

Reflections

by the
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A Matter of Life and Death

Next weekend we celebrate Respect Life Weekend. Since 1973 when the Supreme Court legalized abortion, the first weekend of October has been designated as a time for people to stop, to reflect, to pray, and to do everything possible to respect life from the moment of conception to the moment of death. It is appropriate that Respect Life weekend coincides this year with our own diocesan effort for RENEW when we are asked to pray for the success of RENEW. Spiritual renewal will be the basis for the renewal of society. It is also good that Respect Life weekend occurs at the beginning of a month dedicated to Mary, Mother of God, under the title of Queen of the Rosary.

The Church's teaching on abortion is but a consequence of the conviction that human life is sacred which must be protected and sustained from conception. The life of no innocent person, born or unborn, may be taken directly. Neither parents nor government nor society give the right to life to the unborn child – nor may they take away that right. To subordinate the life of the unborn to the personal values of others or to the goals of society is morally unacceptable. Abortion is a grave evil which must be countered by a public policy effort aimed at the legislative, judicial and administrative areas to guarantee effective protection for the right to life.

During a visit to the United States, Mother Teresa of Calcutta spoke of poverty. Her primary concern was not financial poverty. Rather, she said, "People are not just hungry for bread; they are hungry for love. They are not just naked for a piece of clothing; they are naked of human dignity. They are not just homeless for a room made of bricks, but because of rejection. For me, abortion is the greatest poverty that a nation can experience."

Spiritual renewal will bring about a renewal of values in society. Next weekend as we pray for the success of RENEW in our diocese, may our prayers especially to Mary, the Mother of God, help each of us respect life from the moment of conception to the moment of death. May we respect the dignity and reputation of all people. May we respect human life by working for peace. May we become a society which will never allow abortion to occur. It is a matter of life and death.