



BISHOP'S MONTHLY REFLECTION

October 2024

-October - The Month of Assurance and Consolation

“Only Jesus can save us from condemnation!”
Our Assurance!

Our Lady of the Rosary: She will lead us to God!
Our Consolation

“I am the salvation of the people, says the Lord.
Should they cry to me in any distress,
I will hear them, and I will be their Lord forever.” (Entrance Antiphon 25th Sunday)

Life is precious. Life is sanctified. We are created in the very Image of God. Our Loving and Merciful God who is invisible became visible by taking on human flesh -human life - in the Incarnation. The God of the universe was confined to the womb of the Blessed Virgin Mary for nine months and was born, immersed, into the messiness of this world. He did not come to condemn this world, but he came to save it from sin and its destructive power.

Because life is precious, we are obligated to *respect* life and to uphold human dignity. This *incarnate* God, Jesus, is *hope* for the sinner and Judge and Victor over sin and death. All sin, great and small, is an offense against God and his love. From the Garden of Eden to the present moment, the *culture of life* has been under a relentless attack from the devious tactics of the *culture of death*. It continues to strike at the very foundation of society: marriage and family life. The culture of death will continue to be emboldened and empowered as long as individuals choose to turn away from God and ignore his commandments and moral codes.

The preeminent attack against the sanctity of life - abortion - assaults the most vulnerable - the innocent ones - those conceived in the wombs of their mothers - the *unborn*. What an abhorrent abomination against our God, the Creator! This is *the* great offense against the Lord of Life. How far can this disregard for human life and dignity, this killing of the unborn, continue without us witnessing the hand of God's justice?

The reality is: as long as humanity, and those who govern us, continue to push God and his moral teachings aside, we will forfeit the gifts of grace and mercy and, in turn, will face the consequences of this sin as it is loudly and arrogantly proclaimed as *freedom to choose!* It's a freedom to choose to terminate, to kill a child, an unborn human life, all in the name of it being perceived as “a right” to resolve a problem, to address an inconvenience to one's livelihood, basically, a *final solution* to an unwanted pregnancy.

We are reminded by Bishop Michael F. Burbidge, the USCCB's Chairman of the Committee Pro-Life Activities, that for fifty years of national access to abortion, “it has tragically created a national mindset where many Americans have become comfortable with some amount of abortion.” Bishop Burbidge continues: “We must call for policies that assist women and their children in need, while also continuing to help mothers in our own communities through local pregnancy help centers,” adding that Catholics must “extend the hand of compassion” to those who participated in an abortion.

If one realizes it or not, the consequences, the “wake-up call,” of the impact of this sin has mysteriously contributed to all the senseless division, unrest, hatred, violence, lawlessness, and war that we are experiencing. It is all, somehow, interrelated.

In the United States, alone, abortion is responsible for the destruction of 1 million American lives a year! Can you imagine what the number is on a worldwide scale? What will be the repercussions of this sin? Could it possibly lead to a horrific scenario for the human race. St. Mother Teresa had thoughts on this. She was known to have stated, in a prophetic tone, that the punishment the world would face, for the sin of abortion, would be - war - nuclear war! Is this the endgame resulting from an unrepentant attitude toward the sin of abortion? My friends, some of you might think this is a farfetched scenario? But observing the present state of affairs in our world, this is not farfetched! Many things are happening in our world to “get our attention, to alert us! We simply need to “read the signs of the times.”

Together, let us pray for our country as we approach our national elections. As Catholics, let us approach the voting booths as faithful citizens with well-formed consciences. The United States Conference of Catholic Bishops are inviting us to acknowledge October, Respect Life Month, with “a revival of prayer and action.” For I believe there is a dark spiritual cause behind all the division and hatred we are experiencing as the citizens of this country, and among those who govern us. As long as abortion continues to be “showcased” by political parties, we will continue to experience a sense of confusion, uncertainty and unrest among us as a nation and world.

Why are some who are in power so obsessed with abortion? Why are they so committed to promote the killing of unborn children under the guise of so-called reproductive healthcare and a woman’s reproductive rights? Why would they be willing to forfeit the cost, the loss of potential blessings that could come from future generations born to this nation? Where is this desire to celebrate abortion coming from?! This is nothing short of what Sr. Lúcia dos Santos, visionary of Fatima, described as “diabolical disorientation.” If not addressed, this will lead to a greater disrespect of human life and dignity which will result in more chaos. Our Catholic vote can make a difference for the future of the United States of America.

I would like to share a quote from Matthew Kelly included in his recent book: [33 Days to Eucharistic Glory](#) - “When we are not willing to even listen to the other side of an argument, we dangerously open ourselves to deception and tyranny of the worst kind. When a culture begins to deny objective reality, it is teetering on the edge of destruction. This is the attitude of today’s culture - and not only in relation to matters of faith. The poverty of mind and spirit has descended so low that this is now the attitude of the culture toward objective truths and scientific and biological realities.”

So, what is the culprit and source behind this “poverty of mind and spirit? Mental illness? Spiritual disorientation? Spiritual darkness?

In the midst of all of this, we are called, during the month of October, to pray for God’s mercy. We must call upon God’s intervention. Let us recommit to pray the Rosary during October. May Our Lady of the Rosary of Fatima intercede for us in a powerful way during our challenging and troubled times. As Our Lady consoled Lúcia, so she consoles and reminds us that she is *our refuge*, and she, Our Lady of the Rosary, will *lead us to God*.

During this month of October, let us also turn to the Shepherd Children of Fatima, asking them to pray for us to be true disciples of the Lord of Life. We are called to be *Pilgrims of Hope*. We are called to be *Disciples of Life!* Are we not blessed that the parents of the children of Fatima chose life for them and not death! How many tens of millions of children who were not permitted to be born into this world, potentially, could have been other Jacinta’s, Francisco’s, and Lúcia’s for the world?! What a travesty! Who is going to take responsibility for this? Who will pay the price for this “disorientation” of the use of the gift of free will and the supposed freedom to choose?

Let us be determined, as faithful Catholic citizens, to approach the upcoming elections and vote as committed promoters of life! Our Catholic vote can make a difference and an impact on the future of our Nation and help secure religious liberty among us. Let us pray for our politicians. There is much at stake. Let’s “bend a knee” in prayer as we prepare to cast our vote and remember:

“In you, Lord, is the source of life...”

For the sake of your sorrowful passion, have mercy on us and on the whole world!

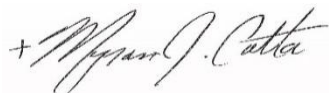
Visionaries of Fatima:

St. Jacinta, pray for us.

St. Francisco, pray for us.

Sister Lúcia, pray for us

Our Lady of the Holy Rosary of Fatima, pray for us.

A handwritten signature in black ink, starting with a small cross symbol followed by the name "Miguel J. Cotta". The signature is written in a cursive style.

Bishop Cotta