

October 6, 2019

From Fr. Jim . . .

Respect Life: On October 6, throughout the Archdiocese of Cincinnati, we celebrate Respect for Life. Traditionally and annually, the Church celebrates this on the first Sunday in October. Our lives and our sharing fully in the life and love of God is a tremendous gift. We are all stewards of this tremendous gift. God entrusts this great gift of life to each of us. We are to give care to this gift of life always with respect and dignity and to image our Creator.

The Church teaches that there is a consistent theory of human life – that proper stewardship of God’s gift of human life involves giving the proper care and love for life beginning in the womb and continuing to the tomb. And within this continuum, human life is not to be abused, denied or taken away. Therefore, as Christians and as the Church of God in the world today, we need to be concerned with the major issues of our day that challenge the respect, dignity and care that all life, on all levels deserves and desires. Issues such as abortion, stem cell research, euthanasia, sexual abuse, child abuse, spousal abuse, war, proper health care for everyone, treatment and care for the elderly, the death penalty and what else can we include? The continuum of life requires respect, dignity, protection, and rights for life on all its levels at all times. The responsibility of stewarding this incredible gift to us is never ending, always challenging and at the same time wonderful.

I believe being good stewards of all of God’s creation means living the great commandment to the best of our ability: Love God and love your neighbor as yourself. This, too, is a continuous straight line and not a hierarchy of values. Therefore, one can’t really love God without loving neighbor and self and one can’t really love neighbor without loving God and self and one can’t love self appropriately without love for neighbor and God. So, too, dignity and respect and love for God’s life are continuous along the entire spectrum of life.

Included in our call to be good stewards of God’s life and love is the proper care for our planet. We are blessed to enjoy it and to preserve it for future generations to enjoy. Therefore, as Christians and as the Church of God, we also need to be concerned about the issues of our day that threaten to destroy our planet. Such issues include pollution, global warming, shrinking rainforests, overconsumption and the lack of recycling.

We thank God for entrusting us to care for the life of all creation. We rejoice in the blessings that we receive from treating all life with respect and dignity. We ask for God’s healing, forgiveness and guidance for the times when we don’t steward God’s life well. We continue to work to promote the gift of God’s life on all levels and celebrate the growth of God’s people as they mature in faith. We pray, too, for God’s protection over our lives and the life God entrusts to our care. May all the peoples praise you, oh God. May all the peoples with all your creation sing your praises for the marvels of your life and love. Amen. Alleluia!

