
BLESSED ARE THE LIFEMAKERS!



Confronted we all the paraphernalia of death spread before us by the media, we can feel like young Davids before giant Goliaths. However, our conviction is that life will triumph, in the end. Life will have the last word! Love is stronger than death! The words I write today, I would like them to be a tribute to all who promote life, in our midst. I have in mind all the organisations like Birthright, for young mothers-to-be, or Faith and light for the handicapped, or again the sheltered workshops for the physically and intellectually challenged, but I am also thinking of all those who work in our social services, in education, health services, and homes for the elderly. I am also thinking of those who spare no effort at different government levels, to support and foster child adoption, international cooperation, and every measure conducive to the welfare of all. To all of you I offer the profound words which Pope Paul VI left us, thirty-five years ago, in his acclaimed encyclical on the development of people; his words are still timely. "Another name for peace is development."

DEEP YEARNINGS

"Today we see men trying to secure a sure food supply, cures for diseases, and steady employment. We see them trying to eliminate every ill, to remove every obstacle which offends man's dignity. They are continually striving to exercise greater personal responsibility; to do more, learn more, and have more so that they might increase their personal worth. And yet, at the same time, a large number of them live amid conditions which frustrate these legitimate desires. In God's plan, every man is born to seek self-fulfillment, for every human life is called to some task by God. At birth a human being possesses certain aptitudes and abilities in germinal form, and these qualities are to be cultivated so that they may bear fruit. By developing these traits through formal education or personal effort, the individual works his way toward the goal set for him by the Creator. Endowed with intellect and free will, each man is responsible for his self-fulfillment even as he is for his salvation. He is helped, and sometimes hindered, by his teachers and those around him; yet whatever be the outside influences exerted on him, he is the chief architect of his own success or failure. Utilizing only his talent and willpower, each man can grow in humanity, enhance his personal worth, and perfect himself."

AWESOME!

In all my visits throughout the diocese I met countless people who are true "lifemakers". In thought and prayer I see all these people I meet on a daily basis, who dedicate themselves fully to caring for the weaker in our society. And what kindness I have met, in both volunteers and professionals: only unconditional love can be at the root of such kindness! They really have a way of relating to both mothers-to-be and new mothers! Such skill in caring for the newborn! Such liveliness, in the meetings with young mothers and future mothers. Such professional presence to our youth in difficulty, whether at school or juvenile court, in recreation centres and youth groups. The same admiration rises in me when I visit senior citizens' homes and convalescent homes. I cannot remain insensitive when I visit palliative or intensive care facilities in our hospitals. So much care and respect are given to the patients, however long their stay. There is something one cannot put his finger on, about these people who on a daily basis are present to our suffering brothers and sisters.

GOING FOR SOMETHING MORE

“Each man is also a member of society; hence he belongs to the community of man. It is not just certain individuals but all men who are called to further the development of human society as a whole. Civilizations spring up, flourish and die. As the waves of the sea gradually creep farther and farther in along the shoreline, so the human race inches its way forward through history. We are the heirs of earlier generations, and we reap benefits from the efforts of our contemporaries; we are under obligation to all men. Therefore we cannot disregard the welfare of those who will come after us to increase the human family. The reality of human solidarity brings us not only benefits but also obligations. Man's personal and collective fulfillment could be jeopardized if the proper scale of values were not maintained. The pursuit of life's necessities is quite legitimate; hence we are duty-bound to do the work which enables us to obtain them. This is what will guarantee man's authentic development – his transition from less than human conditions to truly human ones.”

LIFE IS WORTH LIVING!

It is thanks to a bit of hindsight that we can measure the results of such kindness. Just as it has taken time to measure the effort involved in developing college-level education in our milieu, it is the same with every group and organization dedicated to the protection and promotion of life. It will be up to the next generation to reap the harvest of what we have sown. Nevertheless, let us not be afraid to take every measure at our disposal to promote LIFE in our milieu.

AN IDEAL TO PURSUE

“What are less than human conditions? The material poverty of those who lack the bare necessities of life, and the moral poverty of those who are crushed under the weight of their own self-love; oppressive political structures resulting from the abuse of ownership or the improper exercise of power, from the exploitation of the worker or unjust transactions. What are truly human conditions? The rise from poverty to the acquisition of life's necessities; the elimination of social ills; broadening the horizons of knowledge; acquiring refinement and culture. From there one can go on to acquire a growing awareness of other people's dignity, a taste for the spirit of poverty, an active interest in the common good, and a desire for peace. Then man can acknowledge the highest values and God Himself, their author and end. Finally and above all, there is faith – God's gift to men of good will – and our loving unity in Christ, who calls all men to share God's life as sons of the living God, the Father of all men.”

+ François Thibodeau

+ François Thibodeau, C.J.M.
Bishop of Edmundston

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