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**Dear Friend of Family & Life,**

We wish you the blessing of this holy season as we celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is the second Personal Update in digital form to be issued from Family & Life, and I trust that it is reaching you intact. Many of you receive the digital version of the Update over the Internet. To open the file of the Update, you have to use your computer or laptop, all of which may take time and limit where and when you can read it. If we had a connection to your smart phone, we could send the Update directly to you, allowing you to read it whenever you had a break. Please send your phone number to our office to obtain this immediate reception.

**St Patrick, Patron of Ireland**

There’s little doubt that Ireland’s new president, Catherine Connolly, hasn’t read St Patrick’s Confessions, judging by the errors in her broadcast for the public holiday on March 17. Patrick wasn’t a migrant when he came to Ireland; he was a slave, kidnapped by raiders from his comfortable family life in Wales, and sold to a landowner in the North of the country.

This effort to secularise the national patron is not surprising, considering the President’s record. She made no mention of God, Jesus Christ or Christian evangelisation. She ignored St Patrick’s preaching of the Gospel, leading to the establishment of the Church despite the opposition of local rulers and the druids of celtic mythology.

Connolly presented Patrick as a campaigner for migrants and refugees, a prototype of a social justice reformer, ignoring the evidence of the saint’s writing and of historians. If you wish to read her broadcast, somewhat sanitised by her staff, see: <https://president.ie/en/media-library/audio#st-patricks-day-message-from-president-catherine-connolly-2026>

**A Saint and a Preacher**

The *Confessions* reveal Patrick's defence of his preaching and justification of his missionary work of converting Ireland to the one true faith. He addresses the reader directly and we hear the voice of the man coming straight to us from the 5th Century, somewhere near 460 AD, not long before he died in 461.

He was a Christian bishop, schooled in the Scriptures in the late Roman Empire, and compelled by the Spirit to return to the land of his slavery and preach the Good News for his remaining years, despite opposition and threats to his life.

Ireland needs St Patrick's message as much today as at any other time, when so many appear to have lost the faith of their fathers, and chosen "spiritualities" or neo-paganism.

### **The 'Ghost' in the Seven Sacraments**

Before St Pius X's reform in 1903, most Catholics only received Holy Communion on rare occasions like Christmas and Easter, and only went to confession shortly before the occasion. The papal encouragement of frequent Holy Communion led to the frequency of confession, especially among the young.

The Sacrament of Penance, more commonly known as "confession", has all but disappeared in the lives of many Catholics, even among those who attend Sunday Mass. It is a ghost of what it was in my teenage years as a boarder at a Jesuit school. Saturday evening was a ritual to confess one's sins, and in many churches across the country long queues of penitents would wait patiently for the sacrament. Yet, after the Second Vatican Council, this sacrament went into freefall, and the queue to enter the confessional disappeared. Father had to take a book with him to the confessional to while away the time that was once consumed by giving absolution to penitents.

Just why did this happen? There was nothing in the reform of the liturgy, which suggested the sacrament should be rare; indeed, it barely received the two lines in *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, § 72. One cause was the increase of moral laxity in the Sixties at a time of cultural confusion, manifested in the Church after the Council's "opening" to the modern world.

The judgmental assumption of sinfulness and the hellfire sermons of preachers were retired, and replaced with a welcoming but ambiguous acceptance that "God loves us as we are." Gradually, God was recreated in the image and likeness of man, and endowed with such unconditional mercy that it didn't matter what you did, as long as you did it to satisfy what were once considered to be unruly desires and needs. Inevitably, Hell had to be closed down, and its long-standing incumbent was made homeless and was to be receive a new identity.

Another cause was the rise of a better educated laity, who were more focused on the social teaching of the Church and its efforts to solve the social problems of society than the constant self-examination of one's behaviour. No doubt, the hostile reception of Pope Paul VI's decision on contraception in *Humanae Vitae*, and the later revelations of clerical child abuse contributed to the neglect of regular confession.

Another post-conciliar change was the universal obligation of Friday abstinence from meat, a significant sign of a Catholic as well as a penance for one's sins. The bishops decided that Catholics need no longer practice this abstinence under the threat of grave sin, yet hoped that they would continue to abstain by free choice. Surely a most foolish decision! Give an inch and take a mile. Catholics decided that there was no need to confess their sins because they no longer felt guilty, and forgot about Friday abstinence.

Pope Francis' advocacy of confession was not just by word of mouth but by example. In 2014, after an address in St Peter's about the need for confession, he "went to confession" to a priest in full view of the congregation. "One does not go to confession", the Pope

explained, “as chastised people who must humble themselves, but as children who run to receive the Father’s embrace.”

In 2013, Francis spoke on 17 March, “God never ever tires of forgiving us! ‘Well Father, what is the problem?’ Well, the problem is that we ourselves tire, we do not want to ask, we grow weary of asking for forgiveness. He never tires of forgiving, but at times we get tired of asking for forgiveness.”

In his apostolic letter, he wrote *Evangelii Gaudium*, § 44, “I want to remind priests that the confessional must not be a torture chamber but rather an encounter with the Lord’s mercy which spurs us on to do our best. A small step, in the midst of great human limitations, can be more pleasing to God than a life which appears outwardly in order but moves through the day without confronting great difficulties. Everyone needs to be touched by the comfort and attraction of God’s saving love, which is mysteriously at work in each person, above and beyond their faults and failings.”

### **Pandora’s Box and a Trojan Horse**

The two synods on synodality in 2023 and 2024 did not impress Cardinal Gerhard Müller, who failed to see a guiding “spirit” but instead saw a manipulated process “to achieve the outcomes desired by those in charge of the workings of the Synod”. The whole synodal process operated within a climate of ambiguity, obfuscation, and outright error.

The Cardinal believed that the two central goals of the synodal process were to “eradicate the hierarchical structure of the Church as instituted by Christ, replacing it with a democratic model”, and to introduce the “inverted pyramid” as the model of the Synodal Church. In his own words:

“Our Lord personally gave authority to His Apostles and their successors in office to teach, to govern, and to sanctify the faithful, the entire People of God. The structure that Jesus established for His Church is hierarchical; and in this divinely-established order, the bishop, as the shepherd of his diocese, does not ‘follow’ his flock; moreover, his authority is not ‘dependent’ on ‘listening’ and ‘learning’ from those under his care.”

The second goal, presupposing the first, would overturn “the entire moral order by permitting individual (subjective) conscience to reign supreme over objective moral law”, leading to different teachings on family, marriage, chastity, homosexual inclination and activity”, and further the pro-LGBTQ+ agenda inside Church structures.

### **Nietzsche’s Delusion according to Cardinal Müller**

Bishop Barron asked a casual question: “*Why do you think American teenagers are interested in Nietzsche?*” Cardinal Ludwig Müller responded, “Spiritual delusion!” The fathers of this delusion, which afflicted Friedrich Nietzsche in his later years were Copernicus, Freud and Darwin.

The scientific theories of Copernicus caused a major change of focus on the spiritual and philosophical perception of Europeans in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Nicolaus Copernicus produced a new model of the universe, making the sun the centre rather than the earth, as Ptolemy had understood it in the pre-Christian world. From being at the centre of the universe and the focus of God’s attention, man existed on a tiny planet circling a star in a vast universe. We are no longer the focus of God’s attention. We don’t matter.

Sigmund Freud’s theory of human behaviour suggested that we are not masters of ourselves but rather victims of powerful unconscious urges and hidden conflicts in our psychological life. Freud’s new method of psychoanalysis promised to lead to a world of peace and harmony.

Charles Darwin's theory of evolution discovered that we are the same as animals, even if the highest form. The teaching of Genesis, "created in the image of God" was lost in the theory of evolution by natural selection.

These three scientists opened the door to an absent God who, even if He exists, is not bothered with us. We are animals, driven by biological urges and existing on an insignificant speck in an ever-expanding universe.

What did Nietzsche, the master of suspicion, perceive? He was a prophet and a victim. He recognized the collapse of the western understanding of the world, when belief in God was taken over by the rationalism of the Enlightenment, leading to today's nihilism and despair. He wanted to escape from it. So, "God is dead" is his conclusion, as he recognised the catastrophe of the loss of objective truth and objective morality. What fills the vacuum? The will of power when truth becomes the agenda that the strong can impose on the weak, even in the Church.

"Nietzsche did not celebrate the death of God — he announced it as a catastrophe for Western civilisation. When the Christian God dies, the whole architecture of objective truth and objective morality collapses. What fills the vacuum? The Will to Power. And we see this today: truth becomes whatever the stronger party can impose."

### **The Answer to Despair**

Müller's reply: "We must counter this Nietzscheanism with a discovery that it is a joy to exist — a great happening, a good happening. Nothing is better than your existence. You have an eternal meaning. You come out of nothing by the goodwill of God. All education ought to be directed at the experience of discovering you are accepted absolutely, because you are accepted by God; you are a creature of God; and the same God is saving you by the blood of his Son who took your flesh."

Barron asked, "Do you agree the Church is the most important voice battling the nihilism in our culture?" Müller answered, "The Church is a great counter-voice and therefore must not retreat into our privacy. We are so attacked because we are presenting the truth about Jesus Christ — and we are destroying their model for making money... They are making money from their delusions, by saying: you are nothing, and you have to accept our medicine and our drugs. Modern ideologies are only drugs to help you overcome this feeling that you are nothing."

"But if you are listening (to the Catholic Church), you don't need all these drugs; you don't need sex in the wrong sense; you are a partner of the Word of God. You are a son or a daughter of God... Those who listen to the voice of God need no substitutes: they possess a dignity that no ideology can give them. We are only slowly becoming aware that we live within a post-capitalistic machine that is subjecting all value to the pursuit of profit, whether it is the apocalyptic delusions of climate disaster, pornography, the pharmaceutical industry, or the psycho-dominance of advertising."

