

ST. MARY'S RESPECT LIFE NEWSLETTER

"You will know the truth and the truth will set you free" (Jn 8:37)

St. Mary's Parish, Franklin, MA

October 2014

The Dignity of the Human Person

"The Pole has no rights whatsoever. His only obligation is to obey what we tell him. He must be constantly reminded of his duty to obey. A major goal of our plan is to finish off as speedily as possible all troublemaking politicians, priests, and leaders who fall into our hands. I openly admit that some thousands of so-called important Poles will have to pay with their lives, but you must not allow sympathy for individual cases to deter you in your duty, which is to ensure that the goals of National Socialism triumph and that the Polish nation is never again able to offer resistance. Every vestige of Polish culture is to be eliminated. Those Poles who seem to have Nordic appearances will be taken to Germany to work in our factories. Children of Nordic appearances will be taken from their parents and raised as German workers. The rest? They will work. They will eat little. And in the end they will die out. There will never again be a Poland".

These were the instructions given by the Nazi Governor-General Hans Frank to his subordinates following the German invasion of Poland in 1939. Imagine, by orders of the authorities, your nation and your culture are to be eliminated along with all political and religious freedoms; you are declared irrelevant and no longer have the right to life, liberty or the pursuit of happiness. We cannot even begin to imagine the fear and terror felt by the Polish people of 1939.

During this time many Poles fled their homes to escape the onslaught of the German invaders. Among the fleeing refugees was a young man of 19 named Karol Wojtyla. Between 1939 and 1978, Karol Wojtyla lived through the persecutions of the atheistic ideologies of both Nazism and Communism.

In 1946 Karol Wojtyla would be ordained a Priest of the Roman Catholic Church but unfortunately after the Nazi's were driven out of Poland at the end of World War II, the Russians and their Communist ideology would replace National Socialism as the new rulers of his country. In his recent book *Saint John Paul the Great: His Five Loves*, Jason Evert describes life under the Communist Regime: *"To undermine Polish culture, communists struck at its heart—the family. Work and school schedules were organized so that parents had minimal contact with each other and with their children. Birth control and abortion were encouraged, state-sponsored sex education was implemented in schools, and apartments were built to accommodate only small families".* The idea of government sponsored birth control and abortion is not a recent phenomenon but has its roots in the atheistic ideologies of National Socialism and Communism.

These are the roots of the man who tirelessly preached the Gospel of Life to promote the importance of the dignity of the human person from conception to natural death. In his first encyclical, *Redeemer of Man*, he said: *"The Church must be aware of the threats to man and of all that seems to oppose the endeavor to make human life ever more human and make every element of this life correspond to man's true dignity; the source of Man's true freedom cannot be found in the various ideologies of the world or in the individuals who propagate these ideologies. Man's true freedom is found in Christ".*

OCTOBER IS RESPECT LIFE MONTH – SPONSOR A ROSE FOR LIFE



Renew your commitment to life – the life God gave each of us in our mother's womb and the life we must protect until natural death.

Over the weekend of October 25-26 at all Masses, envelopes will be placed in the pews for those of who want to sponsor a rose for life. A local florist delivers two fresh roses to the Church each week. One rose is placed in the front of the statue of the Sacred Heart of Jesus in the upper Church and one is placed in front of the statue of the Blessed Mother in the lower Church.

You can sponsor a rose in memory of or for a special occasion of a loved one. The suggested sponsorship donation for a rose is \$10.

To sponsor a rose simply insert your cash or check made out to St. Mary's Respect Life Committee in the envelope provided. Fill out the form located inside the envelope and place the envelope in the white baskets at the church exits.

He goes on to say *“the Church’s mission is to be a guardian of the true freedom given to us by Christ himself in these words: ‘you will know the truth and the truth will set you free’ and that Church helps us discern between the truth of real freedom in Christ by helping us avoid the illusionary freedom given to us by the world that fails to recognize the true dignity of man who is made in the image and likeness of God. It is Christ that brings true freedom to man – freedom based in truth. Recalling the works of Jesus to Pilate: ‘It is for this reason I came into the world, to bear witness to the truth’”*.

Thirty-two years after his ordination, Karol Wojtyla would be elected Pope of the Roman Catholic Church. In 2009, this humble Polish man would be Beatified by the Church and declared Blessed by his successor Pope Benedict XVI. This man from Poland will be forever remembered as one of the great figures of the 20th Century. But the road he had to travel was not easy. As the gospel reminds us, the road to eternal life is narrow and full of obstacles while the road to destruction is wide and easy to travel.

He proclaimed the message of life and the dignity of man to all the leaders of the world. He proclaimed this message to elected leaders of democratic countries as well as totalitarian dictators. Through his efforts of teaching the truth of the dignity of man, the Communist regimes of Eastern Europe collapsed in 1989 bringing an end to the Cold War.

Like John Paul II, Pope John XXIII (Angelo Roncalli) lived during the tumultuous times of both World War I and World War II with much of his formation and experience coming as a result of experiencing the tragedies of war. During World War I, as a young priest, he was drafted into the Royal Italian Army as a sergeant, serving in the medical corps as a stretcher-bearer and as a chaplain. During World War II, he was actively involved in helping Jews flee from the terrors of the Nazis. He helped Jews in Bulgaria and Romania from being sent to concentration camps in Germany.

In his encyclical *Mater et Magistra* written in 1961, Pope John XXIII said: *“We must solemnly proclaim that human life is transmitted by means of the family, and the family is based upon a marriage which is one and indissoluble and, with respect to Christians, raised to the dignity of a sacrament. The transmission of human life is the result of a personal and conscious act, and, as such, is subject to the all-holy, inviolable and immutable laws of God, which no man may ignore”*. Throughout this encyclical, Pope John XXIII writes extensively about the dignity of human the person especially in terms of economics and social justice.

On April 27, 2014 Blessed John Paul II and Pope John XXIII were canonized saints of the Church by Pope Francis. For both men and their successors including our present Holy Father, Pope Francis, the dignity of the human person is of the utmost importance to freedom and world peace. On his recent trip to Albania, Pope Francis said *“when, in the name of an ideology, there is an attempt to remove God from society, it*

ends up adoring idols, and very soon men and women lose their way, their dignity is trampled and their rights violated”.

St. Mary’s Raises over \$7,000.00 for Life

Through the baby bottle drive last January along with the annual baby shower in March, the parishioners of St. Mary’s contributed over \$7,000 for two area pro-life organizations including the Abundant Hope Pregnancy Resource Center in Attleboro and the Friends of the Unborn in Quincy, Ma. The **Abundant Hope Pregnancy Resource Center** received over \$6,000 and serves area communities by providing life affirming support to women of all ages who find themselves in a crisis pregnancy situation. Through the annual baby shower we were able donate a car-load of baby items along with about \$1,000 in cash to the Friends of the Unborn in Quincy, Massachusetts. **Friends of the Unborn** is a Christian based organization that provides a sheltering-home for pregnant, homeless young women. Neither organization receives government funding and is dependent on donations from people like you in parishes throughout the Commonwealth - Thank you for your support.

National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children

On Saturday, September 13, 2014, St. Mary’s participated in the second annual National Day of Remembrance for Aborted Children to honor our unborn brothers and sisters. Solemn prayer vigils were conducted at gravesites and memorials across the country and here in Franklin about 16 people participated in the Rosary at the Knights of Columbus Memorial at St. Mary’s Cemetery.

