

1. In a famous "Homily about the Virgin" (Homily 4) Saint Bernard Abad, imagining he is in the small house of Nazareth at moment of the Annunciation, addresses Mary with these touching words:

"You've heard, O Virgin, that you will conceive and give birth to a son; you have heard that this will happen, not by means of man, but by means of the Holy Spirit. The Angel is waiting for your answer: He has to return to God who sent him. We also wait, O Lady, a word of compassion, we miserably oppressed by a sentence of eternal damnation.

(...) O Virgin, give your answer soon. Respond promptly to the Angel, in fact, through the Angel to the Lord. Respond with your word and accept the Word (eternal): say your human word and conceive the divine Word.

(...)

Why does it take you so long? Why do you fear? (...) The One, towards whom is drawn the desire of all nations, is knocking outside at the door. Get up, run, open! Get up with faith, run with devotion, open with your yes.

And Mary said: 'Behold the handmaid of the Lord: be it done to me according to your word! "

At the time Mary utters these words, the most extraordinary event of all human history occurs: the Eternal enters time, the Almighty becomes small, God becomes a man, becoming a relative of humanity and giving a new dignity to every man.

For this reason Christianity gives particular strength to the arguments of reason, which are already sufficient to affirm the inalienable dignity of every human life.

But, because of the Incarnation of the Son of God, Christianity is presented in an extraordinary way as the religion of life, the religion that defends every human being from the first moment of existence until the last breath.

2. It should be noted that, when Christianity entered the tormentous human history, human life was subject to oppression and pagan legislation readily accepted abortion and infanticide as it accepted the killing of a slave by the master.

Christianity has presented itself to the world with this bold and unprecedented statement: "Whatever you do to the least of men, you have done it to God", because God is the guarantor of human dignity, is the foundation of all human rights, is the avenger and the judge on any violation of the human dignity.

In the "Didaché", which is a text contemporary to the Gospels, we find this sharp warning: "You shall not kill by abortion the fruit of thy womb, nor will destroy the infant already born."

And Minucius Felix, a Christian writer of the second half of the second century, in his work entitled "Octavius" so bravely writes: "I see that you (not Christians) discard the kids exposing them to the beasts and to the birds or by strangling them you suppress them with a miserable death. (...) All this can only be consequence of the school of your gods. Saturn, in fact, did not abandon his children, but devoured them: for which, in some regions of Africa, parents once sacrificed their own children, suffocating their cry with caresses and kisses, so as not to offer a crying victim"(Octavius, XXX).

And Tertuliano, in his admirable "Apologeticum", Chapter IX, states: "For us Christians murder is expressly prohibited and, therefore, there is not even permitted to remove the fetus in the womb. Preventing birth is anticipated murder.

It does not matter whether one destroys a life already born or crushes it at birth: it is already one man who is about to be born (homo est et qui est futurus!)

These statements in the pagan world at that time, were injections of civility and flashes of light in the dark and the seeds of the future recognition of human rights.

The author of the "Letter to Diognetus" rightly observes: "Christians marry like everyone and concieved children, but do not throw away the baby" (Letter to Diognetus V). And Saint Justin, who came from paganism, said: "We, Christians, so as not to commit any injustice or wickedness, were taught that the wicked abandon their babies: first of all because we see that later they are all forced into prostitution and not only girls but also boys. In this

way, as we once used to breed herds of cattle and goats, or sheep, so now we raise the children only to use them shamefully. "

3. Today we are under a new eclipse the dignity of human life and, therefore, we Christians are called to give a new and courageous witness to the value of life and the dignity of every human life.

The Servant of God John Paul II's Encyclical "Evangelium Vitae" has given us a thorough reading of the moment we are experiencing and the task which Providence has entrusted to us: as in the early centuries, we must be calm and secure sowers of civilization regressed into a world of paganism.

Mother Teresa of Calcuta, echoing the teaching of John Paul II, said: "Abortion is the evil of this century. If a mother can kill her own child, what prevents us from killing each other? ".
And in December 10, 1970, in her speech accepting the Nobel Peace Prize, Mother Teresa, addressing the King of Norway said: "Your majesty, abortion is murder. I am speaking on behalf of unborn children. Again, Your Majesty: abortion is murder. "

We have to rebuild a culture of life, we must find the melody that sings the beauty of human life as well as was sang by Saint Francis of Assisi, and as recently was witnessed by Mother Teresa of Calcutta.

May the Blessed Virgin help us. To her we turn hopefully, saying:

O Mary, cradle of the great mystery!
In your clear womb
the most unthinkable and necessary event has happened:
God, in you, has become a child
and has shared the itinerary
of the human adventure.

From that moment, when life blooms
we can exclaim: also God
has traveled the same road;
also God has experienced the fascinating
and gentle season of the presence
in the mother's womb.

Donna del prodigio del grembo
abitato miracolosamente da Dio,
con te vogliamo implorare la luce
dello Spirito per le mamme e i padri
di oggi: riportali a rispettare la vita,
riportali a cantare la vita, riportali
ad amare la vita dal primo
istante fino all'ultimo istante
del suo prodigio! Amen

Woman of the miracle of the womb
miraculously inhabited by God,
we plead with you the light of the
Spirit for today's mothers and fathers:
bring them back to respect life,
bring them back to sing to life, bring
to love life from the first
moment until the last moment
of its wonder! Amen

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