He continued with this warning: "Many people today — even inside the Church — live as functional Nietzscheans without knowing it. When doctrine or moral teaching is treated as an obstacle to 'pastoral accompaniment' or to 'inclusion,' and we are told we must simply override it because 'the Spirit is doing a new thing', that is the Will to Power dressed in theological language."

### **NEWS FROM AMERICA**

**[By Brendan Gleason]** As we have always stated here, this column concerns itself with President Donald Trump's pro-life actions, policies and statements only. All else, whether in domestic or foreign policy, is outside our scope and our conversation.

### **Abortion Giant Fined \$500,000**

In mid-March the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) fined Planned Parenthood of Illinois \$500,000 for violating civil rights laws by committing “unlawful discrimination and harassment against white employees”. The unlawful treatment included anti-white “training” sessions, race-based “affinity caucuses” and unequal working conditions.

Pro-life observers ironically recall that starting in 2020, Planned Parenthood received complaints by hundreds of its employees in 33 states that it discriminated against employees of minority groups in promotions, performance evaluations and overall treatment. The abortion giant then admitted “systemic racism”. The baby-killing entity also acknowledged that its founder, Margaret Sanger, was an out-and-out racist and eugenicist. whose programmes harmed the black community; and they removed her name from their flagship New York City facility.

### **Abortion Giant’s Victim Toll Rises**

Tragically, none of Planned Parenthood’s admissions of racism, as in the story above, have stopped it from targeting and slaying minority group mothers’ unborn babies.

And of course, the abortion giant is happy to abort babies of every race, every day throughout the year. The latest proof of that is found in its 2024-2025 annual report, released to little notice on Easter weekend 2026. The report covers Planned Parenthood’s deadly “services” committed during its fiscal year October 1, 2023 through September 30, 2024.

The abortion giant admits aborting 434,450 babies in that time, a death toll up a shocking 8 percent from the 402,230 infants whose lives it took in the fiscal year before. Planned Parenthood is acknowledging that it kills 1,190 babies every day. Pro-life scholar Michael New says the new total means Planned Parenthood kills almost 39 percent of babies aborted in the USA.

In addition to the above baby toll, Planned Parenthood says it gave out 542,958 “emergency contraception” kits, conducted 320,390 “telehealth” appointments and held 62,000 “virtual centres” in its 2023-2024 fiscal year. Clearly, countless thousands of those “services” ended in untraceable baby deaths. Unspeakable deaths, all pro-lifers would add.

### **David Daleiden Wins! Case Dismissed**

On April 1, pro-lifers across the USA rejoiced at the news that after a 10-year legal battle a judge in California had dropped the last charge against David Daleiden, the pro-life citizen journalist whose undercover videos in 2015 recorded Planned Parenthood and other officials discussing the lucrative trafficking of the organs of babies the abortion giant had aborted.

Back in January 2025, reports pro-life journalist Katherine Hamilton, Mr Daleiden and his colleague Sandra Merritt entered a deal in court in which a “no contest” pleas of theirs would be considered a misdemeanor rather than a felony and later would be termed a “not guilty” plea and then be dismissed and be deleted from the official record.

But on the eve of that closure of the case, Planned Parenthood and the National Abortion Federation intervened, vindictively wanting the court to brand Mr Daleiden a felon for life.

Fortunately, that last-minute intrusion into a case already decided did not sit well with San Francisco County Judge Brian Ferrall. He flatly turned down the abortion groups, even laughing out loud at the baselessness and absurdity of their attempt. He declared the case against Mr Daleiden be dismissed and expunged from the record, and the same for Sandra Merritt.

After the dismissal of the case, Mr Daleiden said that “soon” he would announce a new pro-life project. We will report on that for you as soon as the details become available.

### **Pro-Life Attorneys Speak Out**

Mr Daleiden’s attorney, Steve Cooley, who was district attorney for Los Angeles County 2000-2012, had this to say:

“In my five decades as an attorney, 40 years of which were as a prosecutor, I have never seen such a blatant exercise of selective investigation and vindictive prosecution. The California Attorneys General who initiated this case and pursued it for nearly ten years should be ashamed for weaponising their office to pursue people who were merely exposing illegality associated with the harvesting and sale of foetal body parts.

The pro-abortion California attorneys general Mr Cooley spoke of were none other than Kamala Harris, the failed 2024 Democrat presidential candidate; Xavier Becerra, Health and Human Services secretary under Joe Biden; and nationally prominent rising star Democrat Rob Bonta. The national Democrat Party had much invested in trying to discredit Mr Daleiden and his revelations about abortion groups and the sordid trade in aborted babies’ organs.

Pro-life observers remark that the California state government had never before criminally prosecuted any citizen journalists for making undercover recordings in the public’s interest. Sandra Merritt’s attorney Mat Staver said this: “Sandra Merritt did nothing wrong. She did the right thing by exposing the depravity of the abortion industry... Sandra deserves to be applauded and acclaimed for revealing these horrors and then enduring this selective and vindictive prosecution as a result. Murdering human babies to harvest their body parts for profit is evil and there is no excuse for Sandra’s political persecution.” (See: No Dead Yet, p. 20)

#### **Paul Ehrlich Has Died**

Paul Ehrlich (1932-2026) died March 13 at age 93. A biologist at Stanford University, he became a worldwide celebrity in 1968 with his *The Population Bomb*, a doomsday, scare-tactic, pop science book that became enormously influential. He almost single-handedly created the impossible-to-get-rid-of “overpopulation” myth that to this day plagues the world with the “there are too many people” notion. Never mind that it has been scientifically disproven over and over.

“Overpopulation” was only the first of Ehrlich’s false notions. The other was population control—his totalitarian proposal that governments must force people to stop having babies.

Incidentally, Ehrlich’s wife Anne co-wrote the book with him, but she was never credited, because the publisher demanded that the book list only one author.

Paul Ehrlich literally hated babies; in 2015 he called them garbage. After Anne gave birth to their daughter Lisa Marie, he subjected himself to a vasectomy. He hated normal families with children, too. And he hated the Catholic Church. That was because She loves babies and mums, follows God’s command, “Be fertile and multiply” (Genesis 1:28 and 9:1), and defends everyone’s God-given liberty and rights against the state and its encroachments upon them.

Ehrlich’s “Chicken Little” 1968 tome opened with this “the sky is falling” paragraph: “The battle to feed all of humanity is over. In the 1970's the world will undergo famines—hundreds of millions of people are going to starve to death in spite of any crash programmes embarked upon now. At this late date nothing can prevent a substantial increase in the world death rate... We can no longer afford to merely treat the symptoms of the cancer of population growth; the cancer itself must be cut out.”

Ehrlich came up with this solution to his utterly imaginary problem, even though he had just said it was too late for a solution: “We must have population control at home, hopefully through a system of incentives and penalties, but by compulsion if voluntary methods fail.”

Of course, not only pro-lifers but also scientists from many disciplines continue to point out that literally all of Ehrlich’s predictions such as the one above have failed abjectly.

One source of Ehrlich’s anti-life, “too many people” ideology was his incredibly illiterate misunderstanding of economic reality. He actually said there were too many people all trying to devour the same, finite economic pie—as if individuals are not creating new

sources of prosperity and wealth all the time. For example, Ehrlich completely ignored the tremendous advances in agriculture that were happening right in front of him, and which have led to large-scale elimination of hunger and poverty in most areas of the world in the last 70 years.

Contra Ehrlich, the economic pie is not fixed in size, it is expanding daily as it always has been when not stifled by the state. He wrote *The Population Bomb* without foreseeing the endless innovations that constantly arise out of human creativity and benefit all of mankind.

### **Ehrlich's Anti-Life Tidal Wave**

Coming as it did after the widespread introduction of the Pill and other birth control methods in the early 1960s, and in the midst of a specious but effective campaign to legalise aborting babies around the United States, Ehrlich's book found a receptive audience. People were only too ready to believe they could now fornicate without consequences—and that they were being virtuous in doing so, because by not having babies they were saving the world.

Ehrlich was a charlatan, but he unleashed incalculable harm upon the world. His anti-life mantras have led to today's rigid mentality of abortion, sterilisation, large-scale disintegration of marriage and the family, the mainstreaming of abnormal sex and the debasement of culture. Not only did he help cause those harms, but also the pro-death, totalitarian population control regimens of the dictatorial states of Communist China, India, Peru and many other countries.

Not only that, but today the world faces not "overpopulation" but depopulation, and that is due in no small measure to Ehrlich and his countless pro-death disciples around the world.

Even as late as 2023, Ehrlich was insisting that having babies was bad. He actually said, "Humanity is not sustainable." So much for Almighty God's plan for our creation, flourishing, redemption and salvation through Jesus Christ.

### **Ehrlich Was Anti-Catholic**

In 2014, Ehrlich opined, "Of course, the most unethical thing going on now with one of the monotheisms, Catholicism, is opposition to the use of contraception. The main source of that is the Vatican and its bishops." As if that were not enough, he added, "The pope and many of the bishops are one of the truly evil, regressive forces on the planet." To that, one pro-life wag has replied that to find a "truly evil, regressive force", Ehrlich could have just looked in the mirror.

### **Praying for Paul Ehrlich**

Regardless of all of the above, or actually because of it, pro-lifers agree we need to pray for Paul Ehrlich's soul, just as we all need to pray for each other and our eternal salvation.

### **Jesse Jackson Has Died**

Civil rights activist, politician and Baptist minister Jesse Jackson (1941-2026) died February 17 at age 84. In his early career he was strongly and eloquently pro-life; but eventually he became pro-abortion, along with almost all other Democrat politicians then and now.

