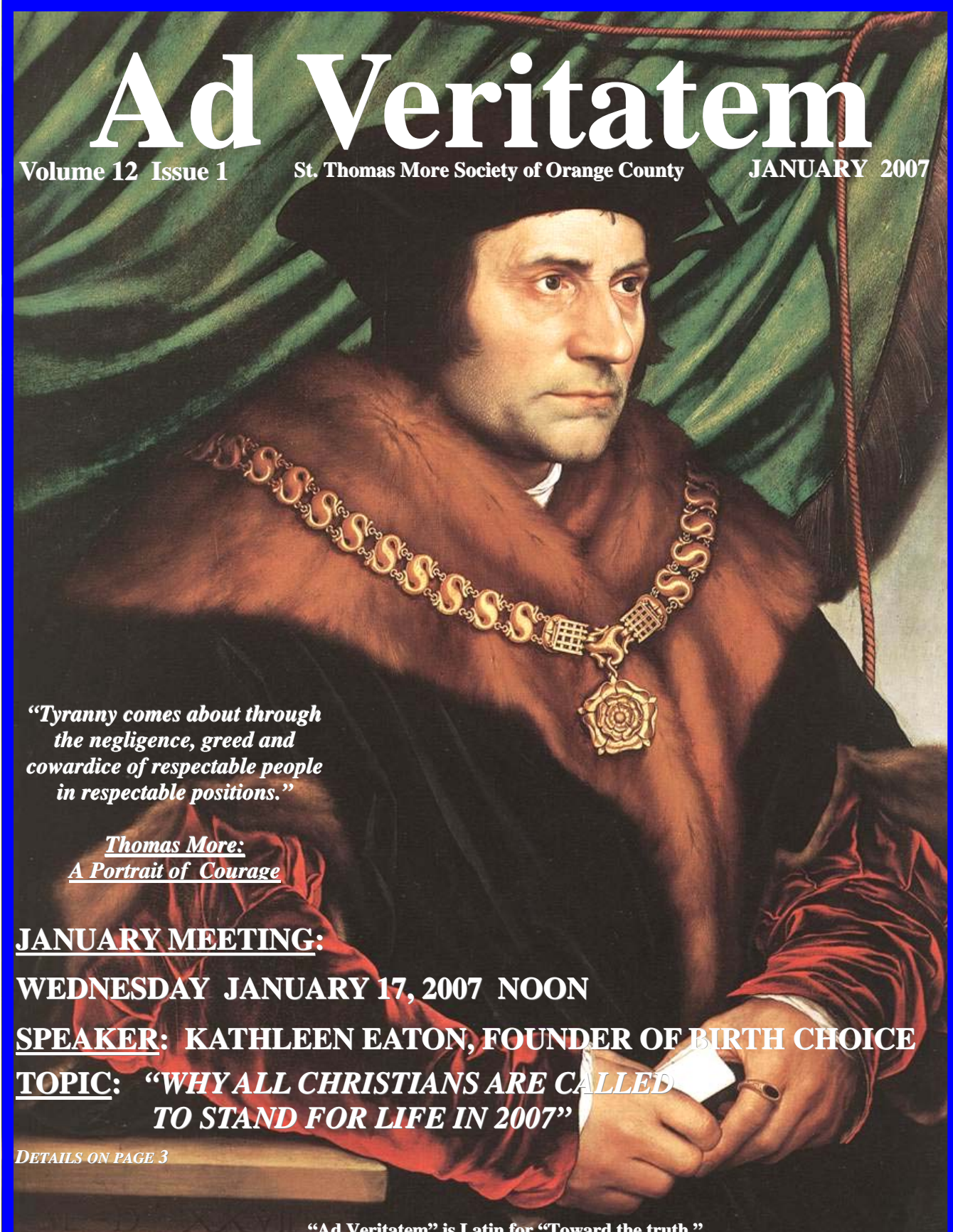


Ad Veritatem

Volume 12 Issue 1

St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

JANUARY 2007

A detailed portrait of Thomas More, the English philosopher, lawyer, diplomat, and statesman. He is depicted from the chest up, wearing a dark cap and a voluminous, fur-lined red robe. A gold chain with a large, ornate pendant hangs around his neck. He is looking slightly to the right with a serious expression. The background is a dark green, draped fabric.

*“Tyranny comes about through
the negligence, greed and
cowardice of respectable people
in respectable positions.”*

Thomas More:
A Portrait of Courage

JANUARY MEETING:

WEDNESDAY JANUARY 17, 2007 NOON

SPEAKER: KATHLEEN EATON, FOUNDER OF BIRTH CHOICE

**TOPIC: “WHY ALL CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED
TO STAND FOR LIFE IN 2007”**

DETAILS ON PAGE 3

“Ad Veritatem” is Latin for “Toward the truth.”



WHO WE ARE

In 1966, the movie *A Man For All Seasons* inspired the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to recognize this film as the Picture of the Year. This was one of the few occasions in the history of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences where the life of a religious figure won the hearts of the motion picture industry's elite. The central figure portrayed in *Man For All Seasons* was, of course, St. Thomas More, the great lawyer, statesman, apologist, husband, father and faithful Catholic. In 2000, St. Thomas was honored as the Lawyer of the Millennium by a secular panel of historians for the British Commonwealth. Shortly thereafter, John Paul II declared St. Thomas as the Patron Saint of Statesmen.

Inspired by a homily given by Bishop Norman McFarland at the 1995 Red Mass of Orange County, five "fearless" members of the Orange County bar met shortly thereafter at the law offices of Rutan and Tucker in Costa Mesa. These lawyers all shared the realization that the legal practice takes a severe toll on the personal and spiritual lives of those involved in it and that many in the legal profession had become too focused on the material life with the natural consequence being the de-emphasis on their spiritual life. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the formation of a new organization for lawyers and judges in the County of Orange with its mission being to publicly support and encourage the spiritual development of its members in their Catholic faith. The group chose as its patron St. Thomas More, the greatest lawyer of his time, who was a dedicated husband and father with a deep and profound commitment to his Catholic faith, his profession and his fellow man. Thus the St. Thomas More Society of Orange County was born.

Attendance at the monthly meetings in the early years was sporadic. Our spiritual director, Fr Hugh Barbour, wisely advised us not to worry about numbers because it was more important "to be than to do or say." He encouraged the virtues of patience and perseverance. His sage advice, together with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and St. Thomas More, has led us to our current level of a fourteen member Board of Directors of lawyers and judges and a mailing list for the monthly newsletter of over 970.

The goal of the Society is to inspire and lift up the minds and hearts of the legal community of Orange County to follow the example of St. Thomas More by integrating God in every aspect of their professional and personal lives. The Society seeks to accomplish this goal through inspirational speakers at monthly meetings, this newsletter, the Red Mass, a website, an annual spiritual retreat and other events. The St. Thomas More Society also seeks to provide a haven where those who are committed to their Catholic faith as well as those who are seeking to learn more about the Church, can find fellowship and encouragement in the face of overwhelming media and cultural forces working against that pursuit.

St. Thomas More, please pray for us. ☩

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

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Judy Patno at (714) 871-6655 or email to jpatno@patnolaw.com.

VISIT OUR WEBSITE at www.stthomasmore.net

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St. Michael's Abbey

AD VERITATEM EDITORS

ANNE LANPHAR
RONALD GABLE

JANUARY
MEETING

KATHLEEN EATON, FOUNDER OF BIRTH CHOICE
“WHY ALL CHRISTIANS ARE CALLED TO STAND FOR LIFE IN 2007”

WHEN:
NOON
Wed. Jan 17th

WHERE:
First American
Title Ins. Co.
5 First American
Way, Santa Ana

FOR DIRECTIONS
CALL (714) 800-3000

COST:
\$10 for lunch

Kathleen Eaton, President and Founder of Birth Choice Clinics in Orange County provide support and information to individuals empowering them to make healthy life-affirming choices consistent with the inherent value of every human life. In 1981, Kathleen started volunteered at the Birth Choice in Oklahoma City. In 1985, she moved to California and started Birth Choice in Mission Viejo where she serves as President and CFO. In 1996, she founded Toby’s House, a maternity home for pregnant women with children. Our Thrift Store—Toby’s House Annex—supports both ministries. In 2005, Kathleen also founded Teen Integrity, Inc. a program teaching “abstinence only” education and sexual integrity in both Catholic schools and CCD programs as well as in the public schools in Orange County.

