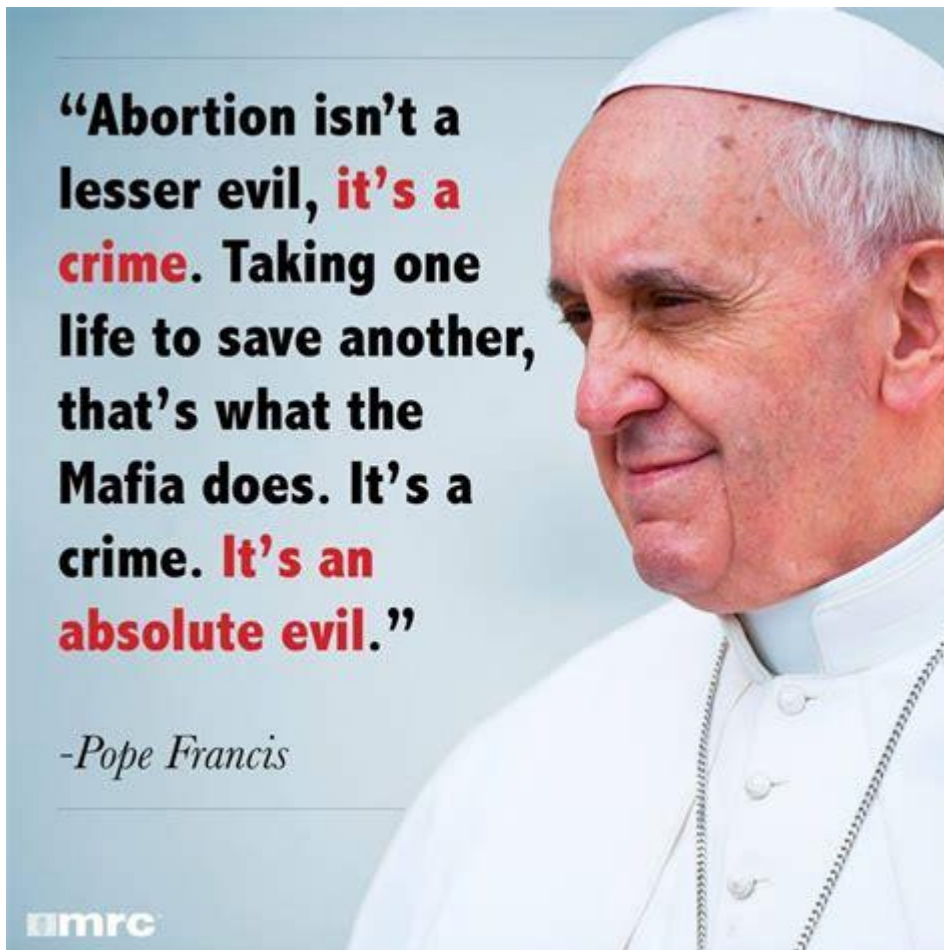


**FROM FATHER JOHN:** *“Blessed are you who fear the LORD, who walk in his ways! For you shall eat the fruit of your handiwork; blessed shall you be, and favored. Your wife shall be like a fruitful vine in the recesses of your home; your children like olive plants around your table. Behold, thus is the man blessed who fears the LORD. The LORD bless you from Zion: may you see the prosperity of Jerusalem all the days of your life. May you see your children's children. Peace be upon Israel!” ~ Psalm 128*

***May the Lord bless us all the days of our lives!!!***



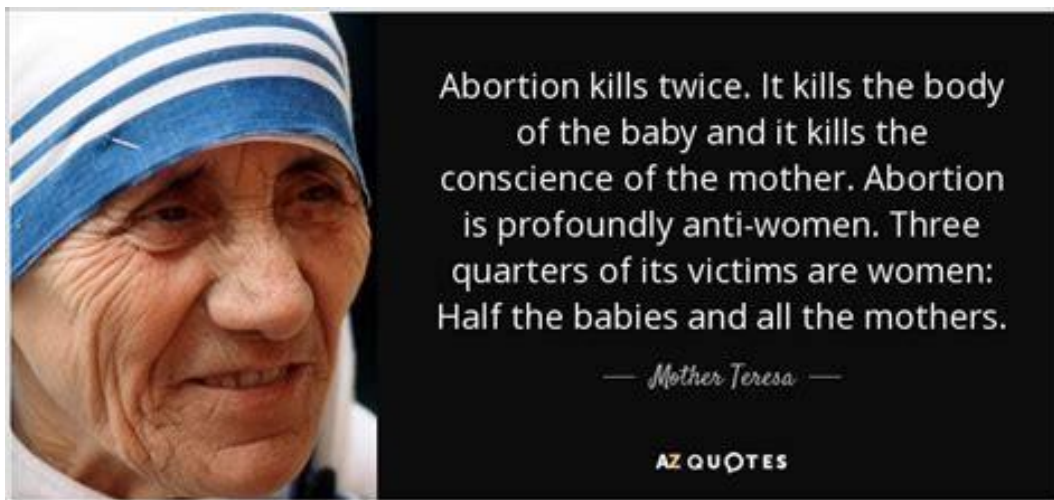
Today is Respect Life Sunday and October is Respect Life Month. The elite corporate media attacks and scorns the Church because we stand up and defend the right to life. The Church opposes abortion, the death penalty, euthanasia, human cloning, embryonic stem cell research, war and anything else that attacks the dignity and sanctity of all human life. Although the Church opposes abortion, the Church also embraces with mercy those who have made this mistake and offers to bring them absolution and forgiveness. In the words of St. John Paul II:

