



St. Luke the Evangelist Parish
13 North St., Geneseo, NY



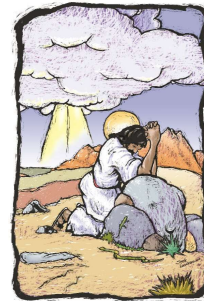
Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I
Fr. Jeffrey S. Tunnichliff
January 13, 2021

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Opening Prayer



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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I


Webinar Tips

- All participants are muted to reduce background noise
- If slides are not fully visible, check at the top center of your screen for "fit to window" under arrow.
- If you would like to ask a question, at the bottom of your screen you should see a box with the letters "Q & A". Click it and you can type your question. It will show on my screen.
- In addition to the slides, you should see a video of me. It should appear in the upper right of your screen. It should not block any significant content on the slides. If it does, you can drag it around.

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I




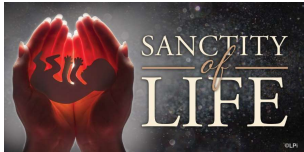
What do we hope to accomplish in this series?

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Life
in the
Womb

DAY OF PRAYER
FOR THE
LEGAL
PROTECTION
OF UNBORN CHILDREN

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I


Near the Tomb



And all stages in
between



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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

What do we hope to accomplish
in this series?

- Many people know the Catholic Church is opposed to abortion, euthanasia, and the death penalty. Do people know why?
- Do people also know that the Catholic Church is concerned with all life, not just at the beginning and the end (Consistent Life Ethic)?
 - To be **for** life in the womb, we need to help the family after the child is born
 - To be **for** life near the end, we must be willing to accompany the dying

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

We are not trying to have a debate
here. We are trying to inform people
on what the Catholic Church teaches
and **why**.

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

We live in a disposable society. When something is unwanted, we throw it out.

We have become “desensitized” to the intrinsic value of anything.

Life is not disposable.
Life is Precious



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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Things have gotten bad. People no longer respect life.

Is there a path forward/back to human dignity?
Is there hope?
Yes!

**"For human beings this is impossible,
but for God all things are possible."**

Matthew 19:26

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Pope Francis on the Dignity of All Life

"Every human being has the right to live with dignity and to develop integrally; this fundamental right cannot be denied by any country. **People have this right even if they are unproductive, or were born with or developed limitations.** This does not detract from their great dignity as human persons, **a dignity based not on circumstances but on the intrinsic worth of their being.** Unless this basic principle is upheld, there will be no future either for fraternity or for the survival of humanity" (Fratelli Tutti, 107, my emphasis).

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Life is Not Valued Just By Faith

"It is especially important to emphasize that Aristotle said man does not make himself to be man: "Statesmanship does not create human beings but having received them from nature makes use of them." **He meant that man does not fabricate his end or telos.** Human nature is a given. Its meaning is not located in man's will or desires, but in preexisting reality - in what is. **Consequently, while man can know what is good or evil, he does not have the prerogative to determine what is good or evil.** "Oughtness" is already in the given nature of things. Therefore, **man is morally obliged to choose the good that will bring about what "ought" to be.** Otherwise, he will become less than fully human and what he "ought" not to be - perhaps even something worse than a beast, as Aristotle warned." (Reilly, *America on Trial*, 29, my emphasis).

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Life is Not Valued Just By Faith

United States of America
Declaration of Independence

“We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are **Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.**”

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Life

- When does life begin? When does it end?
- “I came so that they might have life and have it more abundantly” (John 10:10b).

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Liberty

Gaudium et Spes (GS), 17

“Only in freedom can man direct himself toward goodness. Our contemporaries make much of this freedom and pursue it eagerly; and rightly to be sure. **Often however they foster it perversely as a license for doing whatever pleases them,** even if it is evil. ...Hence man's dignity demands that he act according to a knowing and free choice that is personally motivated and prompted from within, not under blind internal impulse nor by mere external pressure. Man achieves such dignity when, emancipating himself from all captivity to passion, **he pursues his goal in a spontaneous choice of what is good,** and procures for himself through effective and skillful action, apt helps to that end. Since man's freedom has been damaged by sin, only by the aid of God's grace can he bring such a relationship with God into full flower.” (my emphasis)


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Liberty cont'd

- “Freedom negates and destroys itself, and becomes a factor leading to the destruction of others, when it no longer recognizes and respects its essential link with the truth” (*Evangelium Vitae*, EV, 19).
- “This view of freedom leads to a serious distortion of life in society. If the promotion of self is understood in terms of absolute autonomy, people inevitably reach the point of rejecting one another” (EV, 20).