Kathleen is a huge believer that the pros and cons of abortion cut across all faiths. “I feel with 34 years of abortion-on-demand,” Eaton said, “That its time for it to come to an end due to active support of all Christians. I believe it has torn our country apart.”

Kathleen is a widow raising four children and is a parishioner at St Edward Church in Dana Point.

For more information, please contact either Don Hunsberger (714) 663-8000 or dah@hunsbergerlaw.com or Anne Lanphar at (714) 250-8605 alanphar@firstam.com †

STM MONTHLY MTGS:
3RD WEDNESDAY OF MONTH:

- FEBRUARY 21**
- MARCH 21**
- APRIL 18**
- MAY 16**
- JUNE 20 †**

ST. THOMAS MORE SOCIETY
ANNUAL MCLE SEMINAR

Saturday, January 20, 2007

Earn 3 hours of credit for Ethics,
Bias Elimination & Substance Abuse

SEE PAGE 11 FOR DETAILS! †

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DEVOTION TO THE CHILD JESUS

FR HUGH BAROUR, O. PRAEM, PH.D.

Our Chaplain

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CHAPLAIN



INFANT JESUS
OF PRAGUE

QUESTION: *Recently, I was in a Catholic bookstore that sells devotional articles. There were two friends with me, one a Catholic, and the other a Protestant. A woman in front of us in line was buying a statue of the Infant Jesus of Prague. Both my friends commented after we left the store about how they found devotion to the Child Jesus, especially in that form, kind of hard to take seriously. My Protestant friend's opinion didn't surprise me, but my Catholic friend's agreement with him did. How can we explain devotion to the Holy Child to those who say we should only worship an adult, risen Christ?*

ANSWER: If Christ had willed only to be worshipped as He is now in heaven, as a "risen adult," as they say, then He would not have appeared on earth as a Child, or at least, His childhood would not have been included in the message of salvation contained in the Holy Gospels. As it is, however, Christ inspired the evangelists by His Holy Spirit to tell the story of His virginal conception and birth at Bethlehem. The Letter to the Hebrews presents the sentiments of Christ the God-Man "upon entering the world" at the moment of His incarnation, when He was the merest of children in the womb of His Blessed Mother. Our Lord was the Savior of the world at every moment of His earthly life, and because of the special gifts of knowledge and wisdom given to His Sacred Humanity, He merited our salvation continually, from His conception until He breathed forth His Spirit on the Cross. As the great Benedictine spiritual writer Abbot Marmion has said, "*The mysteries of Christ are our mysteries.*" The events of His life are all sources of grace and enlightenment for the Christian soul. Thus it is that the Holy Spirit has inspired the Church to celebrate each year all of the mysteries of the life of Christ, because each one has its own special grace for our souls, and its own special glory given to the Father.

The greatest of saints and mystics have found deep spiritual wisdom in devotion to the Holy Infancy of Jesus. This devotion goes back to the earliest days of the Church. The Sayings of the Desert Fathers, which originated partly in the third century, contains an account of the miraculous appearance of the Holy Child at the celebration of the Eucharist. St. Alexander of Alexandria, the predecessor of St. Athanasius, had a vision of the Child Jesus persecuted by the Arians. St. Francis of Assisi, St. Cajetan, St. Dominic, St. Catherine of Siena, St. Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, St. Anthony of Padua, St. Anthony Mary Claret, and most recently, Blessed Faustina, all had a tender devotion to, and even experienced visions of, the Holy Child. This devotion is not only for the sentimental or the effeminate, it is for all the faithful, following the example of the great saints and mystics of the Church. In fact, it is really the devotion of God Himself, Who "*has hidden these things from the wise and clever and revealed them to the merest children.*" Think of the amazing revelation of wisdom contained in the Heart of the Child Jesus! A very fine book has recently been published by Ignatius Press on this very topic, called Redeemer in the Womb, by Thomas Saward. Devotion to the Infant Jesus can renew in our hearts a deep appreciation for the mystery of God made Man, and of His love for the little and the poor. Perhaps taking up devotion to the Child Jesus would be a fitting way to follow the Holy Father's call to meditation of the mystery of Jesus based on a sound theology, as a preparation for the Holy Year of A.D. 2000, the end of two millennia since the birth of the Holy Child. †

TO THE LEAST OF OUR BRETHREN

GREGORY N. WEILER, ESQ.

No, this is not a sappy article by a bleeding heart liberal seeking to shame you into donating to what seems to be an infinite number of conscience-tugging charities. Yes, you can read the article and still be highly annoyed at illegal immigrant scofflaws, welfare abusers, inefficient/counterproductive governmental programs and high taxes. Rather, this article is all about questions directed to lawyers who are certainly accustomed to the Socratic method. Answers to these questions must be found in each reader's own heart.

Are we really pro-life? It's easy to state our opposition to abortion and pontificate about the evils of *Roe v. Wade*, euthanasia and even the application of the death penalty to the not so innocent; but are we really *pro-life*?

How do we feel about the homeless and the mentally ill roaming the streets, the severely handicapped left alone and isolated — all of these forgotten souls who populate our inner cities as well as poor countries around the world?

Like so many teachings of the Church, do we pick and choose from the cafeteria of life issues? The Church urges us to develop a transcendent view, treasuring life in all its kaleidoscopic hues. The late Mother Theresa, who found the face of Christ in everyone she met, even in their most distressing disguises, typifies this transcendent, God-like view.

But we in America are challenged by the abundance of our material blessings. Our culture's emphasis on the material threatens us spiritually by valuing humans solely based on IQ, college pedigree, good looks, wealth, family background, and other materialistic factors. As self-centered human beings it is disconcerting that our Lord loves each one of us completely. Yes, He wants *all* of us in heaven with him, even those we personally dislike or find personally or culturally inconvenient or undeserving. The Scriptures as well as the Magisterium have consistently taught that God's love is ever expansive, without limitation, diminution or qualitative distinction.

Our fidelity to this ethic is a challenge to our attitudes and actions which we take in respect to the least of our brethren. Our attitude towards immigrants, the third world poor, the needy elderly or handicapped, the unborn, and those "useful" human embryos. Do we really think ourselves "better" than others since we work hard and are productive? Isn't population control in the third world a good idea? Isn't the existence of "those" people less important than mine? After all, "they" might interfere with my prosperity or impose an obligation on me? After all, "they" are not really producing anything of value to the world and are wasting my resources. What about *my* children's future? These selfish attitudes urged on us by society tend to de-humanize others. Anyone who is a threat to our "self-actualization" is devalued and eventually made expendable. For example, social psychologists have determined that most women who abort their children believe bearing the child will *destroy* their life — reducing the decision to one of either "the baby" or "me."

American history has inbred into us the idea that we can arrogate to ourselves all material possessions. This idea was derived from the Puritan philosophy that those who are materially blessed are obviously favorable to God while those who are not so blessed must be displeasing to God. The concept of manifest destiny also infiltrated American thinking with the idea that we are "entitled" to the blessings of this land. Both

To the Least of our Brethren (Continued on page 6)



INFANT JESUS
DISTRIBUTING BREAD
TO THE PILGRIMS

*Bartolome Esteban
Murillo*

(1678)

***The law of God
has been
written on the
hearts of man-
kind through
his conscience.
Anymore than
the Nazis had to
be told that
killing innocent
people was
intrinsically
wrong, it is also
not necessary to
tell anyone that
creating and
then killing a
baby for its
body parts
is morally
reprehensible.***

(Continued from page 5) *To the Least of our Brethren*

these concepts have subtly evolved into a philosophy of “dog-eat-dog” and “eat what you kill,” moderated only slightly by our Judeo-Christian morality. There is a tension between our historic rugged individualism and the desire for economic self sufficiency with the Lord’s command to “love one another.” With great dismay, the retreat from the moderating effects of our Christian background has declined into self-interested and self-asserted “rights” seeking the survival of the fittest who are urged to shallow hedonism with the weakest destroyed or discarded.

However, the good news is that we were not created to use one another but rather to love one another. The Gospel is a fact, as true as the sun rising each morning, transcendent and crosses time and national boundaries as well as economic and political philosophies. The law of God has been written on the hearts of mankind through his conscience. Anymore than the Nazis had to be told that killing innocent people was intrinsically wrong, it is also not necessary to tell anyone that creating and then killing a baby for its body parts is morally reprehensible. Nor is it necessary to tell anyone that it is wrong to allow the poor to starve or to euthanize the elderly or those who are “inconvenient” or “expensive.”