He was born Jesse Burns, out of wedlock, but later was adopted by Charles Henry Jackson, who married his mum, Helen Burns. Jesse was a fine athlete in high school and college and became student body president at North Carolina A&T, a historically black college. In the early 1960s he joined civil rights sit-ins and protests, and began working for the civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr, who saw his potential and in 1965 promoted him within the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). Jackson later founded various groups, gained in prominence, and in 1984 and 1988 ran for president in the Democrat primary contests. While still pro-life in 1977, Jackson prophetically explained the right to life position:

"Psychiatrists, social workers and doctors often argue for abortion on the basis that the child will grow up mentally and emotionally scarred. But who of us is complete? If incompleteness were the criteri(on) for taking life, we would all be dead. If you can justify

abortion on the basis of emotional incompleteness, then your logic could also lead you to killing for other forms of incompleteness: blindness, crippledness [sic], old age.”

But by the 1980s, Jackson had jettisoned those pro-life convictions. After he died, though, pro-life leader Raimundo Rojas recalled that in 1973 Jackson told *Jet* magazine, “Abortion is genocide. Anything growing is living... If you got the thrill to set the baby in motion and you don’t have the will to protect it, you’re dishonest.”

Mr Rojas quoted Jackson as saying in 1977, “The name has changed, but the game remains the same”—meaning that modern-day defences for aborting babies mirror the 19<sup>th</sup>-century’s amoral, utilitarian defences for slaveholding. Also in 1977, Jackson said this:

“Politicians argue for abortion largely because they do not want to spend the necessary money to feed, clothe and educate more people. Here arguments for inconvenience and economic savings take precedence over arguments for human value and human life.”

Mr Rojas found Jesse Jackson’s most touching pro-life quote: “It takes three to make a baby: a man, a woman, and the Holy Spirit.” He, along with other pro-lifers, prays and hopes that in his final days, Jesse Jackson returned to the loving, noble pro-life truth of his youth. Amen.

### **Jesse Jackson Defended Terri Schiavo**

Bobby Schindler now defends vulnerable people from euthanasia, all in the name of his late sister Terri Schiavo, the woman living with brain damage but not in any way in “end of life” shape whom the jackals of the pro-death establishment pursued for years until they finally got their cruel wish in March 2005 and starved and dehydrated her to death over 13 days.

When Jesse Jackson died in February of this year, Bobby Schindler publicly praised and thanked him for coming to Terri’s defence when so many other politicians—and many in the national public—had abandoned her. Mr Jackson flew down to the hospice in Florida where Terri was being slowly done to death—and stood, prayed with and comforted her anguished and helpless parents Mary and Bob, her sister Suzanne and her brother Bobby.

Mr Jackson said, “I feel so passionate about this injustice being done, how unnecessary it is to deny her a feeding tube, water, not even ice to be used for her parched lips. This is a moral issue and it transcends politics and family disputes.” Terri’s mom said, “I wanted the Reverend Jackson here for moral support. I feel good with him here. Very strong. He gives me strength.”

Wesley J Smith, pro-life columnist, author and defender of vulnerable people targeted for euthanasia, has recounted Mr Jackson’s visit to the Schindler family and has written, “May Jackson’s righteousness in that just cause redound to his eternal benefit.” All pro-lifers can agree.

### **Lou Holtz, RIP**

Louis Leo Holtz (1937-2026) died at 89 on March 4. Best known as the head coach of the University of Notre Dame’s “Fighting Irish” American football team, where his squad won a national championship in 1988, and he compiled a record of 100-32-2 from 1986 to 1996, he was also a conscientious Catholic and a fearless, devoted and eloquent pro-life spokesman.

In private life after his coaching career, Mr Holtz defended unborn babies and their right to life. He never pulled his punches; during the 2020 presidential campaign, he aroused the ire of Catholic pro-aborts by accurately calling Democrat candidate Joe Biden and other Democrat politicians of his ilk “Catholics in name only” because they muddied moral and theological waters by trumpeting their Catholicism, even as they fiercely promoted aborting babies.

In one memorable pro-life address in 2017, Mr Holtz laid out his pro-life credo to a large gathering of Right to Life of Southwest Indiana members:

“And the baby has no vote, and that's why we're here! We are the vote for the baby. We've got to be the voice for the unborn—or nobody else will. Ladies and gentlemen, don't talk about pro-life; live it. Be proud of it. Understand, what we're doing is so critical.”

Mr Holtz's wife Beth died in 2020. Their four children, nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren survive him. His Mass of Christian Burial was at the Basilica of the Sacred Heart at the University of Notre Dame on a snowy March 16, with many of his former players present. He and Beth are buried at Cedar Grove Cemetery on Notre Dame's campus.

Mr Holtz was a daily Mass-goer, and he always said that going through life is about three things: doing the right things, doing things to the best of your ability and showing people that you care. America's pro-lifers agree that if anyone ever lived by that creed, Lou Holtz did. May he rest in peace. Amen.

### **Kermit Gosnell Has Died**

Professional baby-killer and drug dealer Kermit Gosnell (1941-2026) died in hospital March 1 outside State Correctional Institution-Smithfield in Huntingdon, Pennsylvania. He had been serving life imprisonment on counts of murdering three newborn babies at his filthy abortion mill in a poor, minority neighborhood in West Philadelphia. He and staffers under his direction were known to have killed hundreds of other newborns by severing their spinal cord.

Kermit Gosnell received his medical degree at Thomas Jefferson University in Philadelphia in 1966. He opened his abortion centre in 1972. He is said to have charged as much as \$3,000 to kill each late-term baby girl or boy, and to have made \$10,000-\$15,000 daily. His abortion facility was obviously a multi-million-dollar business.

Gosnell was also convicted of involuntary manslaughter in the death of Nepalese refugee Karnamaya Mongar, 41, who succumbed after being over-anaesthetised before an abortion.

Gosnell's serial killing came to light only after law enforcement agents raided his office because he was dealing controlled substances—in this case, Oxycontin and other painkillers in the hundreds of thousands, many of which ended up being peddled on the streets by other drug dealers. Gosnell received a sentence of 30 years for his drug crimes.

Pennsylvania officials responsible for inspecting health facilities had ignored his business operation for 15 years, resulting in conditions described as having constituted a garbage-strewn “house of horrors” of medical waste, bloodstained floors and furniture, cat faeces and stored containers of 47 aborted babies and those slain in infanticides.

Pennsylvania pro-life leader Maria Gallagher has noted, “As the grand jury stated, hair and nail salons received greater scrutiny than Gosnell's catastrophic abortion centre.”

### **Gosnell: the Aftermath**

Longtime pro-life leader (and then-Father) Frank Pavone attended Gosnell's trial. After the conviction, he asked Philadelphia's city medical examiner for the bodies of the 47 infant victims found stored in the mill. The city refused him, cremated the infants and buried their ashes in an unmarked grave. Frank Pavone located the grave and held a memorial there for the babies.

So favoured are abortionists in much of America, and so protected are they by anti-life politicians, that government authorities sometimes turn a blind eye to their depredations. For one example of favoritism and preferential treatment, recall that just before the presidential election in November 2024, Democrat candidate Kamala Harris thought it a winning tactic to have 10 (count 'em) abortionists appear onstage with her at a campaign rally. For another example, as pro-lifers point out, pro-aborts actually hold “Abortion Doctor Appreciation Day” fêtes.

Politicians are not the only ones who protect abortionists. Journalists do, too. Even after the horrific revelations about Gosnell, they have not been investigating his fellow abortionists. Authorities arrested Gosnell in 2010 and he was tried and convicted in 2013, but all the while

the news media, who after all are supposed to expose crimes without fear or favour, did their best to soften and bury news about him and his years-long, bloody crime spree.

Not only that, but the news media failed even to report Gosnell's death; it was pro-life investigative journalists who discovered the news, two weeks after he died.

It is not known whether Gosnell ever expressed remorse for the countless babies he killed. Pro-life activists pray for his soul—and warn that other Gosnells are out there and need to be unmasked.

### **Chuck Norris, RIP**

Carlos Ray “Chuck” Norris (1940-2026), US Air Force veteran, martial arts expert, actor and forthright pro-lifer, died March 10, nine days after his 86<sup>th</sup> birthday. He was beloved throughout the United States and much of the world for his friendly demeanor, good-guy image and movies and TV shows—which he good-naturedly said contained “action, not violence”. He sometimes had themes of the power of prayer and the occurrence of miracles in his long-running TV series, “Walker, Texas Ranger”.

Mr Norris had such star power that he was able to survive in Hollywood, even though he was publicly pro-life. In an op-ed piece poignantly entitled “I’m Voting for Those Not Yet Born” that ran on WorldNetDaily in October 2008, just before the unfortunate first election of the abortion enthusiast Barack H Obama, he explained and extolled our Declaration of Independence because it affirms everyone’s God-given right to life.

Mr Norris reminded his fellow Americans that the right to life is one of the Declaration’s “three specifically identified unalienable rights”. And he quoted the immortal words that Thomas Jefferson penned “to the Republicans of Washington County, Maryland”, on March 31, 1809: “The care of human life and happiness, and not their destruction, is the first and only legitimate object of good government.” Mr Norris challenged all of us to live up to Jefferson’s vision.

May Chuck Norris rest in peace and may his pro-life example inspire many. Amen.

### **Then and Now**

They sacrificed their sons and their daughters to demons. – Psalm 106 (105)

Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. – Luke 23: 34

More pro-life news from America for you next time. **God bless – Brendan**

### **The Most Appalling Atrocity in History**

Hitler’s profound hatred of Jews was not expressed in “one single, monumental moment of decision” but by a series of smaller actions and decisions, building up to the Holocaust after 1940. “Auschwitz did not fall from the sky ... evil comes step by step.”

If many German Jews clung to the illusion that they could survive under Hitler’s regime, the events of Kristallnacht on November 10, 1938 should have dispelled it. It was an organised pogrom across Germany and Austria to destroy synagogues, schools, shops and homes of Jews, followed by mass arrests of Jews, an orgy of looting and violence, leading to many deaths.

