



STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH *All of God's Creation*

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, October 1, 2023

Human Dignity: A Key Principle of Catholic Social Teaching

“The Catholic Church proclaims that human life is sacred and that the dignity of the person is at the core of a moral vision for society. Our belief in the sanctity of human life and the inherent dignity of the human person is the foundation of all the principles of our social teaching.” (*Key Principles of Catholic Social Teaching*, Catholic Charities Office for Social Justice, St. Paul, MN)

October is Respect Life Month, and it is helpful to shine a light on this undergirding principle of our faith, but every day is a day to honor God’s gift of creation.

The Unborn and Their Families

A tiny little person, destined for great things, if allowed into the world. Operating with a powerful partnership between Catholic Social Services and the Pro-Life Union of Greater Philadelphia, **The Cenacle at the Padre Pio Center** assists families with case management, education, support groups, and material resources. It provides an inclusive space to foster social support among families, specifically targeting pregnant and postpartum women. (See the insert in this week’s bulletin for more information.)

The Sick and Dying

In March 2021, the government of Canada passed a federal bill “expanding euthanasia eligibility nationwide to those whose death was not reasonably foreseeable. Moreover, the Senate of Canada approved euthanasia for persons with mental illness who sought medical assistance in dying.” **Euthanasia is legal in 7 countries and physician-assisted suicide is legal in 10 countries and in 11 U.S. states.** “What is needed instead is an expansion of services in the community that will help people suffering from serious diseases or mental illness cope with their reality and find meaning in their lives.... Good quality palliative care offers not only release from pain but also answers the economic, affective, emotional, social, and spiritual needs of the sick and dying person.... [And it gives that person] the possibility to maintain their dignity and be accompanied with love and compassion until their natural death. **What is needed is not medical aid in dying but medical aid to the dying person.**” (Noel Simard, *A Crisis in Canada, America*, July/August 2023)

The Poor and Vulnerable

“**The Farm Bill historically provides one of the largest food security and safety nets in existence within the United States....** The Bill which expires at the end of September covers everything—from crop insurance to community food projects, from Meals on Wheels and SNAP (food stamps) to energy, conservation, and international food aid.... As disciples of a loving God, we are called upon to care for poor and vulnerable people and urge Congress to reform the Farm Bill so that it reduces hunger and poverty in the U.S. and around the world.... As Congress prepares to introduce a revised Farm Bill, [urge them to prioritize community programs that provide adequate food supplements to those in need.](#)” (Presbyterian Church Office of Public Witness, 2023)