

Commentary on the Gospel for Tue, Jan 22nd 2019

Collect for Mass for Giving Thanks to God for the Gift of Human Life:

God our Creator

,we give thanks to you, who alone have the power to impart the breath of life as you form each of us in our mother's womb;

grant, we pray, that we, whom you have made stewards of creation, may remain faithful to this sacred trust and constant in safeguarding the dignity of every human life.

This Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children is a special day on the Church Calendar in the United States. It is an opportunity to pray - to turn to our God, the Author of all life - to ask for the graces we need to protect, by means of the law, the lives of unborn children. It is a special occasion to reflect on the sacredness of life from conception to natural birth. When we find ourselves reaching out, in our reflection, to human life we can not see - human life in its development - we can grow in a deeper respect for all human life. Defending unborn human life can help us be more conscious advocates for all human life after birth. Especially, the human lives of those who are not so easy to defend: murderers on death row, enemy combatants, people are on the margins of our society.

Becoming more sensitive to human life can help us become more sensitive to our common home - this planet - which we have abused so much as to change the amount of CO₂ and Methane in the atmosphere - trapping gases into the greenhouse affect, which has steadily raised the temperature of our planet. The effects of these changes - as Pope Francis reminds us so vividly in his encyclical *On the Care of Our Common Home (Laudato Si)* - hurts the poor of our world first and the worst. Ultimately, human life itself could be challenged unless we make significant changes in the way we choose to live, all around this planet. I've been in the a third world country with no pollution laws, and visited and held children in an orphanage with birth defects we haven't yet seen in the first world. It is terrifying to see what these unborn children have suffered.

The readings today are from the Second Week in Ordinary Time. Jesus is being confronted by the so called "religious" people of his day who had made laws which did not respect the dignity of human life. Let's pray this day that, whatever country we live in, there might be greater legal protection for unborn human life, and all human life, everywhere.

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