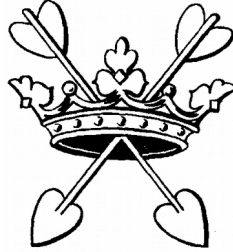


The Parish of St. Edmund, King and Martyr (Waterloo, Ontario)



The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada
(A member of the worldwide Traditional Anglican Communion)

UPDATE

December 8, 2004 - **The Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary**

January Schedule

January 1	Saturday	-	The Octave Day of Christmas / The Circumcision of Our Lord
January 2	Sunday	-	The Second Sunday after Christmas
January 6	Thursday	-	The Epiphany of Our Lord
January 9	Sunday	-	The First Sunday after the Epiphany
January 13	Thursday	-	The Octave Day of the Epiphany / The Baptism of Our Lord
January 16	Sunday	-	The Second Sunday after the Epiphany
January 23	Sunday	-	Septuagesima
January 25	Tuesday	-	The Conversion of St. Paul
January 30	Sunday	-	Sexagesima

Service Times and Location

(1) All Services are held in the Chapel at Luther Village on the Park - 139 Father David Bauer Drive in Waterloo.

(2) On Sundays, **Matins** is sung at **10:00 a.m.** (The **Litany** on the first Sunday of the month), and the **Holy Eucharist** is celebrated (sung) at **10:30 a.m.**

(3) On weekdays - **Holy Days** and **Days of Obligation** (Diocesan Ordo) - the **Holy Eucharist** is *usually* celebrated at **7:00 p.m.** when the Chapel is available.

Notes and Comments

- 1) Our Ordinary's **Bit** - **Humbug** - this page.
- 2) The third of six parts of an address given at the recent Essentials Conference - **Ecclesial Existence Today** - see page 3.
- 3) Darwinism debunked - **Taking the Cake** - see page 6.
- 4) The Catechism Song - **The Twelve Days of Christmas** - see page 8.
- 5) Even though the US Presidential election is over - **Bishop will continue focus on Abortion and Communion debate** - see page 9.
- 6) How we talk about unborn children - **Mixed Signals** - see page 10.

The Bishop's Bit

Humbug

The Concise Oxford Dictionary says our word *hypocrisy* derives from two Greek words, and means *acting a part*. This is precisely what actors on stage and in the movies are paid to do, to pretend to be other than they are. So, unless we wish to abolish all forms of theatre, i.e. much of our culture and entertainment, we shall in one context continue to encourage hypocrisy.

I submit, though, that in another context there is much to be said in praise of hypocrisy. Chancellor *Graham Eglinton* tells of a friend who says that hypocrisy is what holds society together.

In one of his spy stories *A Small Town in Germany* John le Carré makes a character say: "I am a hypocrite. I am a great believer in hypocrisy. It's the nearest we ever get to virtue. It's a statement of what we ought to be. Like religion, like art, like law, like marriage, I serve the appearance of things".

It is a kindness to others, often a great kindness, to put in your dentures, to bathe and wash yourself, to shave, to wear make up or a wig or clean clothes or a corset, to apply deodorant. Such practices conceal the real you beneath all the artifice, but why inflict the real you on society? Of course when there's nobody else around to suffer, then out can come the dentures, off can go the corset. What a relief to stop pretending!

The same holds good for our personalities. We pretend to behave better than we are in fact. But it is a kindness to tell white lies. It can be heroic charity to control your temper, to disciple your tongue, to master your resentments and paranoia, to subdue your jealousy. You may feel anger rising the moment you set eyes on Mary Jane, but you are not sinning if you say, "Good morning", rather than, "I hate you!" St Thérèse of Lisieux called such asceticism "*the little way*". She argued, "Rather than fasting, sleeping on the floor, wearing hairshirts, concentrate on treating Mary Jane as if you actually liked her." St Thérèse* has acquired a reputation for sanctimonious sentimentality, but in fact she was made of tempered steel. I count it an honour to know a similar person. X suffers much at the hands of others, but you'd never know this from X's self discipline, calm patience, unhurried courtesy, initiatives of generosity.