Between September 1939 and January 1945, Auschwitz-Birkenau was the place where over a million human beings were systematically murdered. It began its existence as a military barracks, then was converted into a prisoner of war camp for Poles and Russians. The few German SS put criminals in charge of the daily running of Auschwitz, which soon had a reputation for sadism, torture and murder.

From early 1942 until January 1945, freight trains brought close to a million Jews to Auschwitz from all over occupied Europe. Most of them were immediately gassed or would

die from slave labour and starvation, together with Poles, Romani, and Russian prisoners of war.

Auschwitz 1 became the centre for the administration offices and various workshops. In 1941, Auschwitz 2 was constructed as an extermination centre with four gas chambers and furnaces. Auschwitz 3 was a labour camp supplying workers for the vast I.G. Farben factory, making synthetic rubber, vital for the German army.

Today Auschwitz has become a tourist attraction, and clearly many of the visitors treat it as such. The hotels in nearby Krakow advertise, “Day Trips to Auschwitz. Back in your hotel in time for tea.” As one visitor noted, “Auschwitz was one of the most shattering and profound experiences of my life, yet I saw people taking photos of each other, eating crisps as if it were part of a holiday box-tick.”

### **Bureaucracy’s Industrialised Extermination**

There are three odd features about the Holocaust: first, the system of the six death camps in Poland was run on a shoestring; the rampage of the Einsatzgruppen’s “holocaust by bullets” was staffed by only 2,955 troops out of three million in the German armies at the Russian front, and each of the death camps had no more than 35 SS personnel.

Second, the Holocaust could not have been done without help from accomplices. The first accomplices were the so-called Trawniki, a village near Lublin, where thousands of Lithuanian volunteers and prisoners of war, were trained to become auxiliaries for the SS troops. Other helpers were the Jewish councils set up by the Nazis to organise the ghettos and ensure that Nazi regulations were observed. They were forced to hand over lists of Jews, and organise the deportations of their own people to the death camps. Lastly, the hated *kapos*, the convicts and criminals and who worked for the SS and the Trawniki to herd the new arrivals to the gas chambers, and then burn the corpses in the furnaces. The lowest of the low became the top prisoners in the camp.

A third feature was the Nazis’ elaborate efforts to disguise the purpose of the death camps from both the victims and the world outside the camps. The victims were met by “doctors in white coats advising the new arrivals” on health matters, while the gas chambers were advertised as “baths for disinfection” with shower heads which would expel the deadly Zyklon B gas. The secrecy of the death camps was the order of the day among the SS, who used various euphemisms in official documents, as when sending problem people for “special treatment” or “resettlement actions” in Auschwitz. For Jews especially, the phrase was the “final solution”.

In the death camps, the normal experience was to be murdered. The abnormal was to survive.

The two prisoners, Alfred Wetzler and Rudolf Vrba, stand alongside Anne Frank, Oskar Schindler and Primo Levi, those whose stories shaped our understanding of the Holocaust. When the two realised that Auschwitz could only continue if it remained secret, they managed to escape and reached Slovakia where they contacted a secret Jewish group. Their description of Auschwitz was the first full account of the murder centre to reach the western allies. Yet it was put aside in London and Washington, in part by prejudice but worse by disbelief. Why? A common response to terrible information is disbelief. The official Jewish Council in Budapest was such; it did not want it to be true, and decided to keep it secret—with deadly consequences for the Jews of Hungary.

### **The Mystery of Evil at Nuremberg**

In May 1945, the war ended, and the victorious Allies collected some 80 leaders of Nazi Germany and imprisoned them in the Palace Hotel in the state of Luxembourg. These men—government ministers, field marshals, Reichsleiters, and generals— had “strutted, jackbooted

and murdered” across the continent of Europe, from the island of Crete to Norway’s Lofoten Islands. A group photograph was taken and entitled the “Class of 1945”.

The allies had organized a tribunal to try the Nazi leaders for war crimes and the brutal invasions of other countries in Europe. The Nuremberg tribunal was a novelty, the like of which had never happened before, even at the end of World War One. The judges came from the US, Soviet Russia, Britain and France, and would sentence 11 men to execution in October 1946, and further trials would continue to 1949.

### **Normal or Deviant?**

How normal were the Nazis? The greatest misconception about the Nazis is that they were fundamentally deviant and transgressive, physically or mentally disabled. Although we typically think of the Nazis as barbarians, they were nothing of the kind. Many loved high culture and had modern, even progressive tastes. Hitler was a teetotaler and a vegetarian; Goebbels wrote a doctoral thesis on romantic drama. The stormtroopers’ gay leader Ernst Röhm collected engravings, adored Wagner and was an excellent pianist, as was the Nazi viceroy of Poland, Hans Frank. The foreign minister Joachim von Ribbentrop, often derided as a jumped-up champagne salesman, was a passionate violinist who learnt fluent French and competed in Canada’s national figure-skating championship. Even the most repulsive of all senior Nazis, the coarsely Jew-baiting Julius Streicher, loved nature, painted watercolours and wrote articles about Nordic fairytales.

Almost all came from middle-class backgrounds, and all were steeped in nationalist and conservative values. (It was very unusual for senior Nazis to have defected from the Social Democratic or Communist parties.) All were committed to an ideal of masculine comradeship, either because they had served in the trenches, or because they had just missed out. All were inured to violence. And, perhaps crucially, most had experienced some kind of loss —perhaps a failed business, or a disgraced parent, or simply the trauma of defeat in 1918.

### **Fast Cars and Cream Cakes**

Hitler was “susceptible to feminine charm”, like that of Eva Braun, and adored operas, films, fast cars and cream cakes. Himmler, too, was a recognisable type, a nerdy, pedantic control freak, obsessed with paganism and the occult, constantly hectoring his underlings about everything from the flies in their office buildings to the right way to make porridge (“only with water”).

To many Germans, Hitler’s message offered hope and redemption, stability, pride and self-respect after years of humiliation—war, revolution, inflations and depression. In the words of Luise Solmitz, here was “a man who fears nothing, knows no compromises, hindrances or difficulties”. Seven years later, however, her diaries told a different story: “Never has a people supported such a bad cause with such enthusiasm.”

After the war, many Nazis, even the defendants at the Nuremberg trials, refused to accept that they had done anything wrong. They really believed there were fighting for Hitler’s mission, “the future of the human race and its protection from the evil machinations of the Jews”.

For most Germans, the Nuremberg trials were just the “winners’ revenge”, and they asked, “Why should we suffer so much? What have done to deserve this?” Suddenly, everyone had a Jewish friend to whom they had given 10 pounds of potatoes, “at great risk to my life”. Everyone found a different story, and became posthumous good Samaritans.

To my generation, the Nuremberg Trials were both justified and, by and large, were just. It was organized within six months, a miracle when compared with today’s never-ending enquiries. Although Hitler, Himmler, Bormann and others escaped justice by suicide or flight, most of the key authors of the regime of terror were in the dock.

What are my reactions? Grief, horror and anger, and maybe shame that so many humans could take part in this murderous project with such enthusiasm.

### **Even Statistics is Threatened by Trans Gender**

Sir Anthony Finkelstein, head of City St George's, University of London, said it is essential that researchers retain the well-established classification of biological sex in their statistical data and analysis. He pointed out, "In recent years, there's been growing unease about recording sex as a basic variable, and pressure — sometimes explicit and sometimes in the background — to replace it with or collapse it into gender identity." In other words, "biological sex" is a category that is important to maintain. It matters because sex correlates strongly with capital, health, mortality, fertility, violence, incarceration, employment, and caring responsibilities."

Finkelstein said: "Gender identity may be an important subject study, but it's a different kind of variable. It's subjective, fluid and changeable but not a statistic."

Finkelstein quoted the unhappy episode of Ivan Kraval in Soviet Russia in 1937, which dramatically illustrates the dangers of political interference in the science of statistical data. [Ivan Kraval](#) was the head of the Central Statistics Department in the 1937 Census of Soviet Russia. When the results of the census showed that the growth of Russia's population was 8 million short of what Stalin had already stated, thanks in great part to the four million deaths by hunger in the *Holodomor*, the great Ukrainian man-made famine of 1932 to 1933, Josef Stalin was infuriated. He accused the officials of double-counting deaths, and had Kraval and other "enemies of the people" executed for distorting the census results.

The bureaucrats who survived had no intention of being shot, so they invalidated Kraval's census, reconfigured the numbers in the 1939 census to show a happy workers' paradise increasing in numbers, as required. There would be no further census until 1959 after Stalin had departed to another world.

Seemingly, the danger of interference hasn't gone away. The *Sullivan Review*, published in March last year, concluded that biological sex should be considered superior to gender identity, and the male/female binary retained in data collection. Needless to say, the trans opponents criticised the review for fuelling anti-trans discourse and associated it with efforts to marginalise trans and gender-diverse people from public life.

Finkelstein noted the "quiet disappearance of sex as a recorded variable, not because it lacks relevance, because it's become politically uncomfortable. It's a familiar pattern... We don't live in a system that executes mathematicians... but we do live in a system that rewards conformity, discourages awkward questions and quietly reshapes categories so that certain answers no longer appear."

"There is a long-term danger of governing with degraded data and discovering too late that we are not describing the world we inhabit... Society that can't better count itself will eventually lose itself and its ability to govern itself."

**Addendum:** Baroness Cass, the paediatrician who led a review of NHS child gender services, said that social media mislead children about the realities of transitioning, noting that social media had contributed to a rise in cases of gender dysphoria. Children were not given enough information about "what transition would really mean and how hard it would be", including intensive drug treatments and "sometimes quite brutal surgeries".