These tragedies are an affront to our “personhood” which is respected and urged by the teachings of the Church, especially Pope John Paul the Great and Pope Benedict XVI. The inherent God-created dignity of each human being, loved by their Creator without distinction, without weighing economic utility or physical attribute, is what truly gives value to each person. Why is pornography, euthanasia, abortion, mercy-killing, indifference to poverty, unfair labor practices wrong? Because each of these are an affront to the inherent dignity of the human person created by God and to which Jefferson refers in the Declaration of Independence. The inalienable human dignity will always survive abuse by tyrannical dictatorship, majority vote or even our own personal indifference.

The inherent value of human life is a reality created by God and, therefore, any degradation of it is a sin. Virtue, fulfillment and happiness all flow from respect for human life and the presence of God in each person. In contrast, the degradation of human life inevitably leads to sins of all kinds with selfishness being the center of unhappy lives. Therefore, Christ challenges each of us to conform our life to recognize and act consistent with respect of human life notwithstanding a hostile world.

After all, we have already been warned concerning the content of our final discussion with God: “Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or a stranger, or naked, or ill or in prison and not minister to your needs . . . Amen, I say to you, what you did not do for one of these least ones, you did not do for Me.” (Matthew 25: 31–40)

I urge everyone to the Compendium of the Social Teachings of the Catholic Church and the Catechism to appreciate the beauty and depth of the Church’s teachings on the dignity of human person and our responsibilities. †



**ST MARTIN AND
THE BEGGAR**

El Greco
(1597)

FRANK ERNEST



THE REAL QUESTION

GEORGE CAPPS

SENIOR, STANFORD UNIVERSITY

MAJOR: BIOLOGY

As vice president of Stanford Students for Life, I routinely have to field inquiries and challenges from a campus almost universally hostile to our pro-life message. In my attempts at a reasoned dialogue, I have come to realize the true extent to which anti-abortion ideology is misunderstood by the general public. It seems that the media's characterization of it as the manifestation of frenzied religious fanaticism has been especially influential. Abortion, however, is not a religious topic, nor is being pro-life an arbitrary article of faith. Rather, it is a rational position that is perfectly defensible on secular, non-religious grounds. And this is important for activists, of whatever faith background, to understand as they work for change in secular society.

There are a few points with which it is important to begin such an emotionally charged discussion. One is the abortion focus. Pro-life certainly does not just mean anti-abortion; however, if abortion is the heinous human rights abuse that we claim it to be, then it is by far the most widespread form of such abuse in our society. Thus, the primary attention paid it by many pro-life groups is justified.

Another is the fetal focus that most of these arguments will take. The point that abortion can have adverse physical and psychological effects on women is true—and, indeed, this aspect of the debate is often neglected by pro-lifers to their detriment. However, the fundamental philosophical reason that pro-lifers are not pro-choice—the reason that we think abortion is not just inadvisable but should be forbidden—is because of what we think about the baby and not because of whatever risks there might be for the women who choose to assume them. This is absolutely not to say that we care about the baby more than the mother; it is just an appropriate reflection of the fact that the fetus has way more to lose in an abortion.

With that said, I have two propositions to make. The first is that the only question relevant to the abortion issue is that of fetal personhood. If unborn children ought to be considered persons, then abortion should be illegal; if unborn children ought not to be considered persons, then abortion should be legal. The second is that unborn children ought to be considered persons. These two premises form the foundation of the pro-life philosophy and provide the justification for our decision to be activists.

When Supreme Court justice Harry Blackmun penned the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision, he admitted, “If this suggestion of [fetal] personhood is established, the appellant’s case, of course, collapses, for the fetus’ right to life would then be guaranteed specifically by the [14th] amendment.” In other words, he recognized that abortion should be illegal if unborn humans are persons. Pro-lifers tend to take this principle for granted, but, to their surprise, many pro-choicers contend that abortion should be legal regardless of the personhood of the unborn.

The easiest of these contentions to refute are also among the most often cited arguments in favor of legalized abortion. They are those predominantly emotional appeals that reference any number of personal problems or social issues that abortion is seen as addressing, including the physical or psychological health of the mother, the physical health of the fetus, overpopulation, female empowerment, and crime. However, it is a simple matter to show that none of these considerations would justify killing a born person. For example, slaughtering millions of paupers in a crowded nation is not an acceptable solution to overpopulation. Why? Because they are human persons with a

The Real Question (Continued on page 8)



**CHRIST BLESSING
THE CHILDREN**

Nicolaes Maes

(1652)

(Continued from page 7) ***The Real Question***

right to life. The fact that a man's ex-girlfriend is causing him emotional stress does not give him the right to murder her, again because of the primacy of her right to life. Similarly, it is undeniably wrong to massacre unwanted toddlers living in the slums on the theory that they are a burden to their parents and will grow up to be criminals. It follows that, if unborn children are persons, then it would also be wrong to kill them for those same reasons.

The right to life is an extremely fundamental right, and it trumps most other social rights (such as the right to a preferred lifestyle, the right to be perfectly healthy, the right to have healthy offspring, the right to pursue a career of choice, and the right to be free from the consequences of a past traumatic experience) when those rights are in conflict. None of these conditional social rights translates into a right to commit murder. Therefore, if unborn children are persons with a right to life, all of these external considerations, however real or significant they may be *per se*, are irrelevant to the question of whether or not abortion should be permitted. And incidentally, if unborn children are *not* persons with a right to life, then they are still irrelevant because abortion should be permitted either way.

The most difficult contentions to refute are those that construe an unplanned pregnancy as a case of parasitism, which no one should be forced by law to support. There are some rather subtle analogies that are marshaled in defense of this idea, but even the common catchphrases about bodily autonomy, despite their tiresome inanity (after all, the government tells us what we can and cannot do with our bodies all the time), are often unsophisticated attempts to get at the same concepts. There is much that can be said, depending on the form that these arguments take, but some common themes apply.

One is that, when we say that a fetus has a right to life, we mean that he has a right to the baseline level of care necessary for his survival, regardless of the willingness to provide that care on the part of those in a position to do so. This is not unreasonable, since we define the right to life of a newborn in the exact same way. Not only actively killing but also fatally neglecting an infant is a crime. This is the reason that, during an abortion, the fetus must be ripped or burned to death before being removed from the womb—otherwise, the doctor would be required by law to do his utmost to save the life of the now-born infant, regardless of his willingness to do so. Rather than representing an injustice to those who must sacrifice time and bodily energy, this rightful expectation is the hallmark of a morally progressive society that values and protects its youngest members. If a fetus is a person, he should receive similar protection, and it follows that he would have the right to remain in his mother's womb until viability, even if she does not want him there.

Another point is that, while the law cannot force citizens to make extraordinary sacrifices to save someone's life, it does require that people take ordinary measures to do so. The precise division between these categories may be fuzzy, but the dichotomy nonetheless clearly exists. For example, society is right to mandate that automobile drivers expend the effort necessary to hit the brakes or turn the steering wheel in order to avoid striking a child in the road. Pregnancy is not so trivial, but, with all due respect to the discomfort and inconvenience it entails, it is nonetheless a universal and extremely fundamental biological process, an integral component of human physiology. In order to claim that abortion should be permitted even if fetuses are persons, one would have to argue that the continuation of a pregnancy comprises an extraordinary means of saving someone's life, and such a position is hardly defensible.

The permissibility of abortion, therefore, boils down to one question only: are unborn humans persons? There is currently much uncertainty surrounding it, and no mathematical proof can settle the debate. This should not cause us to despair, however, since there are many historical examples in which the personhood of a category of humans was once in question but no longer is. Furthermore, there is a general consensus in today's society that all born humans, at least, constitute persons. It is worth examining why we agree on this point and what it might have to say about the question of fetal personhood. Note that, just because there is confusion, it does not mean that this is a "religious" question. Rather, it is a facet of the exact same question as whether newborns or adolescents or adults are persons—namely, what is a person? If society cannot dictate whether fetuses count as persons because it would be invading the realm of personal conscience, then there is no reason it should be able to dictate whether any other group of humans constitute persons, and the social protection of human rights would go out the window. Therefore, we should not assume *a priori* that this is a matter which cannot be satisfactorily resolved. At the very least, it is worth considering.