In conversation euphemism can sometimes be a kindness. For example, to talk of Alzheimer's is kinder to a wife than to talk of her husband's premature senile dementia. Doctors and others have to spare feelings as well as to confront the truth.

Our Blessed Lord was fierce about the conservative, traditional, Bible loving clergy of His day. A terrible warning for us traditionalist Anglicans, here! "Woe unto you, scribes and pharisees, you are like whitewashed graves, which outwardly appear beautiful but inwardly are full of the bones of dead men and all uncleanness" (*Matthew 23,27*). But it's

surely better for the physical and psychological health of society to have corpses buried in graves, rather than lying about to decompose in public? In other words, there is something to be said for well tended cemeteries.

Having said so much in praise of humbug, let me now say something against it. We certainly have to be on our guard against the cant and euphemisms of our politicians and governments. For example:

"This government can not interfere with a woman's right to do what she likes with her own body". Oh, what about compulsory seat belts in cars, the proscription of drunk driving, the proscription of pot and heroin, the strong discouragement of tobacco, compulsory vaccination and other treatments in early girlhood such as injections against diphtheria?

"A woman's right to choose what to do with her own body". Quite right too! But what if the body in question happens to be the body of her unborn baby, with its own heartbeat, blood type and DNA? So if she and her doctor choose to kill her unborn baby, that's alright in law. But if an assailant kills her unborn baby, he can be charged with taking life: the government now describes as a human baby what it had previously dismissed as a fetus. In any case, the Bible tells us our bodies are not our own but God's. And in marriage it's just as well to consult your partner before taking any drastic action like growing a beard.

"The tax payer can not foot the bill for procedures in clinics which are for profit". But what about the many abortuaries, the so called women's health centres, where tax payers foot the bill for the killing of thousands and thousands of unborn babies?

I conclude, then, that Canada would be a gentler kinder place if certain types of hypocrisy were proscribed by law!

+Robert Mercer CR

* There's an excellent book about her called *The Hidden Face*. The author, Ida Gorrës, is half German and half Japanese.

By **The Bishop Ordinary - The Anglican Catholic Church of Canada**

Ecclesial Existence Today - 3 of 6

Building the Golden Bull

I said in "Different Gods" that resolution A-134, amendment six, exemplifies the principle that what we are in ourselves is already pleasing to God, requiring no redemption in Christ. That is, it does something more than change Christian moral teaching by asserting, in contradiction of Holy Scripture, that homosexual relations fall within the divine plan and purpose for human sexuality. It does something more than assert that "committed" sexual relationships - though lying outside the marriage covenant that sacramentally participates in the bond between Christ and the church - are nonetheless sanctified. In doing that, it concedes what cannot be conceded without denying the gospel itself and the church with it; namely, that the persons involved in such relationships carry within them, in their very capacity for such relationships, their own holiness and their own sanctification. It speaks, in other words, as if there are areas of our life in which we do not belong to Jesus Christ, but to ourselves or to other lords, "areas in which we do not need justification and sanctification through him."

We ought to consider carefully what this means. To the advocates of gay liberation it means quite simply the removal of another roadblock to the full acceptance of homosexual lifestyles by society at large; not merely of permanent and exclusive homosexual bonding, at which few aim or even wish to aim, but of homosexual lifestyles generally (a point that has been clear for more than thirty years now). ¹¹

But that is not our concern here. Our

concern here is with the gospel as the *conditio sine qua non* of the church, and as the chief treasure of our love for our neighbours. What does it mean for the gospel? What it means for the gospel is that the gospel has nothing essential to say, and nothing essential to offer, where human sexuality is concerned. Where human sexuality is concerned, there is need only of an amorphous and strictly subjective component called "commitment." Which is tantamount to saying that Jesus is neither saviour nor Lord of human sexuality - indeed, if he is not the one he cannot be the other. And if not of human sexuality, then of what exactly?

