civilization of truth and love, to the praise and glory of God, the Creator and lover of life.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ “... vitae cultura renovanda intra ipsas christianas communitates.” EV, 509, n. 95. English translation: EVEng, p. 169, no. 95.

⁵⁵ “... seiunctionem quandam inferunt inter christianam fidem eiusque moralia circa vitam postulata, progredientes hac ratione ad moralem quandam subiectivismum adque vivendi mores qui probari non possunt.” EV, 509-510, n. 95. English translation: EVEng, p. 169, no. 95

⁵⁶ “Credentes tuum in Filium effice ut *Evangelium vitae* candide sciant amanterque nostrae aetatis hominibus nuntiare. Ipsis gratiam impetrato ut veluti novum usque donum illud *amplexentur*, laetitiam vero ut memori mente in vitae suae perpetuitate id *venerentur*, pariter constantiam ut actiosa idem tenacitate *testificentur* unde



Thank you. God bless you.

Raymond Leo Cardinal BURKE

universis cum bonae voluntatis hominibus civilem veritatis amorisque cultum exstruere possint, ad Dei vitae Conditoris et amatoris laudem atque gloriam.” EV, 522, n. 105. English translation: EEng, p. 188, no. 105.