The Real Question (Continued on page 9)

(Continued from page 8) *The Real Question*

Theoretically, there are an infinite number of moments during the development of a human being at which we could draw the line to mark the beginning of personhood. As the distinction between person and non-person is both quantitatively discrete and qualitatively profound, a candidate point at which to draw the line should comprise an unambiguously definable moment that marks a significant transition in some trait integral to personhood. At the end of a human's personhood, we draw the line at the point of death. This makes sense because being alive is an essential component of being a person, and the transition from alive to not alive is an easily definable moment—death. It stands to reason that we also need to draw a line to mark the beginning of a human's personhood.

Several events during human development stand out as superficially attractive points at which to draw this line, including birth, viability, commencement of brainwaves, and the end of the period during which twinning can occur. Unfortunately, space does not permit the formal refutation of each in turn. Most of these candidates, however, would predicate a human's personhood on things like her dependency, degree of awareness, or environment—and our experience with born persons tells us that none of these factors is integral to personhood.

For example, we all depend upon each other to one degree or another, and a newborn infant is not really less dependent upon other humans for survival than is a fetus. Furthermore, elderly people become increasingly dependent as they age, often reaching levels of dependency not unlike that of a fetus. But they do not cease to be persons because of it. If you define the beginning of personhood as the crossing of a certain threshold of independence, then you would have to say that one loses one's personhood when one drops below that level, and this does not occur. As for consciousness, we have no clue when it begins, and, even if we did, humans experience periods of complete unconsciousness throughout their lives (such as during non-REM sleep or while anesthetized for surgery) without ceasing to be persons. Therefore, the question of personhood must transcend whether or not the human body has consciousness at a particular moment. Environment is not a relevant factor, either, because personhood is something intrinsic and does not depend upon one's physical surroundings. Finally, twinning deserves special mention since it is sometimes seen as posing a problem for pre-twinning personhood. However, twinning is best described as a natural cloning process, and, as such, it does not in fact compromise the individuality of the early blastocyst.

Pro-lifers, therefore, believe that to define a person as anything other than a living human organism is to place extra constraints on the definition that are either logically indefensible or socially inconsistent. And if we accept this definition—stripped of all limitations other than the obvious necessity to be alive, to be human, and to be an individual organism—then fertilization is *de facto* the beginning of personhood because, by definition, it initiates an organism's existence. Fortunately, this makes a lot of sense. Fertilization (unlike viability, for example) is an unambiguous and easily definable event. It marks a profound change in the system, a change not in relative factors, such as dependency or size or environment, but in its very nature—this is the moment in which a new genome is formed that will dictate the assembly of a human adult with a unique appearance and personality. It is not just a developmental landmark; rather, it ushers in an entirely new developmental trajectory. There is an extremely fundamental difference between the sperm and the egg before conception and the fertilized zygote after conception, and it is easily arguable that no difference so fundamental occurs between two consecutive moments in the rest of that organism's development until death.

Pro-lifers are convinced that the case for fetal personhood is just as compelling as is that for any category of born humans. And such a conviction compels us by force of logic to work for the legal protection of the basic rights of the unborn, just as we work tirelessly for the protection of vulnerable born people. To do otherwise, to succumb to the rhetoric of free choice and personal conscience when the lives of innocent children are at stake, would be both intellectually dishonest and morally reprehensible. At the same time, we have a duty to address the larger social and cultural disorders of which abortion is a symptom. While an immediate cessation of the killing remains our priority, we must simultaneously increase the resources available to pregnant mothers; we must combat those aspects of our culture which lead to irresponsible and utilitarian sexual behavior on the part of men; and we must create a supportive society in which mothers can carry a pregnancy to term without having to sacrifice their plans, aspirations, and reputation.

We dare to believe that a society which values the human dignity of its weakest members can be a reality. A daunting task lies ahead of us, but men and women of goodwill have always been called on to undertake the great reforms of their age. The ones who answered that call envisioned a brighter future and had the courage to achieve it. Pro-lifers can be confident that they stand on an unshakable philosophical foundation and are proud heirs to the great human rights movements of history. We are up to the challenge. †

MORE ON EDUCATION AND WOMEN



THE WRITINGS OF THOMAS MORE

As More put it, the liberal arts can “prepare the soul for virtue.” They can quicken the reason; they can form and perfect good judgment; they can clarify the highest principles which “both instruct and inspire the mind in the pursuit of virtue;” they can develop prudence in human affairs. By themselves, however, they cannot produce virtue or strong character.

That More did a great deal of thinking about these issues is particularly evident in the fact that he raised five brilliant daughters (including his adopted daughter and a ward) who would have been denied a liberal arts education by the custom of the times. More considered this education so important that he hired tutors from Oxford and personally supervised not only his son’s but also his daughters’ education in languages mathematics, science, history, literature, and philosophy. In doing so, he was criticized by the European literati, Erasmus included, but he soon won them over to his novel educational practices.

More’s fundamental principle in education was crystal clear: “*Put virtue in the first place..., learning in the second.*” In this way, as we have seen, he was convinced that his children would grow to be “*inwardly calm and at peace and neither stirred by praise of flatterers nor stung by the follies of unlearned mockers of learning.*” In stating this principle, More was simply reaffirming the commonsense observations of Plato and Aristotle that a person needs stability of character to see the world with objectivity. Since passion and pride cloud the intellect, he realized, the point of a complete education is to help a person achieve the self-mastery needed for reason to reign.

The liberal arts, he said, can foster this self-mastery not only by developing reason, but also by helping people reach “*the contemplation of celestial realities through the study of nature.*” Such contemplation can bring about a profound grasp of first principles. When this depth of understanding is combined with the experience found especially in the study of history, law, and literature, students can “*learn prudence in human affairs*”—and thus acquire the “*one special thing without which all learning is half lame...; [a] good mother wit.*”

Thomas More: A Portrait of Courage

Gerard Wegemer

Pg 90 †

SIMPLE TRUTHS



Fulton J. Sheen

"Alienation from self and from one's neighbors has its roots in separation from God. Once the hub of the wheel, which is God, is lost, the spokes which are human beings, fall apart. God seems very far away from modern man: This is due, to a great extent, to humanity's own God-less behavior. Goodness always appears as a reproach to those who are not living right, and this reproach on the part of the sinner expresses itself in hatred and persecution." †

GOD KNOCKED ST. PAUL OFF HIS HORSE

but He chose to convert me with a gruff man,
a severed foot, and the face of a little child.
It was 1962. I was fifteen, an atheist, and a first-time Red Cross volunteer.
With bag lunch in hand, I stepped into the hospital's tiny pathology lab
and introduced myself to the stern-faced man who ran it.
He could have been the twin brother of Sonny Liston,
the soon-to-be heavyweight champion of the world.

“I’m Tyler,” he said. “Put your lunch in that refrigerator.”
I opened the refrigerator, leaned forward, and gasped.
There, just where I was about to place my lunch, lay a severed human foot!
Tyler guffawed.

Most days Tyler joked around as we prepared polyps, cysts, appendices, tumors, and other surgically-removed bits and pieces for examination by the staff pathologist. One morning, however, he cracked no jokes. Just before the pathologist arrived, he said
“John, I don’t want you here this morning. The doctor’s got to do an autopsy.”
“Tyler, it’s part of my job, too. Please let me stay.”

A few minutes later, he brought into the lab a small gauze-wrapped bundle which he placed carefully on the examining table. With hands nearly as large as the package, Tyler carefully removed the gauze until I gazed on the immobile but beautiful face of a tiny baby boy, four months premature.
Tyler stood silent, looking at the child.

Then he leaned down, placing his face close to the baby’s face and said softly, as if trying not to wake the child, “Little one, your face is dirty. Your hair’s mussed up. We can’t let the doctor see you this way. Let’s make you pretty.”

With a damp cloth, Tyler gently wiped clean the baby’s face. Then he reached into his back pocket, pulled out his own comb, and, very carefully, combed and parted the baby’s thick, dark hair.
“There,” he said. “Now you look better.”

* * *

With a gesture, Tyler showed me the truth of Psalm 139:

*“You formed my inmost being;
You knit me in my mother’s womb.
Wonderfully You made me;
wonderful are Your works!”*

* * *

That Psalm continues:

*“When I was being made in secret,
fashioned as in the depths of the earth,
Your eyes foresaw my actions;
my days were shaped
before even one of them came to be.”*

Before I was made, God foresaw that I would devote my life to publishing. He sent Tyler and that baby to me “to shape my days” so that when finally I published, I would be a Catholic publisher -- a *pro-life* Catholic publisher.