A-134 represents a curious but recognizable mixture of Pelagian and gnostic heresies. It is Pelagian because it pushes us back on our own resources for salvation; it is gnostic in so far as it attempts to locate salvation in the spirit alone, rendering what is done in the body an arbitrary matter; it is both, in that it renders inconsequential the offering up of the incarnate One. Not to put too fine a point on it, A-134 invites and demands, of those who would be consistent, worship and obedience not to "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" but to "the God that is in you."¹² Behind the Pelagian and gnostic tendencies we discover that fundamentally un-Christian premise about what the church is. The church is no longer understood to be grounded in the self-offering of Jesus Christ alone; nor is it a community that confesses his sole lordship. It is grounded in our offering as well as his, and our offering, like Cain's, is whatever we choose to make of it.¹³

Heresies, of course, like the poor, we have always with us; nor can any of us claim to be entirely free of heretical tendencies. Is it not, then, the charitable thing, in pointing out the heresy, to suggest that perhaps it is all a mistake, requiring for its correction only a little more effort at catechesis? There are, after all, three years until General Synod meets again. Why should anyone feel a need to speak, as I did in "Different Gods," of being utterly divided from the Anglican Church

of Canada in its present form? Is that not a form of intemperance, a vice listed by the scriptures alongside that of deviant sexual behaviour? Should we not simply make our complaint, or rather make our point, and then go home to our own churches to build up the saints?

Would that it were all a mistake, a misunderstanding and nothing more! No doubt with many individuals that is the case, and individuals must be treated with pastoral discretion. But things are different with authoritative bodies. General Synod has spoken. It has declared its mind, and its mind is not that of the church of Jesus Christ. By passing A-134, as amended, it has turned a second-order issue - Christian moral teaching on sexuality - into a first-order issue, a community-defining issue. Like Israel at Sinai, it has cast into the fire such gold as it has to hand. It has begun building its virility god, albeit one that is quite sterile, to go before it.

I do not make this charge lightly. I believe that what the Episcopalians and the Anglican Church of Canada have done, in their different ways - one by deed, the other by word affirming the deed - fits the archetypal unfaithfulness of those who at Sinai refused the situation that God has determined for his people. In the absence of their Master, who is alone with God in the secret times and places of the holy mountain, they have become impatient and gone a-whoring after the old deities. They have broken not only the tablets of the law, but denied the gospel that underwrites those tablets.¹⁴

By Douglas Farrow - Associate Professor of Christian Thought at McGill University, Montreal

¹¹ Jonathan Rauch's recent book, *Gay Marriage: Why It Is Good for Gays, Good for Straights, and Good for America* (Times Books, 2004), represents an exception, but in effect Rauch is asking us to reassert the marriage ideal by fundamentally altering our very concept of marriage. One cannot do both these things at once.

¹² The latter phrase is Schleiermacher's, from the final line of the Fifth Speech, and I do not think that I twist his meaning. The "time of caution and timidity" is

past! It is time to reassert the ancient wisdom of the divinity of the human spirit and to enter "into the one indivisible fellowship of the saints, which embraces all religions." (This is the path Ingham followed in *Mansions of the Spirit: The Gospel in a Multi-faith World*, Anglican Book Centre, 1997.)

¹³ The BAS is ambiguous here, as so often; its revised eucharistic prayers are right to present our self-offering as something that takes place in, with, and through Christ's redemptive offering, but wrong to imply (as some of the prefaces and peripheral prayers do) that they somehow comprise that offering.

¹⁴ See further my *Ascension and Ecclesia* (T. & T. Clark, 1999), chap. 6, though no mention is made there of the present crisis.