*“I would now like to say a special word to women who have had an abortion. The Church is aware of the many factors which may have influenced your decision, and she does not doubt that in many cases it was a painful and even shattering decision. The wound in your*

*heart may not yet have healed. Certainly what happened was and remains terribly wrong. But do not give in to discouragement and do not lose hope. Try rather to understand what happened and face it honestly. If you have not already done so, give yourselves over with humility and trust to repentance. The Father of mercies is ready to give you his forgiveness and his peace in the Sacrament of Reconciliation. To the same Father and to his mercy you can with sure hope entrust your child.” (The Gospel of Life, #99).*

I believe that abortion is an act of desperation; that, unfortunately, people sometimes find themselves in a difficult and desperate situation where there seems to be no good solution. This is why “*The Father of mercies*” offers, through the auspices of the Church, forgiveness, absolution and mercy in the *Sacrament of Reconciliation*. But, at the same time, the reality of the situation in our nation is that over 62 million innocent human lives have been taken since 1973, the year abortion was legalized in the United States by the Supreme Court in *Roe v. Wade*. Roughly 3,300 innocent human lives are lost to abortion per day in the United States which has helped create a situation where human life has been cheapened in what St. John Paul II called “*a culture of death*”.

16-year-old Dolores Weber commented in the *Chicago Tribune* that, “A third of my generation is gone” when referring to abortions. How sad is that, when a 16-year-old realizes that one-third of her generation was never given a chance to live, to dream, or to love?



Suffragist Susan B. Anthony called abortion a “crying evil”. Nineteenth-century feminist Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote “the degradation of women” was caused by the “murder of children, either before or after birth.” Quaker Alice Paul, the author of the original Equal Rights Amendment, called abortion “the ultimate exploitation of women.” In 1979, author Michael Harrington, a renowned socialist and liberal, surprised a crowd of wealthy Planned Parenthood supporters when he called the right-to-life movement “one of the few genuine social movements of the 1970s.”

Unfortunately, the University of Notre Dame invited President Obama to speak at its graduation ceremonies for the class of 2009. During his speech, Obama called for civil and open dialogue concerning abortion in an effort to reduce the number of abortions. Unfortunately, civil and open dialogue about our disagreements is not good enough when it comes to abortion. Dialogue is a good thing but it is not an end in itself.

Dialogue did not end the blood sports in ancient Rome. Entering into a dialogue with Adolf Hitler to reduce the number of Jews murdered in the Holocaust would not have been good enough. Entering into a dialogue with slave owners in the 1850's to reduce the number of African American slaves would not have been good enough, and in fact, it was not good enough for President Lincoln. Entering into a dialogue with the Khmer Rouge to reduce the number of Cambodians murdered in their killing fields was not good enough. Entering into a dialogue with Stalin to reduce the number of people murdered in the gulags was not good enough.

We must remember that all human life is sacred in the eyes of God. This means that we must nurture human life, we must care for human life, we must respect human life, and most importantly, we must defend all human life.

As Catholics, we don't just believe that all human life is sacred; we **celebrate** the sacredness of all human life, human life that comes from God, that is created by God, that is made sacred by God, that is saved by the Father sending His only Son into the world to die on a cross so that we might have life.

That is why our Lord Jesus came into the world – to give us, each and every one of us, life. God the Father didn't send His only son into the world on a whim or because he kind of liked us or because he felt sorry for us. God the Father sent His only Son into the world because he loves us, because he created us, because as the gospels reminds us, all human life is sacred. Always remember, our Lord Jesus Christ died on the cross defending the sacredness of all human life, giving each of us the gift of life.

May God Bless you and all those who love the Lord.