As I was rendered instantly *pro-life* by Tyler and that baby, God has permitted me to render instantly *pro-life* tens of thousands of others by means of a tiny, unborn baby. †



THOUGHT FOR THE DAY



*By John L. Barger,
Publisher
Sophia Institute Press
www.sophiainstitute.com*

MATTHEW 25: 31-46



SCRIPTURAL CORNER



THE LAST JUDGMENT

Peter Paul Rubens

(1617)

**The Navarre Bible,
a renown edition of Sacred
Scripture prepared by
members of the
Faculty of Theology
of Navarre University,
consisting of the New
Vulgate, the Revised
Standard Version and
commentaries.*

³¹When the Son of man comes in his glory, and all the angels with him, then he will sit on his glorious throne. ³²Before him will be gathered all the nations, and he will separate them one from another as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, and ³³he will place the sheep at this right hand, but the goats at the left. ³⁴Then the King will say to those at his right hand, ‘Come, O blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; ³⁵for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, ³⁶I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.’ ³⁷Then the righteous will answer him, ‘Lord, when did we see thee hungry and feed thee, or thirsty and give thee drink? ³⁸And when did we see thee a stranger and welcome thee, or naked and clothe thee? ³⁹And when did we see thee sick or in prison and visit thee?’ ⁴⁰And the King will answer them, ‘Truly I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of my brethren, you did it to me.’ ⁴¹Then he will say to those at this left hand, ‘Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; ⁴²for I was hungry and you gave me no food; I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.’ ⁴⁴Then they also will answer, ‘Lord, when did we see thee hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to thee.’ ⁴⁵Then he will answer them, ‘Truly, I say to you, as you did it not one of the least of these, you did it not to me.’ ⁴⁶And they will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.”

Comment from the Navarre Bible:*

³⁵⁻⁴⁶All the various things mentioned in this passage (giving people food and drink, clothing them, visiting them) become works of Christian charity when the person doing them sees Christ in these “least” of his brethren.

Here we can see the seriousness of sins of omission. Failure to do something which one should do means leaving Christ unattended.

“We must learn to recognize Christ when he comes out to meet us in our brothers, the people around us. No human life is ever isolated. It is bound up with other lives. No man or woman is a single verse; we all make up one divine poem which God writes with the cooperation of our freedom” (Bl. J Escriva, *Christ Is Passing By*, 111).

We will be judges on the degree and quality of our love (cf. St John of the Cross, *Spiritual Sentences and Maxims*, 57). Our Lord will ask us to account not only for the evil we have done but also for the good we have omitted. We can see that the sins of omission are a very serious matter and that the basis of love of neighbor is Christ’s presence in the least of our brothers and sisters.

St. Teresa of Avila writes: “Here the Lord asks only two things of us: love for his Majesty and love for our neighbor. It is for these two virtues that we must strive, and if we attain them perfectly we are doing his will [...]. The surest sign that we are keeping these two commandments is, I think, that we should really be loving our neighbor; for we cannot be sure if we are loving God, although we may have good reasons for believing that we are, but we can know quite well if we are loving our neighbor. And be certain that, the farther advanced you find you are in this, the greater the love you will have for God; for so dearly does his Majesty love us that he will reward our love for our neighbor by increasing the love which we bear to himself, and that in a thousand ways, this I cannot doubt” (*Interior Castle*, V, 3).

This parable clearly shows that Christianity cannot be reduced to a kind of agency for “doing good.” Service of our neighbor acquires supernatural value when it is done out of love for Christ, when we see Christ in the person in need. This is why St Paul asserts that “if I give away all I have...but have not love, I gain nothing” (1 Cor 13:3). Any interpretation of Jesus’ teaching on the Last Judgment would be wide of the mark if it gave it a materialistic meaning or confused mere philanthropy with genuine Christian charity. †

A DISTINCT HUMAN ORGANISM*

ROBERT P. GEORGE

The key question in the debate over stem cell research that involves the destruction of human embryos is: When does the life of a human being begin? To answer this question is to decide whether human embryos are, in fact, human beings and, as such, possessors of inherent human dignity.

Where do we go to find the answer? Not, in my opinion, to the Bible, Talmud or other religious writings, even if we regard these texts as sources of moral wisdom and even divine revelation. Nor should we be satisfied to consult our "moral intuitions."

Rather, the answer is to be found in the works of modern human embryology and developmental biology. In these texts, we find little or nothing in the way of scientific uncertainty: "... human development begins at fertilization..." write embryologists Keith Moore and T.V. N. Persaud in *The Developing Human* (7th edition, 2003), the most widely used textbook on human embryology.

A human embryo is a whole living member of the species *Homo sapiens* in the earliest stage of development. Unless severely damaged or deprived of nutrition or a suitable environment, the embryonic human will develop himself or herself by an internally directed process to the next more mature developmental stage, i.e., the fetal stage.

The embryonic, fetal, infant, child and adolescent stages are *stages of development* of a determinate and enduring entity -- a human being -- who comes into existence as a zygote and develops by a gradual and gapless process into adulthood many years later.

Whether produced by fertilization or cloning, the human embryo is a complete and distinct human organism possessing all of the genetic material needed to inform and organize its growth, as well as an active disposition to develop itself using that information. The direction of its growth is *not extrinsically determined*, but is in accord with the genetic information within it.

The human embryo is not something different in kind from a human being, nor is it merely a "potential human being," whatever that might mean. Rather the human embryo is a human being in the embryonic stage.

The adult that is you is the same human being who, at an earlier stage of your life, was an adolescent, and before that a child, an infant, a fetus and an embryo. Even in the embryonic stage, you were a whole, living member of the species *Homo sapiens*. You were then, as you are now, a distinct and complete -- though, of course, immature -- human organism.

Unlike the embryo, the sperm and egg whose union brings a human being into existence are not complete organisms. They are both functionally and genetically identifiable as *parts* of the male or female parents. Each has only half the genetic material needed to guide the development of a new human being toward maturity. They are destined either to combine to generate a new and distinct organism or simply die.

Even when fertilization occurs, the gametes do not survive: Their genetic material enters into the composition of a new organism. (A somatic cell that might be used to produce a human being by cloning is analogous not to a human embryo, but to gametes.) The difference between human gametes and a human being is a difference *in kind*, not a difference in stage of development. The difference between an embryonic human being (or a human fetus or infant) and an adult is merely a difference *in stage of development*.

Some today deny the moral premise of my position, namely, that human beings possess inherent dignity and a right to life simply by virtue of their humanity. They claim that some, but not all, human beings have dignity and rights. To have such rights, they say, human beings must possess some quality or set of qualities (sentience, self-consciousness, the immediately exercisable capacity for human mental functions, etc.) that other human beings do not possess or do not yet possess, or no longer possess.

I reject the idea that human beings at certain stages of development (embryos, fetuses, infants) or in certain conditions (the severely handicapped or mentally retarded, those suffering dementia) are not "persons" who possess dignity and a right to life. And no person may legitimately be destroyed in biomedical research or for other reasons. †



THE VIRGIN AND
CHILD WITH
ST ANNE
(DETAIL)

Leonardo da Vinci

(1510)

"The adult that is you is the same human being who, at an earlier stage of your life, was an adolescent, and before that a child, an infant, a fetus, and an embryo."

* Reprinted from NPR.org
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MAXIMILLIAN KOLBE, APOSTLE OF MARY

By Fr. John Hardon, S.J.

SAINT STORIES

St. Maximillian was born in the Poland in 1894 and baptized under the name of Raymond. He entered the novitiate of the Conventual Franciscans in 1910 and given the name of Maximillian. He took his final vows in Rome in 1914 and three years later, organized, with six other confreres, the association of the Meletisia Immaculate, which may be translated, The Militia of the Immaculate Virgin Mary. Whatever else Maximillian never forgot is that we are here on earth in the Church militant. He was ordained in Rome in 1918. In 1922, he began publishing the magazine, "Knight of the Immaculate," first in Polish and then in other languages. He is an outstanding promoter of devotion to the Blessed Virgin Mary through the modern media of writing, radio and, since his day, television.

In 1927, he began building a whole town with property donated by a wealthy nobleman, called the "Town of the Immaculate," outside of Warsaw. There he began training people with vocations among the laity and prospective Religious and Priests, to become apostles of Mary. The first Marian Missionaries to Japan were trained in the "Town of the Immaculate." In 1930, Maximillian opened a Marian publication apostolate in Nagasaki, Japan—one of the two cities in Japan which would later be ravaged by a nuclear bomb during the Second World War. As popes have been saying ever since, God chose His most faithful people as a sacrifice to insure future peace in the world.