### **Has the Maternal Body become a Cash Cow?**

The Holy See's permanent observer at the UN, Archbishop Gabriele Caccia, called for a universal ban on surrogacy, which violates the rights and dignity of both the mother and child. It makes the child a "product", at times rejected for some flaw, and the mother a "service

provider”, whose only right is to get paid. It is an area of commercial activity where violence, coercion and exploitation are commonplace. While demand exceeds supply, one wonders if many wealthy customers who claim to be unable to conceive, just want to avoid the pain and inconvenience of a pregnancy.

The Church condemned surrogacy in the 1987 instruction, *Donum Vitae*, since it is contrary to the unity of married love of a man and a woman, and to the nature of procreation, depriving the child of being born by biological parents.

The fertility and surrogacy industry is an international network of businesses, supplying egg and sperm donors, embryos, sex selection, IVF and commercial surrogates for moneyed customers across the world. It is an industry projected to have a value of £150 billion by 2032. Most of the surrogates come from poor families in Africa, Asia and Latin America, often forced by their family to carry a child for wealthy customers.

While surrogacy is treated as a form of trafficking and outlawed in most of Europe, the safest way to obtain a baby in this way is to send an individual courier with a cryogenic container of frozen embryos to the foreign surrogate. Dublin is not considered a safe airport since luggage is x-rayed, which could damage an embryo.

One of the low-cost centres is Cyprus where clinics abound in Famagusta and Nicosia. Growing numbers of citizens of the UK and Ireland travel to Cyprus or Ukraine, where they obtain a baby, thanks to a surrogate, and then return to their own country where they obtain an adoption order from a family court, making them the legal parents, even though commercial surrogacy is banned in the UK and Ireland.

In March this year, the fourth Future Fertility Show took place since 2023 when the first show opened in Dublin. This is not surprising, since the 2024 law, *Health (Assisted Human Reproduction) Act*, made Ireland the first EU country to recognize commercial surrogacy as legal, as long as it is outside Ireland.

This law makes Ireland complicit in the trafficking and exploiting of women to provide babies for Irish couples. The Minister for Health, Stephen Donnelly, was responsible for this law but refused to reply to a warning from the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission. Section 8 of the Act will pre-authorise surrogacy arrangements and provide for post-birth parental orders in Irish courts for baby deals, even though payment for commercial surrogacy arrangements is forbidden in Ireland.

### **The ‘Great Satan’ and the ‘Little Satans’**

47 years ago in 1979, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini returned to Iran after 15 years of exile in France, and set up the Islamic Republic to replace the Imperial State of Iran and the disgraced Shah Muhammad Reza Pahlavi. Iran became a world advocate of Islamic jihad, terrorism and hatred of the West, expressed in the chant of “death to America, death to Britain and death to Israel”.

Iran succeeded in constructing proxies like Hamas in Gaza, Hezbollah in Lebanon and the Houthis in Yemen, and has long planned to make nuclear weapons to achieve its ambition, the total destruction of Israel. Since 1989 Khomeini’s successor, Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, has continued the repressive theocracy, especially against women. According to the UN, there were 901 executions in Iran during 2024.

He was also influenced by the writings of Sayyid Qutb, an Egyptian fundamentalist ideologue and proponent of Islamic statehood, some of whose work Khamenei translated to Persian from Arabic. “Khamenei was arrogant, literate, obdurate, revengeful, unable to accept mistakes, unwilling to make concessions and given to conspiracy theories”, according to Abbas Milani, a historian and director of Iranian studies at Stanford University. “He was constantly

at war with real and imaginary enemies. His policies led to Iran's isolation internationally and to sclerotic despotism at home."

Khamenei had a special hatred of Israel, denying the Holocaust's existence and suggesting that the Jewish state should be "wiped off the map". Khamenei once described Israel as a "cancerous tumour of a state" that "should be removed from the region".

A ruthless dictator who relied on brutal force rather than spiritual authority, Sayyid Ali Khamenei, supreme leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran, was born in Mashhad on April 19, 1939. He died during American and Israeli airstrikes in Teheran on February 28, 2026, aged 86.

Even though Christians and Jews are tolerated under the written constitution of Iran, their existence was always far from secure, and any effort to gain Muslim converts would be dicing with death. Another religious group remains the object of a special persecution by the regime, namely the Baha'is.

### **The Baha'is? Persecuted from Day One**

The Baha'i sect is an outgrowth of Islam, and has been persecuted since its beginning during the 1840s in what was then the kingdom of Persia. Both Persia and the Ottoman Empire refused to recognize the Baha'i faith as a new religion but treated it as an apostasy from Islam that should be exterminated. This was nowhere truer than in Iran under the despotic rule of Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1979 and his successor, Ayatollah Ali-Khamenei. In June 1983, 10 Baha'i women were tortured and then hanged.

The founder of the Baha'i sect was Siyyid Ali-Muhammad, an Iranian merchant, born in 1819 in Shiraz, and executed for heresy in 1850 in Tabriz with thousands of his followers. He compared himself to John the Baptist, the forerunner of Christ, and for this reason he took the name of the Bab, "the gateway" to the new religion. In 1844, he became convinced that he was the promised teacher, divinely inspired to proclaim a new faith and a "still to come greater" messenger from God. During the next few years, his writings describe a religion to bring peace and harmony throughout the world. The Bab's remains are housed in Haifa in northern Israel at the Shrine of the Bab on Mount Carmel. Today his followers number some seven to eight million.

Baha'ullah, born in 1817, of a noble and wealthy family, is the second founder of the Baha'i faith. At the age of 27, he accepted the Bab's abrogation of Islamic law. Six years later, when the Persian government launched a campaign to suppress the new religion, it exiled Baha'ullah to Bagdad, where he lived for 10 years and claimed to be the anointed one predicted by the Bab.

By this time the new faith was spreading rapidly across Persia, and the clerical enemies in Teheran continued to harass Baha'ullah in Iraq, asking the Ottoman authorities to remove him further away. He was taken to the capital, Constantinople where he continued his preaching until he was placed in house arrest for four months, and then removed to a harsh prison in Acre, a few miles north of Haifa in Ottoman Palestine.

After two years, his conditions eased, and he was permitted a measure of freedom until he died in 1892, aged 74. His son, Abdul-Baha, 1844-1921, succeeded his father, and remained in prison until his release in 1908. He continued the work of spreading Baha'i faith across the world, especially in the United States where he travelled several times until the World War I made this impossible. Apart from his voluminous writings, Abdul-Baha organized the Baha'i World Centre, the impressive headquarters of the Baha'i faith on Mount Carmel. He is considered the third founder of Baha'ism.

Both the Bab and Baha'ullah called into question the whole Shia religious structure with its rules, clerics and wealth. They proclaimed, contrary to Islam's dogma that the teaching

of the Prophet Muhammad was God's final revelation, that he was the next divinely-sent messenger and cancelled many laws of Islam, thereby incurring the fury of the clerical class.

The Baha'i faith is a distinct religion, and is based on the triple unity—of God, of religions, and of the human race. Since it is monotheistic, it belongs to the family of Abrahamic religions. It teaches that the progressive revelations of different religions are directed to the perfection of the human race, which would bring in a period of peace, equality and harmony to the world. All the religions of the world have value, since they are Manifestations of God, suited for the time and place. While each religion has its own special rules, which can be changed or cancelled, certain ethic values like love of our neighbour are universal and constant.

**Addendum:** In 1848 the Bab was examined by an Irish doctor, William Cormick, to ensure that he was of a sane mind to stand trial in a court. Dr Cormick had come to Persia from Kilkenny, and was living in Tabriz where he had married Tarmar, a member of an Armenian family. Ireland's National Baha'i Centre is on 24 Burlington Road, Dublin 4.

### **Scotland's *Assisted-Death Bill* Voted Down**

The Scottish version of the right to die, *Assisted Dying for Terminally Ill Adults (Scotland) Bill*, failed to become law after MSPs voted against it on St Patrick's feast day, March 17. The vote in the final stage of the bill was 57 for, 69 against. After two years of discussions and endless amendments, most MSPs decided that the measure was unsafe, if not entirely wrong.

While the bill's supporters claimed it was "safe and compassionate", a leading opponent of the bill noted, "However many safeguards we try to bring in, this type of bill can never be safe." Not wishing to end one's life should remain the norm. The big question about this norm is, if assisted death is made legal, then pressure builds up to make it the new norm for the vulnerable. There is much talk of choice, ignoring the fact that for many suffering patients the choice of effective palliative care does not exist.

What will the NHS do? Expand universal palliative care or fund the killing option, which is so much cheaper? What will happen to hospices, especially those who refuse to accept assisted suicide? The real issue is palliative care, required by the right to life of every individual. Assisted suicide is not a medical solution but an economic shortcut.

#### **'Mission Creep' or the 'Slippery Slope'**

Once legalized, this law would soon be shorn of its "protections" like Canada where the "only in cases where death is foreseeable" condition was dropped after five years. The number of Canadian people who have chosen assisted dying since 2016 is close to 100,000. The strict conditions for patients to choose assisted dying have dropped off, allowing many more to choose this alternative. Oddly enough, the Scottish bill did not require a defined period of time for the sick patient to live.

The risk of coercion is obvious to Audrey Nicol, an MSP. As a former police officer, she had wide experience of dealing with vulnerable people in the wider community, and this led her to change her support of the bill to opposition. "The reality is that some individuals will be subject to coercion and pressure, whether directly or indirectly and in ways which may be subtle and difficult to enunciate."

She was concerned that some "reasonable amendments" were rejected, and there has been little evidence that the bill once passed would be subject to a rigorous scrutiny after a few years. Once this controversial bill becomes law, it is wide open to expansion, since its supporters believe that assisted dying is a basic human right.