From here and there

a) We Can't Ignore the Moral Implications of Human Cloning -

Korean scientists recently announced that they cloned 30 embryos and extracted stem cells from one of the clones. Scientists everywhere marveled at the possibilities of tinkering with the raw material of life. Far less consideration seems to be given to the moral implications of creating life simply to destroy it. Each embryo these researchers harvest and dissect has a unique genetic code. That means they are using their scalpels to tear not at a random collection of cells, but at a genetically complete human being. This is no different from, say, abortion or murder. Science can never be allowed to supersede the sanctity of human life. On such matters, there can be no room for compromise. By **Armstrong Williams** - posted February 17, 2004 on www.lifenews.com.

b) **toady** n. - sycophant, obsequious hanger-on, servile flatterer, parasitic person

c) It's a troubled time for the Anglican Church. While the global Anglican Communion tears itself apart over same-sex relations, the Calgary [Alberta, Canada] Diocese is suffering some hard church closures.

And as a result of both these issues, one of the city's longest serving priests is

leaving that denomination.

Father Douglas Skoyles, who retired from St. John the Evangelist Church at the end of August, has now formally notified Calgary's Anglican Bishop Barry Hollowell that he is withdrawing from the Anglican Diocese of Calgary and (by extension) the Anglican Church of Canada.

In a letter to Hollowell, Skoyles said he is leaving the denomination he served for 35 years, partly because of the ACC General Synod's affirmation of the "integrity and sanctity" of same-sex relations, last May, and partly because of what he called Hollowell's "vicious and brutal actions" in closing three churches and firing two priests.

Last Sunday, a letter from Hollowell was released to Calgary's Anglican churches, announcing without warning the closing of three parishes. Two churches were rumoured to be next on the block.

"Parishes that cannot maintain canonical parochial status, nor meet the test of the vision and are unlikely to do so in the future will be closed," Hollowell wrote.

Skoyles said the bishop is not building a Christian community of love.

"This can be summed up in two words: money grab. This is all to pay for the bishop's pet project, Holy Trinity," Skoyles said.

"St. Gabriel's and All Saints supported themselves but the diocese owns the real estate, and Holy Trinity has a big mortgage. So who serves whom? Does the diocese serve the parish, or the parish, the diocese?"

Now that he is no longer a member of the Anglican Church of Canada (though he still considers himself part of the global Anglican Communion) Skoyles says only that he'll "serve the Lord in another jurisdiction," perhaps the small but growing off-shoot Anglican Catholic Church of Canada.

By **Joe Woodard** in the October 30, 2004 issue of the Calgary Herald

d) Don't worry about what people think - they don't do it very often.

e) A conscience is what hurts when all of you other parts feel so good.

f) Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.

g) If you look like your passport you probably need the trip.

h) Lagos - Africa's leading Anglican bishop congratulated United States President George W. Bush on his reelection and said his victory put to shame the liberal American churches which promote same-sex unions.

Nigeria's **Archbishop Peter Akinola** of Abuja, the Primate of the world's largest Anglican province and chairman of the Council of African Provinces of Africa, said US Episcopalians should learn from the poll results.

"By your victory at the polls, you have put to shame the revisionists and their agenda in the Church of Christ, and particularly in the Episcopal Church of the United States of America," Akinola said, in an open letter to Bush.

"I hope that by your election victory, these ordained men and women will feel rebuked and be forced to repent of this grievous sin of reputing the word of God, and to seek genuine restoration," he added.

Thanks to **Andrea Botha**

The coming

Shepherds watched on darkened hillside
Drowsy flocks, by stars' dim light.
Sky illumined by appearance
Of Angel's glow, that Christmas night.

Shepherds startled by the splendour;

Of God's Own Son were told the birth.
Sky is thronged with Host from Heaven,
Praising God, with Peace on Earth.

Shepherds leave their flocks on hillside;
Hasten down that Babe to seek.
Found Him in a lowly stable,
Snug in manger, fast asleep.

Shepherds kneel in adoration
Watched by Mary, Mother mild,
While Joseph, earthly father, proudly
Looks down on Mother and sleeping Child.