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Liberty cont'd

The "Pro-choice" Argument

- To make a choice a person
 - Must understand what their choices are and what the consequences are
 - Have a well-formed conscience

"Deneen and Hanby are rightly repulsed by the radical individual autonomy that has infected American life, exemplified in Justice Anthony Kennedy's notorious statement in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* (1992) that "at the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life."
 (Reilly, *America on Trial*, 6. interior quote "Planned Parenthood of Southeastern Pa. et al., v. Casey, Governor of Pennsylvania, et al., 505 U.S. 833, 851 (1992) <https://www.law.cornell.edu/supct/html/91-744.ZS.html>.)"

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Pursuit of Happiness

- Consistent Life Ethic
- Hedonism
- Define "happiness"
 - "We see in Aristotle's account an adumbration of Aquinas' definition of final and perfect happiness as "nothing else than the vision of the Divine Essence". (Reilly, *America on Trial*, 30, quote from Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I-II, q. I.a.7.)

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From Rights Come Duties

- With our rights, we receive the duty to make sure others enjoy the same rights
- Pope Francis, "The Book of Job sees our origin in the one Creator as the basis of certain common rights" "Did not he who made me in the womb also make him? And did not the same one fashion us in the womb?" (Job 31:15) (*Fratelli Tutti*, 58).

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From Rights, Comes Duties cont'd

- Some say, "I would never choose abortion or euthanasia-assisted suicide but who am I to tell others what to do"
- "Cain does not wish to think about his brother and refuses to accept the responsibility which every person has towards others" (EV, 8).

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The commandment is “You Shall Not Kill” (Exodus 20:13, cf. Deuteronomy 5:17, *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2258-2330)

The Chapter in the *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults* (29) is called “The Fifth Commandment: **Promote** the **Culture of Life**” (my emphasis).

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Our Approach Must be One of Hope

- Someone might choose abortion or assisted suicide out of despair, in a dark moment
- Prayer of St. Francis

*where there is despair, hope;
where there is darkness, light;*

- Pope Francis, “We need a community that supports and helps us, in which we can help one another to keep looking ahead” (*Fratelli Tutti*, 8)

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Our Approach Must be One of Healing

- Abortion
 - Healing after abortion - <https://hopeafterabortion.com>
- Death penalty
 - Does executing the criminal really bring any healing or is it only revenge?
- Assisted suicide
 - Perhaps the person considers assisted suicide only because of woundedness, loneliness, and broken relationships

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Where Does the Dignity of Life Come From?

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Where Does the Dignity of Life Come From?

Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2258.

"Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains for ever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. **God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end**; no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being" (my emphasis).

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Where Does the Dignity of Life Come From? – The Bible

- Genesis 1:27 "God created mankind **in his image**; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them."
- Genesis 2:7 "Then the LORD God formed the man out of the dust of the ground and **blew into his nostrils the breath of life**, and the man became a living being."

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Where Does the Dignity of Life Come From? - The Bible cont'd

- Psalm 139:13-16
 "You formed my inmost being;
 you knit me **in my mother's womb**.
 I praise you, because I am wonderfully made;
 wonderful are your works!
 My very self you know.
 My bones are not hidden from you,
 When I was being made in secret,
 fashioned in the depths of the earth.
 Your eyes saw me unformed;
 in your book all are written down;
 my days were shaped, before one came to be."

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Where Does the Dignity of Life Come From? – The Bible cont'd

- Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10) was "short in stature" in human size but precious before God
- Affirmed by Jesus' Incarnation – humanity is not fundamentally flawed
 - "called by the Second Vatican Council: "By his incarnation the Son of God has united himself in some fashion with every human being." This saving event reveals to humanity not only the boundless love of God who "so loved the world that he gave his only Son" (John 3:16), but also the *incomparable value of every human person*" (EV, 2 - quote taken from GS 22)

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*Treating Life with
Dignity and Love, Part I*

**We are not defined by
what we can do**

Pope Francis

"Ultimately, 'persons are no longer seen as a paramount value to be cared for and respected, especially when they are poor and disabled, 'not yet useful' - like the unborn, or 'no longer needed' - like the elderly" (*Fratelli Tutti*, 18).

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*Treating Life with
Dignity and Love, Part I*

Ashley and O'Rourke (*Health Care Ethics 4th Edition*)

"Modern medicine has unprecedented power to heal human beings of physical and mental diseases, to keep them healthy, and even to improve the human race. This power can be used to humanize life or to dehumanize and destroy it" (xi).