Kate Forbes, the deputy first minister, voted against the bill, explaining, "Doctors, psychiatrists, pharmacists and palliative care specialists — the people who would be tasked with implementing this — are asking us not to do it. These are the people on the front line of

compassion in Scotland, the people who have dedicated their lives and careers to helping people in life and in death. They think this bill is unsafe.” It is significant that the Royal College of Psychiatrists and the Royal Pharmaceutical Society have opposed the bill.

Insisting that “disabled people don’t have real choices in life”, she said it was “inconceivable to suggest the introduction of assisted dying is about choice... If this bill passes, in a world of inequality it will be easier to access help to die than to live.”

How would this bill change the nature of medicine? At present, its purpose is to heal or reduce suffering, neither of which welcomes assistance in a suicide. How will it affect the legal system where the norm is that suicide is a bad thing. How will it affect people who are poor, lonely, homeless, in an abusive relationship or chronically depressed? One can argue from individual examples but euthanasia’s advocates want it made available to everyone as a normal option.

The advocates of assisted death claim it is a right to choose in the name of freedom, and the health system has a duty to supply it with “assistance”. This is way outside personal freedom to kill oneself, and does not justify making doctors and nurses participate.

A second reason is to act in the name of mercy, relieving them of pain and suffering. However, this is precisely what the palliative care movement does, and in many cases succeeds, thereby making suicide a last resort, if ever. Yet, governments are slow to do anything about making palliative care universal for obvious reasons—it’s too expensive. True mercy in healthcare is not death.

### **One Medic who Resisted the Crazy Gender Ideology**

Dr Paul R McHugh, the former psychiatrist-in-chief for Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, had no doubt about three things: transgenderism is a “mental disorder” which merits appropriate treatment, sex change is “biologically impossible”, and that people who promote sexual reassignment surgery are collaborating with a delusionary patient and promoting a mental disorder.

When Dr McHugh became the chief psychiatrist at Johns Hopkins Hospital in 1975, Dr John Money’s pioneering sex-change clinic had been working since 1965. Dr McHugh soon realized the craziness of this project, which was invading America’s medical profession, and he became the leading voice in opposition to sex-change surgeries and the trans ideology. In 1979 he was instrumental in closing Money’s Gender Identity Clinic.

He attacked Money’s clinic because it was experimental, since nobody knew how his patients would benefit from the surgery, however much it was a promised solution to their problems. McHugh and his fellow workers found that the problems which the patients wanted to be solved did not happen. These problems were interpersonal relations, difficulties in their jobs, and family matters, which remained long after surgery and drugs.

In 2016, McHugh published a special report entitled, *Sexuality and Gender: Findings from the Biological and Psychological and Social Sciences*. One of his conclusions was about transgender’s key principle, namely that one’s sexual orientation is biologically fixed. This, wrote McHugh, has no support from the physical sciences. Needless to say, some of his colleagues were very unhappy and opposition wasn’t long in coming. Clearly, Dr McHugh had asked the wrong question and given an answer they didn’t like.

A 2011 study by the prestigious Karolinska Institute in Sweden followed 324 people who had sex-reassignment surgery for up to 30 years. The study revealed that about 10 years after having the surgery, the transgendered began to experience increasing mental difficulties. Most shockingly, their suicide mortality rose by a staggering almost 20-fold above the comparable non-transgender population. Clearly, an enormous suicide risk is attached to sex change surgery.

This year, the American Society of Plastic Surgeons advised its members to refuse to perform gender-change surgeries on children and adolescents before the age of 19. It based this position on the “low certainty” of any benefit for patients of irreversible surgery including breast and chest, genital, and facial features.

This recommendation follows the 2024 Cass Report in the UK and the 2025 report of the US Department of Health and Human Services, both of which called for restrictions on the use of puberty blockers and cross-sex hormones and so-called “gender-affirming care” for minors.

In early 2025 President Trump issued an executive order to stop state hospitals from giving dangerous drugs to children as well as surgeries on healthy parts of their bodies in the name of the transgender ideology.

In February this year, a New York court awarded \$2 million to Fox Varian, a 22-year old woman who had both breasts removed at the age of 16, which she claimed was a medical malpractice since she was not told of the risks and potential dangers. She was told that she was in the wrong body, and given the above irreversible surgery for her transition from female to male. About 30 similar cases are winding through the legal system.

**Addendum:** Ireland’s progressive politicians are transgender-friendly, as shown in the *Transgender Recognition Bill 2015*, one of the most extreme examples of such legislation in the world.

### **Cistercian Monks to Leave Mother House**

Soligny-la-Trappe is a township in Normandy, some 70 miles west of Paris, where the monastery of Notre-Dame de la Trappe is situated in a land of forests, streams and lakes. This is the mother house of the reformed Cistercian Order of the Strict Observance (OCSO), where Abbot Armand Jean le Bouthllier de Rancé introduced his reform in 1664, and gave its name to this religious order of monks and nuns. The Abbot’s reforms were harsh and penitential: silence, prayer, hard labour and a very simple diet.

Today, the 20 monks are considering leaving this ancient monastery, due to fewer vocations and the burden of managing a large building and its extensive farmland. They hope to find a more suitable place by 2028.

Bishop Barron of Winona-Rochester lamented that the monks are to leave this historic monastery, noting “the La Trappe abbey has survived the Black Death, the Hundred Years’ War, the Protestant Reformation, the French Revolution, and the two world wars of the 20th century. That this venerable monastery cannot find enough vocations to keep it alive is, in my judgment, a sign of the spiritual disaster that has befallen Europe in the last hundred years: an ideological secularism that is rotting the soul of the West.”

### **Norwegian and Cistercian**

Pope Leo appointed Bishop Erik Varden to be his leading preacher in the Lenten spiritual exercises at the Vatican. This man was born in 1974 in a non-practicing Lutheran family in Norway. During his studies at Cambridge University, he converted to Catholicism, and joined the Cistercian Abbey of Mount St Bernard in England. In 2019, Pope Francis appointed him to be the bishop of the Territorial Prelature of Trondheim in central Norway.

This city was formerly the see of the Archbishop of Nidaros, who was driven out when the Lutheran Reformation was imposed on Norway in 1537. Catholic missionaries appeared in Norway in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and a Catholic parish was established in Trondheim in 1872. In 1931, Norway was divided into three Missionary Districts, one of which became the Trondheim Prelature. Today, Trondheim has its own cathedral, dedicated to St Olav, the warrior king and patron saint of Norway. The new bishop also has jurisdiction over the northern Territorial Prelature of Tromsø, presumably until another bishop is found.

Norway was late becoming Christian around the year 1000, after King Olaf II succeeded in bringing the population to the baptismal font, and the country became part of the Catholic world. However, in 1537, the Lutheran reformation expelled the clergy who refused to convert to the king's new religion. Since then, the Lutheran Church of Norway has been the state church and today most Norwegians belong to it, even though religious practice is a mere five percent of its membership and one of the lowest among Christian churches.

Three centuries after the Reformation, Catholic missionaries were active in Norway in the 1840s, when a law of religious toleration was passed in Norway's parliament in 1843. The constitutional ban on religious orders was lifted in 1897, allowing several monasteries and convents to be founded. Today, Catholics are said to be around five percent of the population, numbering some 230,000, most of them migrants, born outside Norway and who arrived after the Second World War.

### **The Holy Kingdom celebrates its Martyrs**

On December 13, the diocese of Jaén, not far from Malaga and Seville in the South of Spain, celebrated the beatification of 124 martyrs during the Civil War, which lasted from 1936 to 1939. Priests numbered 109, lay people 14 and one Poor Clare nun brought the number to 124. The total number of Catholics—clergy, religious and lay—who were murdered for their faith and recognized by the Church stands at 1, 254, and includes 11 canonised saints.

One of which is St Pedro Poveda, founder of the Teresian Institution of Education, and a priest of the Jaén diocese. In July 1936, after the Civil War had begun, he was singled out as a significant leader of the Church, and was executed in Madrid for being a priest and Catholic educator.

Bishop Sebastián Chico of Jaén wrote that the martyrs “were not heroes, humanly speaking, nor ideological fighters, nor casualties in a war for earthly interests” but rather men and women “marked by weakness and sin, like any of us, but who conquered evil in the last moment of their lives with the sole strength of an unwavering faith in Christ. Their only weapon was love.”

He also emphasised that “martyrdom is the supreme testimony of Christian hope”, because it tells us that “with the eloquence of their own lives, violence, hatred, or death do not have the last word.”

The diocese of Jaén is called the “Holy Kingdom”, the place of many saints and martyrs from Roman times. One saint is Potenciana, a humble woman who lived the life of a hermit beside the parish church in the Villanueva, and died in the early 16<sup>th</sup> century. She supported herself by weaving. After her death, she was venerated as a saint, and her remains were brought to the Villanueva church. During the Spanish Civil War, the Republicans destroyed this church and threw Potenciana's relics into the river Guadalquivir.

General Franco led the rebellion against the Republican government, which had fallen into the hands of the Popular Front, composed of Socialists, Marxists and anarchists, all of whom were strongly anti-Christian, and had no qualms about executing priests and burning churches.

While Franco had the support of Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy, his opponents had that of the Communist International, led by Josef Stalin, who hoped to make Spain another “workers' paradise”, and supplied the Republicans with arms and military personnel in return for the country's gold.

### **The UK's 'Missing Mothers'**

Why are more women finding it hard to have a baby? No doubt, there is more than one reason for this failure. Yes, we know that finding the right man, the demands of a career, the price of houses, and the cost of rearing a child all play a part in this disturbing development. In

the post-Sixties, feminist dogmas told women to make their career and their own desires all important, and ignore “toxic masculinity”. At the same time, the introduction of contraception and legal abortion allowed men to play the field or choose serial monogamy. Don’t forget the arrival of “soft parenting” and the rule to never say “No”. But hold on, there is more to come.

A think-tank’s report, *Baby Bust*, produced by the Centre for Social Justice, believes that some three million women between the ages of 16 and 45 will have no children, even though many of them want to become mothers. They are the “missing mothers”.