By **Helen E. Glover**

Taking the Cake

When my fiftieth birthday arrived in 1990, just before the publication of *Darwin on Trial*, my wife Kathie organized two surprise birthday parties, one in the morning for our Presbyterian church Bible study fellowship, and the other in the afternoon for my University of California law school faculty colleagues. Each party had its own specially decorated birthday cake. For the church group, the cartoon on the frosting was of the young David (me) slaying the giant Goliath (Darwinism).

Kathie thought that a more ironic theme would be appropriate for the secular professors, most of whom weren't sure what to make of my emerging notoriety as the scourge of Darwinism, and so the afternoon cake displayed Don Quixote tilting at windmills. Almost fifteen years later, those two birthday cakes still pose an unavoidable question about the prospects of the intelligent design movement. Are we slaying giants, or tilting at windmills?

Can we possibly succeed in slaying the gigantic error at which we have aimed our logical slingshot, and thereby liberate the people of God from their bondage to the Philistine philosophy of scientific naturalism? Sometimes the mission we have undertaken seems almost impossible, because the Darwinists are backed by the financial power of the

federal government and the major foundations, plus the cultural power of the academic elite and the national media.

Those are pretty mighty windmills, and they put out a lot of wind. Cultural mandarins with that kind of backing can misrepresent scientific challengers as religious fanatics yearning to impose a theocracy, and they can impose censorship and thought control while portraying themselves in their own newspapers, television programs, and classrooms as voices of reason standing up for religious liberty and honest science. In a word, the manipulators can get away with a lot of lying, and they take full advantage of the opportunity.

'The continual exploitation of the *Inherit the Wind* myth of the 1925 Scopes trial is an egregious example. The real Scopes trial was an ACLU publicity stunt, in which nobody's liberty or job was at stake. The famous play, which is regularly revived in theaters across America and even in Britain, converts this farce into a moving tale of vicious persecution by Christian ministers that bears little resemblance to what actually happened. The Hollywood movie of the play is still frequently shown to public school science classes for the purpose of teaching the students to associate evolution with freedom and divine creation with repression.

Darwinism's Failure

Dr. Goebbels would have been impressed to see what propaganda can accomplish even in a democracy, where citizens are legally free to protest. If a cultural elite has sufficient control of the news media and the textbooks, it can marginalize disfavored opinions by confining them in categories that effectively label them as unworthy of serious consideration.

The Darwinists have the media and the money on their side, but the challengers increasingly have the science. I wish we could resolve our dispute with the Darwinists by scientific experiments, rather than having to spend most of our energies and resources battling to escape

from a pejorative stereotype. In fact, the experiments have been done, and they show that, despite more than a century of prodigious efforts, no natural mechanism capable of producing significant biological transformations has ever been observed. After all the desperate efforts to confirm Darwin's theory, the record of failure is strong evidence that no such mechanism exists.

This is not surprising, once one understands that such a mechanism would need to accomplish not just change, but information creation on a colossal scale. Biologists who believe that the Darwinian mechanism can account for the extreme complexity and diversity of life hold that belief not because of what they have observed in their microscopes and in their experiments, but in spite of everything they know of biology from empirical observation and testing.

Fifty years ago, biologists and chemists confidently expected that newly discovered evidence would fix any deficiencies in the Darwinian model of evolution. If the theory were true, that probably would have happened. Instead, the Darwinists are losing some of their best textbook examples, including the fraudulent drawings of embryonic similarities and the staged photographs of moths on tree trunks. When new discoveries are made - like the recent discovery that non-coding regions of DNA are not "junk," as Darwinists had assumed, but have important biological functions - they tend to expose new problems for the ruling theory or reveal that old problems remain unsolved.

I have on my desk an impressive collection of scientific articles by prominent biologists, titled *Origination of Organismal Form*. The Introduction describes organismal form as the "forgotten cause in evolutionary theory," which is a bit like saying that gravity is the forgotten cause in physics. The editors go on to describe many open questions, which amount in toto to an acknowledgment that nothing much is known about how the forms of organisms

originate. A perceptive critic observed long ago that "Darwin explained the *survival* of species but not the *arrival* of species."

