

Catholic Diocese of Raleigh



THE RIGHT TO LIFE AND THE DIGNITY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

Human life is sacred. The dignity of the human person is the foundation of a moral vision of society. Direct attacks on innocent persons are never morally acceptable, at any stage or in any condition. In our society, human life is especially under direct attack from abortion. Other direct threats to the sanctity of human life include euthanasia, human cloning, and the destruction of human embryos for research.

Catholic teaching about the dignity of life calls us to oppose torture, unjust war, and the use of the death penalty; to prevent genocide and attacks against noncombatants; to oppose racism; and to overcome poverty and suffering. Nations are called to protect the right to life by seeking effective ways to combat evil and terror without resorting to armed conflicts except as a last resort, always seeking first to resolve disputes by peaceful means. We revere the lives of children in the womb, the lives of persons dying in war and from starvation, and indeed the lives of all human beings as children of God.

Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship, Nos. 44,45
United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

“The Gospel of life is for the whole of human society. To be actively pro-life is to contribute to the renewal of society through the promotion of the common good. It is impossible to further the common good without acknowledging and defending the right to life, upon which all the other inalienable rights of individuals are founded and from which they develop. A society lacks solid foundations when, on the one hand, it asserts values such as the dignity of the person, justice and peace, but then, on the other hand, radically acts to the contrary by allowing or tolerating a variety of ways in which human life is devalued and violated, especially where it is weak or marginalized. Only respect for life can be the foundation and guarantee of the most precious and essential goods of society, such as democracy and peace.”

The Gospel of Life, No. 101, Pope John Paul II

For Reflection:

“You formed my inmost being; you knit me in my mother’s womb. I praise you, so wonderfully you made me; wonderful are your works! My very self you knew; my bones are not hidden from you.”

Psalm 139: 13-14

Faithful Citizenship Prayer:

God our Father, may your Holy Spirit guide me in all my decisions and actions. Hear my prayers, and increase in me the will to follow your Son Jesus. Help me to draw on the resources of my faith as I use the opportunities of our democracy to shape a society more respectful of the life, dignity, and rights of the human person, especially the poor and vulnerable. I ask this through Jesus Christ, your Son, who lives and reigns with you in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God forever and ever. Amen.

www.faithfulcitizenship.org