A new element in this report blames what it calls the prolonged adolescence of men into their twenties; either because they continue to live with their parents or go to university, where they are not bothered by the demands of earning an independent living, and grappling with the responsibilities of getting married and starting a family.

As the report notes, “In 21st-century Britain, adolescence now extends well into the early twenties. Nearly half of young people now go to university, delaying entry into the workplace, and shielding them from many of the responsibilities of the working world.” The average age of leaving home is 25; in the past, a man of that age would have been working for 10 years, be married and have children.

According to the Office of National Statistics, the birth rate of the UK has fallen to the lowest ever, 1.41 per woman of reproductive age, and this despite the influx of migrants in the past 25 years. This is well below the minimum 2.1 replacement rate to maintain the current population. Today, the average age of marriage is 31, compared to 22 in 1970.

The report lists a host of incentives to encourage young people to get married earlier, but indicates the need for a major change in government policies, which for decades addressed the problems of older people. The problems of younger people, especially women, were neglected, and little was done to address the falling birthrate and weakness of the family. In its campaign to get women working outside the home, they were told they had plenty of time to have children and should focus on their careers—surely a major deception!

### **Not Dead Yet**

Has Kamala Harris, aged 62, disappeared from the political scene for good, since her disastrous campaign against Trump in 2024? We hear otherwise that she is planning to run for the presidency in 2028, unless the Democrats can find a decent candidate.

Back in 2016 when Harris was the Attorney General of the state of California, she gave her support to Planned Parenthood’s civil case against David Daleiden, and for good reason. PP called her “a defender of reproductive rights and health care”, and gave her thousands of dollars for her re-election as Attorney General in 2014. Needless to say, she investigated Daleiden for his undercover videos of PP’s executives discussing the selling of aborted babies’ body parts for profit to research companies, and illegally sent a search party to his home to confiscate computers and forged documents.

In January 2025, Daleiden pleaded “no contest” to the charge of a felony when he illegally recorded the PP bosses discussing the prices of aborted babies. This decision ended the court case against him since 2016.

Federal law prohibits selling foetal tissue for profit, and Daleiden’s videos shocked the nation, even though official investigations failed to obtain enough evidence to act against PP. I believe that there is little doubt that PP and the research companies work together in a criminal enterprise.

“The abortion industry, led by Planned Parenthood, is a powerful special interest [group] in our country; they fight to silence reporting on their black market of aborted baby harvesting and the ongoing cover-up goes to the highest levels of our government”, Daleiden said.

### **The Autonomous ‘Catholic’ University**

The self-destruction of Notre Dame University, Indiana, in the US shows no sign of ceasing. The appointment of a well-known advocate of abortion to a senior post is one more step in this direction, started by Fr Theodore Hesburgh in the Land O’Lakes Declaration in 1967, stating the total academic “autonomy” from every outside influence, namely the Church, universal natural law and basic philosophy. A major supporter of Hesburgh was Archbishop Theodore McCarrick.

The local Bishop Kevin Roades expressed his “strong opposition” to the appointment of Susan Ostermann as the director of the Liu Institute for Asia and Asian Studies, and was followed by a number of other bishops, including the president of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops. Bishop Paprocki describe it as “scandalous” to appoint someone who has a “public record of radical advocacy” of abortion, which is incompatible with the Church’s mission. Add to those protests the resignation of two staff members, and a vocal group of pro-life students planning a protest march on the issue .

Despite these and other protests, president Fr Robert Dowd did not see the light for some time. The university refused to consider reversing its appointment, stating that Ostermann “is a highly regarded political scientist and legal scholar whose insightful research on regulatory compliance ... demonstrates the rigorous, interdisciplinary expertise required to lead the Liu Institute. Calling Ostermann a “deeply committed educator”, the school said she is “well prepared to expand the institute’s global partnerships and create impactful research opportunities that advance our dedication to serving as the preeminent global Catholic research institution.” The university stressed its “unwavering” commitment “to upholding the inherent dignity of the human person and the sanctity of life at every stage.” It is hard to understand how that is not a contradiction of terms. Can one be pro-life and pro-abortion at the same time?

Those who serve in leadership positions at Notre Dame do so with the clear understanding that their decision-making as leaders must be guided by and consistent with the university’s Catholic mission. Ostermann told the Register that her role at the school “is to support the diverse research of our scholars and students, not to advance a personal political agenda.” In fact, her agenda was quite clear, since she has linked the pro-life movement in the US to white supremacy and contempt for women.

At the end of February, Susan Ostermann declined the appointment to the Liu Institute for Asia and Asian Studies in the face of the backlash from bishops, recognised academics and student groups.

### **The Decriminalisation of Abortion in British Law**

In the UK, the notorious Clause 208 in the *Crime and Policing Bill*, added by the MP, Tonia Antoniazzi last year, is due to become law in the near future. The bill was passed in the House of Lords without any change to this clause. As noted in the Personal Update, no. 205, this clause decriminalises a self-administered abortion up to birth. As long as the unborn child is hers, a mother can consume an abortion drug and kill her baby up to birth without any disapproval of the law. As I wrote then, if this isn’t legalised infanticide, what is?

Under the existing abortion law, a woman who kills her unborn child after the 24<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy can be charged with a crime under the *Offences against the Person Act 1861*, and sent to prison. This happened in the case of Carla Foster, 44, who obtained drugs by the “pills by post” Covid scheme, and killed her 33-week baby in 2020. She was sentenced to 28 months in prison, which caused widespread indignation from the pro-abortion and feminist groups, and renewed demands for the reform of the 1967 Abortion law.

Thanks to that case, the law is due to be changed, removing cases like Carla Foster from police investigation, and opening the door to the death of newborn babies and coercion of

mothers by boyfriends or family. Will the law turn a blind eye to possible infanticide, coercion or a sex-selection abortion because they are reported as self-administered by the pregnant mother?

Another added amendment is to exonerate every women investigated for an illegal abortion since the *1861 Offences against the Person Act*, and pardon those found guilty and sent to prison. All cases of investigation will be deleted from the police records.

Both these changes remove any legal threat to women, and encourage late-term abortions, which even those supporting the right to abortion oppose as inhumane. It is also easy to predict how once the law is passed, an outcry will arise about how cruel it is to leave a woman to abort on her own, so the service of doctors and drugs will be decriminalised in turn. Is it not totally abhorrent that a full-term baby can be murdered by his or her mother?

**Addendum:** Since the US Food and Drug Administration in 2021 dispensed the need for an in-person visit to a doctor for a so-called “chemical abortion”, more women are suffering from “serious adverse events”, often needing a stay in a hospital. Many women feel they were swindled by the drug companies, which sold the drug as a minor and safe solution to an unwanted pregnancy. Today, mail-ordered Pills can be easily obtained by post in any state, even if they are illegal in the woman’s state. Nearly two in every three abortions are caused by chemical abortions. The dangers of this Pill are most serious for women who have an ectopic pregnancy, often a life-threatening condition. The in-person visit allowed the doctor to use a scan to determine the age of the baby and a possible ectopic pregnancy. These safeguards no longer exist, thanks to the Covid emergency. A phone call to a doctor is no substitute for an in-person visit.

### **The Sandie Peggie Case is not Finished**

Nurse Peggie won the case for harassment against the NHS Fife Health Board, and is still employed by the hospital but not working. Despite this important win, the tribunal denied her claims of sexual victimization and belief discrimination, and none of her accusations against Dr Upton was upheld. Ms Peggie’s solicitor, Margaret Gribbon, noted that “aspects of the judgment are hugely problematic for women, leaving the onus on them to object when their privacy, dignity and safety are violated, when men are given access to single sex spaces.”

Upton, who attended the tribunal with his wife, insisted, “There is no agreed definition of biological sex. It’s a nebulous dog whistle”, and added, “I am biologically female.” Supreme Court ruled in the case [For Women Scotland v the Scottish Ministers](#) that “sex” in the Equality Act 2010 refers to biological sex, that is observed at birth, and “woman” means a biological female. This clarified that female-only facilities could legally exclude all biological males including trans women. Sandie Peggie’s legal team were jubilant: “It confirmed what we’d said all along”, Gribbon says, “that Upton had no entitlement to be in female spaces.”

The judge concluded “permitting access based upon asserted gender rather than sex was an appropriate means to achieve the aim of an inclusive workplace environment.” Scotland cannot shake off the gender madness, and still houses trans women criminals in female jails. Scotland’s vast public workforce, some 22 percent, has been trained by Stonewall that gender identity is superior to biological sex. Employment judges are included in this crazy agency, and continue to support the rights of trans women over biologically-born women to single-sex spaces.

For Sandie Peggie the fight continues, and she has appealed Judge Kemp’s judgement to a higher court. She is also suing five hospital officials who turned against her and gave false evidence at the court. “Before this happened to me”, Sandie Peggie said, “I’d never heard of terms like ‘gender critical’. I was just a nurse doing my job. I can’t believe I’ve had to go

through all this just because I didn't want to undress in front of a man... A trans man is a woman. Trans women are not women.”

In sharp contrast, the Darlington nurses' judgment last month was a clear and almost total victory. Eight nurses at Darlington Memorial Hospital complained about a trans woman using their changing room, and went to court after the managers “penalised” them for complaining. The tribunal decided that the nurses had suffered discrimination, and condemned the managers' response to their complaints. It found their Health Trust Authority had “violated the dignity” of female staff by expecting them to change in front of a male nurse, creating a “hostile, humiliating and degrading environment”.

### **Finland's Suppression of Free Speech**

Paivi Rasanen is a grandmother, a medical doctor and a member of the Finnish Parliament since 1995. She first came under investigation in 2019, and was charged with a hate crime against homosexuals. After two unanimous decisions of her innocence, the state prosecutor did not surrender but pursued her to the Supreme Court, where she was found guilty. After seven years, she has ended up with a criminal conviction, a fine of €1,800, and a criminal record.