In 1939, Maximillian was arrested by the Nazis who had taken over Poland. Two years later, in 1941, he died at Auschwitz, the infamous concentration camp. He had been first denied food, but when after some time had passed they looked into his cell, he was still alive. They then inoculated him with deadly poison. Why? Because he offered his life for another man who was chosen in reprisal by the Nazi's for that father of a large family. He was beatified by Pope Paul VI and canonized by Pope John Paul II. [...]

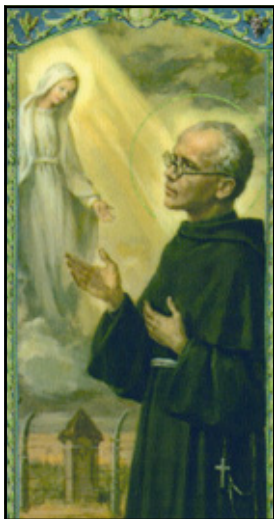
CONDITIONS FOR CONVERSION

St. Maximillian saw the prospects of converting sinners to a life of grace under two conditions. First, we will be as effective converters (or evangelizers or missionaries) as we are personally devoted to Our Lady.

Secondly, we must, if necessary, make drastic changes in our approach to those whom we want to bring to Christ or to a closer following of Mary's Son. We must promote our missionary and conversion zeal through promoting the knowledge, love and devotion to the Mother of God. Mary will do wonders, provided we use her name and her influence to effect what is so desperately needed in the modern world.

Given this logic, that Mary is the key to converting the world to her Son, St. Maximillian not only named but organized his special followers as the Militia or "Army of the Immaculate" following, as he said, on the promise that Yahweh had made in Genesis: that Mary would crush the serpent's head.

St. Maximillian Kolbe, zealous promoter of the veneration of the Immaculate Mother of God and martyr of charity, pray for us. †



MAXIMILLIAN KOLBE
1894 - 1941

THE REAL GOOD NEWS ON STEM CELLS*

ROBERT P. GEORGE

A stem-cell study published in the journal *Nature* last week set off a media frenzy. Headlines in all the major newspapers promised pluripotent (i.e., embryonic or embryonic-type) stem cells without the destruction of embryos. That's what many people on both sides of the debate over embryo-destructive stem-cell research had been hoping for. But, alas, it turned out to be all hype. Nevertheless, the general story of which it forms just one small part — the story of emerging techniques to derive embryonic-like stem cells without harming embryos — may well turn out to be the scientific (and perhaps the political) good news story of the year. Some of headlines may turn out to have been right, even if the details they provided for this particular effort turned out to be all wrong.

The specific story as recounted in the press was roughly this: Researchers were able to remove a single cell from a living human embryo without destroying that embryo. The single cell was then developed in culture into an embryonic stem cell. Since the removal of single cells from eight-cell embryos is a regular practice in some assisted-reproduction clinics (as part of a process of screening embryos for genetic abnormalities), this could be done routinely without harming human embryos and could allow for new stem cell lines with no ethical problems.

But it turned out not to be true. First, the study did not involve the removal of one cell from an embryo that then continued to develop. Instead, researchers disaggregated 16 living embryos, killing them all, and took an average of six cells from each. The 91 resulting embryonic cells were then placed near one another in dishes and allowed to divide. Some divided, while others died, and from the cells that divided researchers were able to produce two lines of embryonic stem cells. In other words, the study did virtually nothing to prove the point that Advanced Cell Technology (the company that carried out the experiments) had argued in the press: that single cells removed from an early embryo and cultured by themselves can produce lines of embryonic stem cells.

So far as I am aware, only the *Los Angeles Times* took note of this little wrinkle in ACT's heavily publicized tale, but even the *Times* didn't pay it much heed. The paper noted: "Although the embryos were destroyed in this experiment, Lanza said it was not necessary to destroy the embryos for the procedure to work." If it was not necessary, why did his team do it? Certainly they would have had a better story to tell if they hadn't. In reality, the fact they had to resort to the technique they used, culturing numerous cells from the same embryo near each other on a dish, suggests they tried to use just single cells but failed. In other words, the ACT study did not show it is possible to extract a single cell from an eight-cell embryo and produce a line of stem cells.

Second, even if it were possible to derive stem cells this way, the notion that removing a single cell from a developing embryo has no negative effect upon the tiny human individual as he or she develops from the embryonic stage into and through the fetal, infant, child, and adolescent stages and into adulthood is at the very least unsupported. As I mentioned, such "blastomere biopsy" is sometimes done to perform genetic testing on IVF embryos. You won't find it difficult to guess why. This "pre-implantation genetic diagnosis" is performed in a eugenic effort to "weed out" those found to be unfit because they are likely to suffer from genetic diseases. This is deeply troubling in itself. More to

The Real Good News (Continued on page 16)



STUDY OF
EMBRYOS

Leonardo da Vinci
(1509 - 14)

Since the removal of single cells from eight-cell embryos is a regular practice... this could be done routinely without harming human embryos and could allow for new stem cell lines with no ethical problems.

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Robert P. George is a member of the President's Council on Bioethics. He is also a professor of jurisprudence and director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions at Princeton University.

(Continued from page 15) *The Real Good News*

the point for present purposes, however, is the fact that there have been essentially no studies on the health effects of cell removal on the children who began life as embryos subjected to blastomere biopsy. Some estimates suggest more than 1,000 children worldwide have been born following such a procedure, but there has been no longitudinal study of their health and well-being.

Dr. Andrew La Barbera, scientific director of the American Society for Reproductive Medicine, which represents doctors who conduct these kinds of biopsies on embryos, could give no greater assurance to the *New York Times* than that “there is no sign yet that they have any greater risk of disease than other in vitro fertilization babies, but the society needs more data to be sure.” Given that there have also been no efforts to look for signs, this is hardly comforting.

It is also not clear if cells removed from embryos at that very early stage do not themselves, when isolated, have the ability to develop as full individual embryos. The question here is whether embryo biopsy amounts to a form of induced identical twinning. That question, too, suggests the ethics of this proposed technique are very much in doubt.

ACT’s scientist-salesmen imprudently dismissed these concerns in the press, and hyped their findings. “There is no rational reason left to oppose this research,” Dr. Robert Lanza, ACT’s vice president told the *New York Times*. This was mere bravado. It did not, and will not, make serious questions go away. Indeed, the media is now in full retreat from the original story, and reporters are not at all happy with ACT for having sold them a bill of goods.

Last year the President’s Council on Bioethics carefully considered embryo biopsy among other techniques for developing embryonic-like stem cells without doing harm to human embryos. The Council concluded decisively and (uncharacteristically for the quarrelsome group) unanimously that the technique described in this week’s publication could not be ethically pursued in humans. But the Council report also considered other possible ethically uncontroversial ways forward, and it is that larger picture — the emerging range of options for non-embryo-destructive means of producing pluripotent stem cells — that is the real story of the past year. It is a very positive story, and one that seems increasingly likely to put our troubling societal division over stem cells behind us.

After all, what really stands out about the ACT study is its fundamental aim. Stem-cell researchers are recognizing the need to find ways of doing their work that do not involve the destruction of human embryos. This is truly a welcome development.

Those of us who defend embryonic human life have vigorously supported non-embryo-destructive methods of obtaining pluripotent cells. We are not opposed to stem-cell research, or even embryonic-stem-cell research, *as such*. We are opposed only to practices that harm or destroy human embryos — who are, as all the leading works of modern embryology attest, human individuals at the earliest stage of development. If research did not require the destruction or exploitation of human embryos, we would be fully prepared to support it.

President Bush and a huge bipartisan majority in Congress have also voiced support for ethically unproblematic ways forward. “Researchers are investigating new techniques that might allow doctors and scientists to produce stem cells just as versatile as those derived from human embryos without harming life,” the president said last month, “we must continue to explore these hopeful alternatives, so we can advance the cause of scientific research while staying true to the ideals of a decent and humane society.” Also last month, the Senate passed a bill that would provide funds for research that sought the same kinds of cells now derived from human embryos, but without requiring the use of such embryos. Support for this bill came from both parties and from across the ideological spectrum from Sam Brownback to Edward Kennedy. The vote was *unanimous*. It garnered a large majority in the House too, but (due to the spite and deceptive last-minute tactics of a small minority of House members) not the two thirds needed to pass it under the governing rule. So President Bush has said his administration will take what actions it can on its own initiative to promote such promising ethical avenues of science.