- Human beings are not simply biological machines to be fixed or discarded
- Lower infant mortality rates and technology leading to smaller families makes children "less valuable" as "commodities." Of course, people should never be seen as commodities.

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*Treating Life with
Dignity and Love, Part I*

Humans are not mere machines

Donum Vitae

- Vatican Instruction issued in 1987
- "Donum Vitae" means "the gift of life"
- "By virtue of its substantial union with a spiritual soul, the human body cannot be considered as a mere complex of tissues, organs and functions, nor can it be evaluated in the same way as the body of animals; rather it is a constitutive part of the person who manifests and expresses himself through it" (*Donum Vitae*, Section 3).

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*Treating Life with
Dignity and Love, Part I*

**If you have had an
abortion,
supported assisted suicide,
or the death penalty,
God IS MERCIFUL**

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

History of Church's Position on Abortion

- It is true that not all Catholic theologians spoke against abortion from time of conception. When they did not, their view was based on incomplete science.
- "In the *Didache* (*The Teaching of the Apostles*), 2, 2, written toward the end of the first century and revered as an honored guide for Christian Life, we read, "You shall not kill the embryo by abortion" (*United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*, 391).
- Second Century Document, the Letter of Barrabas says, "Do not kill an unborn child through abortion." (As found in the Office of Readings 18th Wednesday in Ordinary Time with the following citation: "Cap 19, 1-3, 5-7, 8-12: Funk 1, 53-57")

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Life Begins at Conception

"So, it is when the egg from a female and a sperm cell from a male come together to form a new living creature. That newly formed cell has a unique genetic makeup that will never be seen again. Human beings may be alike but each is unique. From the moment the egg from a human female and the sperm from a human male come together at conception, it has all the potential it needs to grow into an adult human being with dignity given by God. This new human life is "endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are **life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness**" ("U.S. Declaration of Independence.) Nothing can change that."

(My blog article, "Biology Makes Me Pro-Life",
<http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=3124>

Cf. Parable of the Mustard Seed, Mark 4:30-32.

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Future Schedule

- Second Wednesday of each month at 6:30 pm
 - February 10th
 - March 10th
 - April 14th
- When you exit this webinar a short evaluation questionnaire should come up to invite your feedback
- The slides for this presentation will be available online at www.renewaloffaith.org/prolife along with registration information for the next webinar.

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Treating Life with Dignity and Love, Part I

Related Articles on My Blog

- "Biology Makes Me Pro-Life", January 31, 2020
<http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=3124>
- On the death penalty - "What About Accountability", December 7, 2020. <http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=5395>
- For more on the purpose of punishment see my blog article, "Receiving a Penance", (September 1, 2020)
<http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=4776>
- "What About Accountability?" (December 7, 2020) online at
<http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=5395>
- Fr. Jeffrey S. Tunnickliff, "Homily for 5th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A" covering Public Policy weekend on issue of Assisted Suicide. February 8, 2000. <http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=3142>
- Fr. Jeffrey S. Tunnickliff, "27th Sunday in Ordinary Time, Year A" Homily given on Respect Life Sunday, 10/4/20")
<http://blog.renewaloffaith.org/blog/?p=5007>.

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Resources

Ashley, Benedict M, OP and O'Rourke, Kevin D. Op, *Health Care Ethics: A Theological Analysis 4th Edition*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press. 1997.

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Donum Vitae – Instruction on Respect For Human Life In Its Origin and On the Dignity of Procreation: Replies to Certain Questions of the Day*. February 22, 1987. Accessed online at https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19870222_respect-for-human-life_en.html.

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Resources cont'd

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Resources cont'd

Pope John Paul II, *Evangelium Vitae The Gospel of Life*. Boston: Pauline Books & Media. 1995.

Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*. July 25, 1968. Available online at http://www.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-vi_enc_25071968_humanae-vitae.html

Reilly, Robert R., *America on Trial A Defense of the Founding*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press. 2020.

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Resources (cont'd)

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http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_cons_19651207_gaudium-et-spes_en.html

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Resources (cont'd)

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https://www.usccb.org/resources/ethical-religious-directives-catholic-health-service-sixth-edition-2016-06_0.pdf

USCCB, *United States Catholic Catechism for Adults*. Washington, DC: USCCB. 2006.

Vatican News, "Pope Francis: 'death penalty inadmissible'," August 2, 2018. Available online at

<https://www.vaticannews.va/en/pope/news/2018-08/pope-francis-cdf-ccc-death-penalty-revision-ladaria.html>

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