The state prosecutor charged her with a hate crime for a 2004 pamphlet she wrote on sexual morality, claiming that her interpretation of Saint Paul's letter to the Romans was a hate crime rather than the text itself. In 2022, the district court in Helsinki rejected the allegations of the prosecutor, and declared Rasanen innocent of any crime. However, the prosecutor appealed to the Court of Appeal, but again lost his case in 2023. Notwithstanding this, the prosecutor ignored widespread public disapproval and the waste of taxpayers' money, and appealed to the Supreme Court.

On March 26 this year, the five members of Finland's Supreme Court split in a 3-2 decision, which found Rasanen guilty of “an insult” to a group in a 2004 pamphlet. She has suffered hours of police interrogation, three criminal charges, three trials, and now a conviction for “hate speech”, expressed in the writing of her Christian faith.

The Supreme Court agreed that the pamphlet did not contain an incitement to violence or fomenting hatred, and her conduct was not offensive to any group, yet found her guilty of “hate speech” for calling homosexuality a “developmental disorder”, even though this definition is held by many experts.

Under the “hate speech” laws of Finland, introduced over 20 years ago, the government of the time made clear that there was a distinction between permitted speech and criminal speech. Yet when eleven judges could not agree where the dividing line exists, surely this law should be removed. If learned judges can't agree, this law was a mistake. If the police summon you for an interrogation about a comment in your blog or social media, what do you do? Apologise to all, remove the comment and make sure you never write on the topic again.

What this decision has shown is the state's power to decide what opinions are permitted and what should be suppressed. So much for free speech and religious freedom. It seems the real crime is the prosecution of Dr Rasanen.

### **Episcopal Assertion in Argentina**

In Argentina, Bishop José Larregain of Corrientes has declared that the marriage of two trans people was invalid and annulled in the eyes of the Church because it lacked the essential conditions for the sacrament of marriage.

The bishop explained that the matter and form of a marriage is the joining of a man and woman in marriage, the basic condition requiring that they are male and female, and are recognized as such, neither of which was present in this case. Self-identifying as a man or a

woman is not the reality of a male or female person. As we should know, the Church does not accept the possibility or morality of changing one's sex. Stop.

So, the marriage of these two people was invalid, null and void, based on the reality of the two parties (ontology) and the deceptive appearance of the two individuals (phenomenological). The confusion of Catholics and others following from this marriage is an added reason for the bishop's clarification. No doubt the priest of the parish who conducted the marriage ceremony has a few questions to answer.

### **Memory and Mission**

Catholicism must see in Orthodoxy's caution not as obstinacy but fidelity—the patient stewardship of the apostolic inheritance. The Orthodox emphasis on continuity with the Fathers of the Church is not fear of the modern world but reverence for the living memory of the Spirit's work in history. At a risk of overgeneralizing, we might say that Catholicism's key is mission, Orthodoxy with memory. Catholic adaptability without Orthodox depth risks superficiality; Orthodox rootedness without Catholic expansiveness risks stasis. Catholicism emphasizes the outward movement of mission: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations” (Matthew 28: 19). Orthodoxy emphasises the inward movement of the lover: “Abide in me, and I in you” (John 15: 4).

### **Female Deacons? Not Possible!**

A spokesman for the Vatican commission, instituted in 2022, studying the possibility of female deacons, reported that the current state of historical and theological research “excludes the possibility of proceeding” toward admitting women to the diaconate, a conclusion that slows momentum on one of the church's most debated questions while stopping short of a definitive No. Note the distinction between historical and doctrinal.

Norah O'Donnell asked if young girls would be able to become deacons “some day”. He answered, “No. If it is deacons with holy orders, No. But women have always had, I would say, the function of deaconesses without being deacons, right?”

### **Requiem in Pace**

We pray for the following friends and supporters of Family & Life who have died recently: Brigid Wall, Margaret Lunney, Andrew Cloke, Michael Madigan, Peggy Power, Patrick O'Sullivan, William Shinnick and William Fitzgerald.

Every month Fr O'Boyle offers the Holy Sacrifice of the Mass for the intentions of our supporters and the repose of the souls of our deceased donors as well as the members of the Eternal Friends

### **A Request for a Bequest**

Have you considered adding a bequest in your Will in favour of Family & Life? By remembering Family & Life in your Will with a bequest, your legacy will ensure that our work of bringing help to mothers and saving babies' lives will continue.

As you know, we remain committed to defending the right to life of the unborn child in the womb, and rebuilding a Culture of Life in a country where the law and fashionable opinion accept abortion as a human right for women.

To learn more about how a bequest can safeguard the work of Family & Life, or to avail of our Solicitor's free Wills Service, please call the office today.

### **The Importance of Standing Orders**

Is a standing order a possible gift for you? The amount of a regular gift to save babies is entirely up to you. Even a small monthly amount is more valuable than you might think. The amount of your monthly gift to save babies is entirely up to you, and you decide if it is to be monthly or every two months, and you may cancel it at any time. Even a small monthly

amount is more valuable than you might think. That's because Standing Orders help us to plan with certainty, and maintain our most vital baby saving activities, year in year out.

A number of your fellow Family & Life supporters already have monthly Standing Orders for **€20, €25, €50 and €100**. Others, whose material blessings allow, have pledged regular gifts of **€150 and €250**. Unlike our opponents we **don't** have a benefactor to bankroll our work, still less government grants. We do, however, have **you!** And for that we are eternally thankful because without your prayers and financial sacrifices, Family & Life would have closed its doors long ago.

God bless you and your family,

PS      **"...He has risen, as He said He would" (Mt. 28: 6)**. Our Christian Faith and our hope for eternal life rest on the glorious, dazzling truth that Jesus Christ did, literally, rise from the dead. It's a historical fact!

**But that historical event itself was just the beginning of the wonders that flow from the Resurrection.** That's because, St Paul says, the exact same Divine power that raised Our Lord is at work in our lives right at this moment (Eph 1: 20). Marvellous spiritual riches will flow into our lives if only we know how to tap them.

Now we can do that easily, thanks to *Arise: A 50-Day Journey into the Mystery of the Resurrection* by the gifted Catholic writer Laura Bedingfeld. Progressing through the Bible, each of its 50 brief chapters guides the reader in learning about and meditating upon a different, beautiful dimension of Christ's Resurrection and our own hoped-for resurrection. They're like

50 streams of grace nourishing your soul day by day, strengthening your faith, increasing your love of Our Lord, and helping you grow in the virtues you need for salvation.

### **Rivetting insights into the foundation of our Faith**

“If our faith and hope in resurrection are weak or vague”, the author cautions, “so will be our Christianity.” She shows us what “glimpses” in the Old Testament would’ve “disposed” the early Christians to welcome the truth of Christ’s Resurrection and our own. Likewise, she cites the New Testament verses that reveal how the same power that raised Him from the dead is at work in our lives “on a daily basis.”

The first chapters explore the ancient Hebrews’ vague beliefs about the afterlife and the fate of the dead. Reading the author’s accounts, it’s striking how the worldly people of those days manifested the same scorn for belief in the afterlife as their godless counterparts today.

With impressive research, she also reveals the seeds of belief in bodily resurrection, including that of Christ, hidden in relevant Hebrew and Greek words throughout the Old Testament. But despite those many prefigurations of Christ’s Resurrection, she says, that greatest of miracles was “something altogether unexpected and unfathomable, even by His closest disciples.”

### **Understand Christ’s Resurrection as never before**

The full, incredible reality of bodily resurrection was revealed on the first Easter when the God-Man burst forth from His tomb. The author explains that in the New Testament, the concept of resurrection is approached in three ways that “little by little” prepared Jesus’ disciples to believe and to live a new life in Him: (1) that resurrection awaits all people, (2) that it’s a miraculous expression of God’s power, and (3) that it “personally engages” Jesus Christ, “who is the Resurrection”.

In raising the widow’s son, Jairus’s daughter and Lazarus, Jesus illuminated many vital dimensions of our own resurrection, which the author guides the reader through. She highlights important truths hidden in the differences between Jesus’ Resurrection and His raising of Lazarus.

She explains, too, that our resurrection requires not just belief in Christ, but nourishment by Him in the Eucharist: “...he who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day” (Jn 6: 54). Rising on the Last Day will complete what already began with our receiving the Eucharist; we “need not wait until the hereafter to possess eternal life”, because we “already possess it on earth.”

In the most literal terms, Jesus told the disciples He would be crucified but would rise after three days, something they couldn’t understand. Faced with their incomprehension, Jesus performed His Transfiguration, a miracle rich in lessons about His Resurrection and theirs. Yet they remained clueless, especially when He said He would raise “this temple”—His Body—after three days.

### **Become a better apostle for Jesus day by day**

The author unearths clues about our own resurrection in the details of the Gospel narratives about Jesus’ Resurrection, clues that most of us have never noticed before. She also explores Jesus’ words about the Heavenly banquet that risen souls will enjoy, and why those words should make us examine our consciences. She relates, too, how our glorified, risen bodies will differ from their present state, whether marriage will persist in Heaven, the beautiful truths that Jesus presents to us in the Assumption and Coronation of our Blessed Mother Mary, and seemingly endless additional insights, facts and inspirations.

Not content to construct for us a strong scriptural and theological foundation for our belief in Christ's Resurrection, the author builds on that foundation with ways to be a witness to others about the truth and saving power of that miracle of all miracles. *Arise* is ideal for use by individual believers, study groups, educators and clergymen. It even provides study questions, a bibliography, a Scriptural index and a reading plan.

Family & Life highly recommends **Arise: A 50-Day Journey into the Mystery of the Resurrection**, Sophia Institute Press, paperback, available from your bookseller.