The Real Good News (Continued on page 17)

(Continued from page 16) ***The Real Good News***

Despite the exposure of the ACT research as pure hype, it is increasingly clear that such sources are coming. One possibility is “altered nuclear transfer.” This research, being pursued at MIT and elsewhere, seeks to fuse ordinary body cells, obtained harmlessly from donors, with oocyte cytoplasm in such a way as to produce donor-specific pluripotent stem cells without producing or destroying a human embryo. Another possibility is “dedifferentiation.” Last August, Harvard scientists showed they could “reprogram” an ordinary human skin cell back to the pluripotent state. No embryo was produced in the process, yet stem cells were generated. Their experiment still has some kinks to clear away, but just a few weeks ago a group of Japanese scientists showed they could eliminate many of those and turn a skin cell into the precise equivalent of an embryonic stem cell. Their work was in mice, and perhaps that is why it did not receive the degree of attention that the ACT study grabbed, but it was if anything more promising and exciting — and would have been even if the ACT study had been what the ACT publicity machine had cracked it up to be.

Similar techniques are being explored around the world, and it now seems that a new mood is overtaking the field. If nothing else, the work of the ACT scientists implicitly acknowledges the need to find sources of stem cells that do not require embryo destruction. This acknowledgement by stem cell scientists, met as it has been by support and encouragement from the president, Congress, and with last week’s flurry of news also the general public, points the way out of a needless controversy over stem-cell research, and toward scientific promise all Americans can support.

The real news, then, is not about one grossly hyped study published by a publicity-hungry biotech firm. Rather, it is about the promise that pluripotent-stem-cell science can proceed without human embryo-killing. It is very good news. †

Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem*



**Latin for “To turn truth into laughter”*

TWO TROUBLE-MAKERS

A couple had two little mischievous boys, ages 8 and 10. They were always getting into trouble, and their parents knew that if any mischief occurred in their town, their sons would get the blame.

The boys’ mother consulted her pastor who had been successful in disciplining children, so she asked if he would speak with her boys. The pastor agreed and asked to see them individually.

So, the mother sent her 8-year-old first, in the morning, with the older boy to see the pastor in the afternoon.

The pastor, a huge man with a booming voice, sat the younger boy down and asked him sternly, “Where is God?”

They boy’s mouth dropped open, but he made no response, sitting there with his mouth hanging open.

The clergyman repeated the question. “Where is God?”

Again, the boy made no attempt to answer.

So, the clergyman raised his voice some more and shook his finger in the boy's face and bellowed, “Where is God!?”

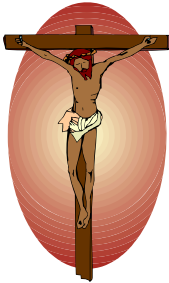
The boy screamed and bolted from the room. He ran directly home and dove into his closet, slamming the door behind him.

When his older brother found him in the closet, he asked, “What happened?”

The younger brother, gasping for breath, replied: “We are in real BIG trouble this time! God is missing, and they think we did it!” †



PRAYER PETITIONS



*Heavenly Father, I offer you this day
all that I shall think, do or say,
uniting it with what was done
by Jesus Christ, your only Son.
Amen*

*We all need prayers—at some times
more than others. If you have a special
need for prayer, please let us know so we
can join in prayer for each other. Leave
a message on Anne Lanphar's voicemail
(714) 250-8605 or email your request to
alanphar@firstam.com*

- ♦ Heather Flynn USAFA (special intention)
- ♦ John Flynn IV USNA (special intention)
 - ♦ Hon. Jenny Latta (serious illness)
 - ♦ Kathy Todd (cancer)
 - ♦ Susan Keenan (serious illness)
 - ♦ Melissa DiFelice (serious illness)
- ♦ Fr. George M. Luznicky (deceased)
- ♦ Madeline McKimney (birth problems)
 - ♦ Ellie Shonefelt & Her Children
 - ♦ Janet Prah (illness)
 - ♦ Lindsay Stevens (illness)
 - ♦ Douglas Kniec (illness)
- ♦ Anne Lanphar (special intention)
- ♦ Eleanor Kott & Family (illness)
 - ♦ David Macdonald (illness)
 - ♦ Eric & Marie Bessem
- ♦ Charles Godwin (serious illness)
 - ♦ Kevin Guice (serious illness)
 - ♦ Julia Nelson (serious illness)
 - ♦ Sean Nelson (illness)
- ♦ Kallie Townsend-3yr old (illness)
 - ♦ Mary Keelan (illness)
 - ♦ Karl Abeyta (serious illness)
- ♦ Lauri B Kalinowski (serious illness)
 - ♦ John Thompson (employment)
 - ♦ Duain Cruzat (serious disease)
 - ♦ Keith Wilson (serious illness)
- ♦ Milos & Edith Myrik (serious illness)
 - ♦ Scott Smith (illness)
 - ♦ Ryan Ronk (serious injury)
- ♦ Kristin Burkett (serious illness)
- ♦ Darren M (questioning the Faith)
- ♦ Fr. Matt Munoz (special intention)
 - ♦ Cindie Burnes (serious illness)
- ♦ John Flynn & his wife (serious illness)
 - ♦ Ron Gable (special intention)
 - ♦ Earle Nelson (epiphany)
 - ♦ Joan Hansen (conversion) †



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**MESSAGE OF HIS HOLINESS
POPE BENEDICT XVI**
Solemnity of the Nativity of the Lord

*St Peter's Basilica
December 24, 2006*

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

We have just heard in the Gospel the message given by the angels to the shepherds during that Holy Night, a message which the Church now proclaims to us: "To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be a sign for you: you will find a babe wrapped in swaddling clothes and lying in a manger" (*Lk* 2:11-12). Nothing miraculous, nothing extraordinary, nothing magnificent is given to the shepherds as a sign. All they will see is a child wrapped in swaddling clothes, one who, like all children, needs a mother's care; a child born in a stable, who therefore lies not in a cradle but in a manger. God's sign is the baby in need of help and in poverty. Only in their hearts will the shepherds be able to see that this baby fulfils the promise of the prophet Isaiah, which we heard in the first reading: "For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government will be upon his shoulder" (*Is* 9:5). Exactly the same sign has been given to us. We too are invited by the angel of God, through the message of the Gospel, to set out in our hearts to see the child lying in the manger.

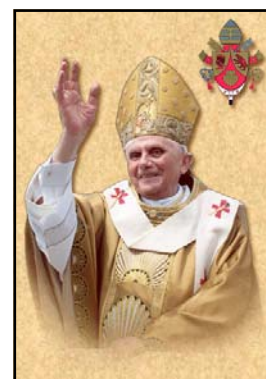
God's sign is simplicity. God's sign is the baby. God's sign is that he makes himself small for us. This is how he reigns. He does not come with power and outward splendor. He comes as a baby – defenseless and in need of our help. He does not want to overwhelm us with his strength. He takes away our fear of his greatness. He asks for our love: so he makes himself a child. He wants nothing other from us than our love, through which we spontaneously learn to enter into his feelings, his thoughts and his will – we learn to live with him and to practice with him that humility of renunciation that belongs to the very essence of love. God made himself small so that we could understand him, welcome him, and love him. The Fathers of the Church, in their Greek translation of the Old Testament, found a passage from the prophet Isaiah that Paul also quotes in order to show how God's new ways had already been foretold in the Old Testament. There we read: "God made his Word short, he abbreviated it" (*Is* 10:23; *Rom* 9:28). The Fathers interpreted this in two ways. The Son himself is the Word, the *Logos*; the eternal Word became small – small enough to fit into a manger. He became a child, so that the Word could be grasped by us. In this way God teaches us to love the little ones. In this way he teaches us to love the weak. In this way he teaches us respect for children. The child of Bethlehem directs our gaze towards all children who suffer and are abused in the world, the born and the unborn. Towards children who are placed as soldiers in a violent world; towards children who have to beg; towards children who suffer deprivation and hunger; towards children who are unloved. In all of these it is the Child of Bethlehem who is crying out to us; it is the God who has become small who appeals to us. Let us pray this night that the brightness of God's love may enfold all these children. Let us ask God to help us do our part so that the dignity of children may be respected. May they all experience the light of love, which mankind needs so much more than the material necessities of life.