Just about anything related to "origination" is still a mystery to those who derive their conclusions from scientific evidence rather than from materialist philosophy or "just so" storytelling. Honest evolutionary biologists who want to survive in the profession have to be sufficiently circumspect that they can describe the evidence accurately, while carefully avoiding saying anything so unmistakably anti-Darwinian that they risk being shunned as traitors to the tribe.

Writings that convey a message of overall skepticism are common in mainstream biology, but the authors try to put a vaguely Darwinian spin on their findings wherever they can. They are resentful if creationists or other unbelievers quote their admissions to score points against Darwinism, even when the quotations are accurate and in context. To be fingered as one who has aided the enemy is not good for one's career in biology. Edward Sisson in this issue has it right: Evolutionary biologists play the role of a hardball litigation firm that has taken on scientific naturalism as a client, and will do whatever it takes to win its case. When scientists become single-minded advocates for a holy cause, then what they produce is known as "junk science."

Darwinism's Demise

I am convinced that the factor that makes it extremely difficult to discredit Darwinism today is the very factor that ensures the theory's demise in the not very distant future. The crucial factor is that the cultural stakes are colossal. If Darwinism were to disappear tomorrow, experimental science would be unaffected, except insofar as the prestige of the ruling biologists might suffer so much that their funding would drop.

The importance of Darwinism is cultural, not scientific. The power of the Darwinian

myth over modernist minds is so complete that reasoning in all subjects, including law, literature, ethics, and sometimes even theology, has to start from the assumption that God is out of the picture. The prestige of most of the professors and pundits who have cognitive authority in our culture depends on the public's acquiescence in the materialist creation myth that Darwin is thought to have proved. That means that there are many clever and wealthy people who have an overwhelming interest in preserving the regnant creation story and demonizing its critics.

It also means that there are many clever and hungry people who have a motive for wanting to topple the ruling mythology and replace it with something that better fits their sense of what is ultimately real. When the hungry clever people finally understand their opportunity, Darwinism will join its cousins Marxism and Freudianism in the dustbin of intellectual history. Won't that take the cake?

This article, by **Phillip E. Johnson**, appeared in the July/August, 2004 issue of *Touchstone* - www.touchstonemag.com

The Twelve Days of Christmas

In the Winter issue of the magazine 'This England' I found a possible explanation for the much maligned carol, 'The Twelve Days of Christmas, giving it a religious connotation rather than the light-hearted one known to most of us:

Catechism Song

The Twelve Days of Christmas was an early underground protest song. It was one of the catechism songs to help young Roman Catholics learn their faith, the practice of which was banned in England from 1558 - 1829.

If the Latin version ends with 'paritur in aperto' it may suggest that all will be revealed when the persecution is finished. As we say: "It will all come out into the open".

In the song itself the True Love refers to God, while "me" is any baptised person. The "partridge in a pear tree" is God in the person of Jesus, the "two turtle doves" are the old and New Testaments, while "three French hens" represent Faith, Hope and Charity. "Four calling birds" are the four Gospels, while the "five gold rings" are the Pentateuch, the first five books of the old Testament.

The "six geese a-laying" are the six days of creation, while the "seven swans a-swimming" are the seven sacraments of the Catholic faith, with the "eight maids a-milking" representing the Beatitudes.

"Nine ladies dancing" are the nine fruits of the Holy Spirit. "Ten lords a-leaping are the Ten Commandments, while the eleven pipers piping" are the eleven faithful apostles.

Finally, the "twelve drummers drumming" are the twelve points of doctrine in the Apostles' Creed.

By **Helen E. Glover**

Bishop will continue focus on Abortion and Communion debate

St. Louis, MO (LifeNews.com) - A Catholic bishop who drew national attention and sparked an intense debate when he said pro-abortion Catholic politicians shouldn't receive communion has no plans to let up on his efforts even though the election year is over.

