



WORD OF LIFE

May 2005

Intercessions for Life

MAY 2005

May 1st

SIXTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

For the newly baptized:
that they who have been reborn in Christ
might stand with him in the defense of all human life
from conception to natural death;
We pray to the Lord:

May 8th

SEVENTH SUNDAY OF EASTER

For those whose wombs sheltered us to the day of birth:
that God might reward all mothers
for the care and protection they give to their children;
We pray to the Lord:

May 15th

PENTECOST SUNDAY

That the Holy Spirit inspire the hearts and minds
of all who seek to serve us in government
and that they might come to know the consummate value
of each and every human life;
We pray to the Lord:

May 22nd

THE MOST HOLY TRINITY

For a growing understanding of life:
created by the Father,
redeemed by the Son,
and made holy by the grace of the Holy Spirit;
We pray to the Lord:

May 29th

THE MOST HOLY BODY AND BLOOD OF CHRIST

That as we receive the body and blood of Christ,
we might grow strong in our love for his mystical body,
and seek, with Christ, to protect and cherish
all those whom the world has forgotten or rejected;
We pray to the Lord:

“All the forces of science and wisdom must be mobilized at the service of the true good of the person and of society in every part of the world, in the light of that basic criterion which is the *dignity of the person*, in whom is impressed the image of God himself.”

Pope John Paul II (February 19, 2005)

Civil progress cannot derive from the social devaluation of marriage and from the loss of respect for the inviolable dignity of human life. What appears as the progress of civilization and scientific conquest, in many cases is, in fact a defeat for human dignity and society.

Pope John Paul II, Message to Italy's Forums of Family Association, December 19, 2005

This is a Darwinian nightmare and a grave violation of the laws of God. Euthanasia for children in circumstances where it is not possible to seek or secure the consent of those affected. It is a slippery slope that will give doctors the right to impose life or death, and will lead to an argument that it should be extended to all.

Spokesman for Dutch Bishop Wim Eijk of Gronigen Netherlands on euthanasia of disabled newborns in the Netherlands.

Human life is a precious gift to be loved and defended in each of its stages. The Commandment "You shall not kill!" always requires respecting and promoting human life, from its beginning to its natural end. It is a command that applies even in the presence of illness and when physical weakness reduces the person's ability to be self-reliant. If growing old, with its inevitable conditions is accepted serenely in the light of faith, it can become an invaluable opportunity for better comprehending the Mystery of the Cross, which gives full sense to human existence..

Pope John Paul II, Message for Lent 2005

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In making me live an extraordinary experience of love, Emmanuel taught me the beauty of life and the possibility it represents.

He taught me the power of this gratuitous love, wholeheartedly given without asking anything in return. It has enabled me to discover fullness, and this has made me profoundly happy, despite the fact that still today I grieve over his absence.

Thanks to him, I have discovered the limits of our world, my frailty and our immense need. Life is relationship with others; we are responsible for this relationship, above all when the other is nearing death.

Isabelle de Mezerac, whose son Emmanuel, diagnosed "in utero" with life-threatening disabilities, died an hour after birth

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If it is true that man lives upon the heritage of those who preceded him, and that his future depends definitively on how the cultural values of his own people are transmitted to him, then the wisdom and experience of the elderly can illuminate his path on the way of progress toward an ever more complete form of civilization. John Paul II, Message for Lent 2005

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Homily for Life

May 15, 2005

Pentecost Sunday

“As we look to the challenges lying before the Church in the United States today, two urgent tasks immediately present themselves: the need for an evangelization of the culture in general, which, as I have stated, is a unique contribution which the Church in your country can make to the mission ‘ad gentes’ today, and the need for Catholics to cooperate fruitfully with men and women of good will in building a culture of respect for life.”

Pope John Paul II

They were afraid of death, so they hid in the dark. But Jesus came through their locked doors and said, “Peace be with you!”

How did he quell their fears? Did he give a long and rambling explanation of why they were safe? No. That would have been a lie. They were still very much in danger from those who had killed Jesus.

How did he bring them the peace he had promised? He showed them his hands and his side: his body, the wounded flesh which he had offered up for their sins. There is saving power in the Passion of Christ.

And then he breathed on them. As God first breathed on the dirt and made man, so Christ breathed on these men and made them his Apostles, anointed with the Holy Spirit.

That same Holy Spirit was breathed into us in Baptism, and was strengthened and sealed in the Sacrament of Confirmation. That same Holy Spirit guides the Church today, showing her how to walk in the way of her Lord and Savior. That same Holy Spirit leads the ignorant to truth and the lost to the road of salvation.

We need Christ to breathe his Holy Spirit upon the United States of America today.

Christ cradled children in his arms, but among us children are so often abused, abandoned, or even killed in the womb. Christ sought out and loved the rejected and the lost, while so often among us the old are warehoused and forgotten, the sick are marginalized, and the weak are left to fend for themselves. Christ cherished every human being and even ate with sinners, while so often we reject those who are not like us, persecute those we fear, and put to death those we no longer know how to love. Christ came to fulfill the law, while we live in a country which sanctions the death of the innocent and the neglect of the endangered.

Our country needs Christ to breathe the Holy Spirit on us. The Spirit who protects the unborn child because Christ loves him. The Spirit who seeks out the man with AIDS, because Christ loves him. The Spirit who embraces the heart broken by abortion, because Christ loves her. The Spirit who preaches the truth about Life, because Christ loves the truth. The Spirit who sacrifices for the poor, because Christ loves them. The Spirit who loves the condemned man, because Christ loves him.

We need the Holy Spirit to do for us what we sang a few moments ago in the Sequence for Pentecost:

Wash the stains of guilt away;
Bend the stubborn heart and will;
Melt the frozen, warm the chill;
Guide the steps that go astray.

We are a country which cherishes liberty. We fight for liberty, we remain vigilant to preserve liberty, and many have died for the liberty we enjoy. But liberty without the guidance of the Holy Spirit is selfishness. Let us pray that Christ will breathe on us anew, purify us from a culture of death, and make our hearts burn with a love for the life he first gave us in our mother's womb and which he calls us to defend until we breathe our last breath.