And so we come to the second meaning that the Fathers saw in the phrase: "God made his Word short". The Word which God speaks to us in Sacred Scripture had become long in the course of the centuries. It became long and complex, not just for the simple and unlettered, but even more so for those versed in Sacred Scripture, for the experts who

Papal Message (Continued on page 20)



**FROM
PETER'S
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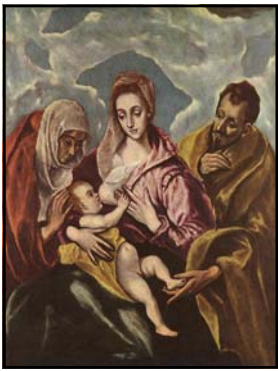


(Continued from page 19) Papal Message

evidently became entangled in details and in particular problems, almost to the extent of losing an overall perspective. Jesus "abbreviated" the Word – he showed us once more its deeper simplicity and unity. Everything taught by the Law and the Prophets is summed up – he says – in the command: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind... You shall love your neighbor as yourself" (Mt 22:37-40). This is everything – the whole faith is contained in this one act of love which embraces God and humanity. Yet now further questions arise: how are we to love God with all our mind, when our intellect can barely reach him? How are we to love him with all our heart and soul, when our heart can only catch a glimpse of him from afar, when there are so many contradictions in the world that would hide his face from us? This is where the two ways in which God has "abbreviated" his Word come together. He is no longer distant. He is no longer unknown. He is no longer beyond the reach of our heart. He has become a child for us, and in so doing he has dispelled all doubt. He has become our neighbor, restoring in this way the image of man, whom we often find so hard to love. For us, God has become a gift. He has given himself. He has entered time for us. He who is the Eternal One, above time, he has assumed our time and raised it to himself on high. Christmas has become the Feast of gifts in imitation of God who has given himself to us. Let us allow our heart, our soul and our mind to be touched by this fact! Among the many gifts that we buy and receive, let us not forget the true gift: to give each other something of ourselves, to give each other something of our time, to open our time to God. In this way anxiety disappears, joy is born, and the feast is created. During the festive meals of these days let us remember the Lord's words: "When you give a dinner or a banquet, do not invite those who will invite you in return, but invite those whom no one invites and who are not able to invite you" (cf. Lk 14:12-14). This also means: when you give gifts for Christmas, do not give only to those who will give to you in return, but give to those who receive from no one and who cannot give you anything back. This is what God has done: he invites us to his wedding feast, something which we cannot reciprocate, but can only receive with joy. Let us imitate him! Let us love God and, starting from him, let us also love man, so that, starting from man, we can then rediscover God in a new way!

And so, finally, we find yet a third meaning in the saying that the Word became "brief" and "small". The shepherds were told that they would find the child in a manger for animals, who were the rightful occupants of the stable. Reading Isaiah (1:3), the Fathers concluded that beside the manger of Bethlehem there stood an ox and an ass. At the same time they interpreted the text as symbolizing the Jews and the pagans – and thus all humanity – who each in their own way have need of a Savior: the God who became a child. Man, in order to live, needs bread, the fruit of the earth and of his labor. But he does not live by bread alone. He needs nourishment for his soul: he needs meaning that can fill his life. Thus, for the Fathers, the manger of the animals became the symbol of the altar, on which lies the Bread which is Christ himself: the true food for our hearts. Once again we see how he became small: in the humble appearance of the host, in a small piece of bread, he gives us himself.

All this is conveyed by the sign that was given to the shepherds and is given also to us: the child born for us, the child in whom God became small for us. Let us ask the Lord to grant us the grace of looking upon the crib this night with the simplicity of the shepherds, so as to receive the joy with which they returned home (cf. Lk 2:20). Let us ask him to give us the humility and the faith with which Saint Joseph looked upon the child that Mary had conceived by the Holy Spirit. Let us ask the Lord to let us look upon him with that same love with which Mary saw him. And let us pray that in this way the light that the shepherds saw will shine upon us too, and that what the angels sang that night will be accomplished throughout the world: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased." Amen! ✠



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CLASS SCHEDULE

8:00am—8:30am	MASS	FR. HUGH BARBOUR, O. PRAEM
8:30am—9:00am	REGISTRATION & CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST (included)	
9:00am—10:00am	SESSION 1: “ FOLLOWING JESUS— ELIMINATING BIAS ” (1 hr Elimination of Bias)	FR. EUGENE J. HAYES, JCD, O. PRAEM. <i>Abbott, St Michael's Abbey Doctor of Canon Law</i>
10:10am—11:10am	SESSION 2: “ SICKNESS & SIN: MENTAL ILLNESS & THE MORAL LIFE ” (1 hr Substance Abuse Prevention/Stress Management)	DR. AARON KHERIATY <i>Psychiatrist, U.C. Irvine and Member of Opus Dei</i>
11:20am—12:20pm	SESSION 3: “ CONTEMPORARY LEGAL ETHICS ” (1 hr Ethics)	DR. GEOFFERY C. HAZARD <i>Distinguished Professor of Law, U.C. Hastings College of Law; Noted Author</i>

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THE CATECHISM OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

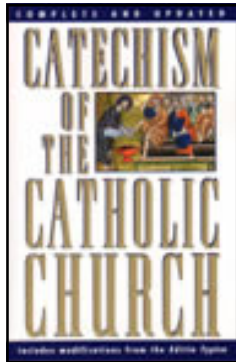
PART THREE: The Life in Christ

SECTION TWO: The Ten Commandments

CHAPTER TWO: "You Shall Love Your Neighbor as Yourself"

ARTICLE 5: The Fifth Commandment

I Respect for Human Life



CATECHISM CORNER

ABORTION

2270 Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person - among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life.

Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you. My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately wrought in the depths of the earth.

2271 Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable. Direct abortion, that is to say, abortion willed either as an end or a means, is gravely contrary to the moral law:

You shall not kill the embryo by abortion and shall not cause the newborn to perish. God, the Lord of life, has entrusted to men the noble mission of safeguarding life, and men must carry it out in a manner worthy of themselves. Life must be protected with the utmost care from the moment of conception: abortion and infanticide are abominable crimes.

2272 Formal cooperation in an abortion constitutes a grave offense. The Church attaches the canonical penalty of excommunication to this crime against human life. "A person who procures a completed abortion incurs excommunication latae sententiae," "by the very commission of the offense," and subject to the conditions provided by Canon Law. The Church does not thereby intend to restrict the scope of mercy. Rather, she makes clear the gravity of the crime committed, the irreparable harm done to the innocent who is put to death, as well as to the parents and the whole of society.

2273 The inalienable right to life of every innocent human individual is a constitutive element of a civil society and its legislation:

"The inalienable rights of the person must be recognized and respected by civil society and the political authority. These human rights depend neither on single individuals nor on parents; nor do they represent a concession made by society and the state; they belong to human nature and are inherent in the person by virtue of the creative act from which the person took his origin. Among such fundamental rights one should mention in this regard every human being's right to life and physical integrity from the moment of conception until death."

"The moment a positive law deprives a category of human beings of the protection which civil legislation ought to accord them, the state is denying the equality of all before the law. When the state does not place its power at the service of the rights of each citizen, and in particular of the more vulnerable, the very foundations of a state based on law are undermined.... As a consequence of the respect and protection which must be ensured for the unborn child from the moment of conception, the law must provide appropriate penal sanctions for every deliberate violation of the child's rights."

2274 Since it must be treated from conception as a person, the embryo must be defended in its integrity, cared for, and healed, as far as possible, like any other human being.

Prenatal diagnosis is morally licit, "if it respects the life and integrity of the embryo and the human fetus and is directed toward its safe guarding or healing as an individual.... It is gravely opposed to the moral law when this is done with the thought of possibly inducing an abortion, depending upon the results: a diagnosis must not be the equivalent of a death sentence."

2275 "One must hold as licit procedures carried out on the human embryo which respect the life and integrity of the embryo and do not involve disproportionate risks for it, but are directed toward its healing the improvement of its condition of health, or its individual survival."

"It is immoral to produce human embryos intended for exploitation as disposable biological material." "Certain attempts to influence chromosomic or genetic inheritance are not therapeutic but are aimed at producing human beings selected according to sex or other predetermined qualities. Such manipulations are contrary to the personal dignity of the human being and his integrity and identity" which are unique and unrepeatable.†



MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS

Guido Reni

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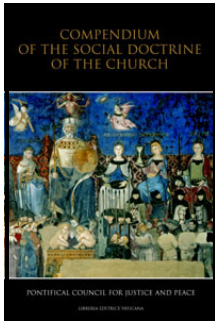
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