Archbishop Raymond L. Burke of St. Louis told the Catholic News Service in an interview that he expects the abortion-communion debate to continue. He told CNS that his outspoken position - which included a statement that he would refuse communion to pro-abortion presidential candidate John Kerry - has earned him criticism from detractors.

"It's funny because some people now

characterize me as a fundamentalist, or an extremist," Archbishop Burke said. "But these are questions that are at the very foundation of the life of our country. We just simply have to continue to address them," he added.

Burke later added to his position on abortion and the Christian sacrament with a letter to parishioners saying he thought it was inappropriate for faithful Catholics to vote for candidates who back abortion.

Despite the controversy, Archbishop Burke told CNS that the subject did not come up in recent meetings with the Pope and other Catholic leaders in a trip he took to the Vatican. "To be honest, no one has raised the question with me," he said.

Burke indicated he did not act with instructions from the Vatican, but on his own as a pastoral leader for Catholics in Missouri.

He told the Catholic News Service he was happy so many voters cast ballots with moral issues like abortion in mind. "That is encouraging to me. It is also a great challenge, because now it falls to the church and to other moral leaders to continue to raise these questions, to write about them, to engage in civic discourse so that they continue to have that priority," Burke said.

The nation's Catholic bishops met over the summer to debate the abortion-communion issue and decided to allow individual bishops to decide on their own whether to allow or prohibit pro-abortion elected officials from taking the sacrament. After the decision, numerous bishops said pro-abortion politicians should not be given communion. Many also instructed churches within their jurisdiction to distribute statements about abortion and the elections encouraging churchgoers to vote pro-life.

By **Steven Ertelt**, *LifeNews.com Editor* - December 1, 2004

Mixed Signals

How We Talk About Unborn Children

If we want to change the way people think, talk, and act toward unwanted unborn children, we will need to change the way they think, talk, and act about wanted unborn children. Our approach to them either conveys the presence of a person or, well, of something less than a person. Take four simple examples.

First, even the best pro-life people will be heard saying, "I'm expecting a child." But if you are "expecting" someone, that person hasn't arrived yet. Our message is that the unborn child is already here, and is fully a person. A pregnant woman is already a mother who has a child. "I'm carrying a child" is more appropriate, and in counting how many children she has, the child she carries counts as one, not as a "half" or one "on the way."

This leads to the issue of naming the child. A pregnant mother is often asked if she has "picked out a name yet." In the Culture of Life, every person has a name. Delaying the practice of naming until birth only reinforces the idea that we don't have a person there until birth. A name should be chosen and used as soon as one discovers she is pregnant. The practical problem, of course, is not knowing the child's gender right away. I recommend, then, choosing two names. But the key is the timing of the decision. In other words, the names are definitively chosen by the time pregnancy is discovered. They are not just possible names. As soon as the gender is known, one of the two will stick.

Another very common practice reinforces the notion that a person exists only at birth. Notice how we celebrate birthdays, but do not celebrate Firstdays. Actually, the Culture of Life should be distinguished

by its custom of celebrating the day the person began to exist, which, of course, is nine months prior to one's birthday. True, we do not know the day with exact certitude, but that should not mean we ignore it altogether. We all existed, lived, and grew prior to our birthdays, and the celebration of a "Firstday" nine months before our birthday would send a meaningful message to our culture.

Finally, the sad reality of miscarriage is common. The Culture of Life recognizes that miscarriage is the loss of a child who is a whole person. It is not the loss of a concept or of a possibility, but of an actual child, who has a body. Where possible, of course, baptism is administered, even if conditionally, in case the child may still be alive. Every reasonable effort should be made, furthermore, to take the bodily remains of this child and commit them to the earth by a proper burial. Here we need the generous collaboration of cemeteries and Churches so that this practice becomes more common.

Babies in the womb are real, full persons. These four steps would be good ways to continue to waken our culture to that simple fact.

By **Father Frank Pavone** - the co-founder of *Priests for Life*

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