

Pope Leo and the Crises Re Death Penalty.

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As I read the many online comments , and articles by orthodox catholics regarding Pope Leo's comments and his stance on life matters, I am beginning to think that he is in for a rough time. The same kind of time which Pope Francis experienced and by the same American groups and individuals. One such writer Darrick Taylor wrote on death penalty and I have to say that I disagree almost completely with comments made. My understanding is from my study of both Old Testament and New Testament, Gospels. (No, am not sola scriptura) I believe unconditionally in all our doctrines, beliefs, church, sacraments, Holy sacrifice of the Mass, the Blessed Virgin Mary, Mary's perpetual Virginity, Immaculate Conception, Papacy, the role and need for the pope etc. I believe in church teachings but I also believe but these have slowly developed in my understanding beginning with simply reading scriptures, reading books, pondering, asking "why" and "how"

I eventually and very very slowly discovered a book about catholic faith and began the journey which has last over 60 years. Moments of doubt. Moments of sin. Lightbulb moments which left me in awe of our God, and Jesus But the seed never left. I studied Catholicism and comparative religions and believe and have said publicly that our faith is the best and most authentic faith on earth and so decided to continue studying, practising, I wanted to continue further study than 2 MAs and other degrees but cancer and epilepsy and other serious health issues interfered but I continued to read and read, pray, listen to the Holy Spirit. For me study of scripture is my food.

As I have said for some time now, (even before Popes St John Paul II, Benedict, Francis and now Leo) regarding death penalty is that I cannot work for 30 years, helping to save miniscule size infants, after the union of sperm and ovum and the spark of light which is like an explosion of the universe and surrounds this fusion and then state and believe that execution, which is the same as abortion (intentional death) is legitimate. For me The glow surrounding and enfolding the new creation is the breath of God. From that instant, God is involved in the life of that infant. "You knitted me together in my mother's womb" (Ps 139:13) So that halo surrounding the fused sperm and ovum is the knitting together by God. And when we even consider intentional death, we reject God's presence and work in the life of the being. All beings. "Life"

It's not the action of the criminal, which is condoned, or even the crime which cries for justice, but legalised murder is "inadmissible" because "life" is the spark which embraces the life of man. God's breath. That glow surrounding fusion "In Him was light and the light was the light of men. Jesus (Jn 1:14) He gives light to all "men "in him. When we accept death by execution, then we accept (which we have-legally) abortion, execution, euthanasia, assisted suicide, even now transgender. This also intentional death (loss of meaning) of the creature are intentional murder. When we accept any of the above, in this writing death penalty then we say like Michael "who is like God" We take control of God's domain.

When we speak about death penalty and abortion and all the other reasons for intentional murder, in our decision made we negate "dignity" afforded to all human beings. Dignity which is the universal human gift from God. Dignity cannot be conditional. It's non-negotiable.

Today we understand dignity in a deeper way than past authors, Church Father, theologians. Cells were not always known about or understood, DNA was not always known and understood etc. As time and knowledge increases the Holy Spirit helps us to understand the many layers of scripture, for our own edification and the help of others who are seeking God. The Holy Spirit uses the language of the day so that those living in those days may understand the meaning. "How is it then that we understand him in our own tongue" (Acts 2:8). The Holy Spirit enlightens each generation and not only past generations which in some cases got it wrong.

Before the 2018 revision of CCC the Catholic Church permitted death penalty "if it was the only possible way to effectively defend human life and their rights." In his great understanding and the Mercy of God, HH Pope Francis revised the Catechism stating that the death penalty is "inadmissible." In these times there are methods which can safeguard society from the danger from criminal but also gives the criminal the time needed where he/she might convert and turn to God. The intentional killing whether by execution, abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, even transgender, are a violation not only of the human being's dignity and his right of return to the Father, repentance, but intrusion into God's own domain. And we lessen the connection we have with our brothers and sisters. Dismissing a human being's dignity makes of him/her a commodity. A "thing." His/her dignity is that which sets us apart from all other creation.

As an example, I will use the case of Cain and the murder of his brother. God didn't smite and kill him; he placed a mark on Cain which ensured his safety from possible murder by others who heard of Cain's act. From the very beginning God said no to intentional death. Lucifer/satan is the enemy of life and the father of death. He cannot create life because Jesus is that glow surrounding conception. That light which glows and surrounds every human, our world and all in it. But satan can produce death. God is Life, in the words of Jesus, "your father was murderer from the beginning" (Jn 8:44)

Dignity is not a time concept. It's not something that the early church, church fathers, saints, theologians conceived by themselves, but the Holy Spirit enlightened them to understand what it means, that is, that it is a divine gift and intrusion into this divine gift is an offence against God. His words "Thou shalt not kill" means that without any exception. The *Lex Talionis method* ceased with redemption. Forgiveness. Resurrection. Our world is now surrounded by murder caused by wickedness, but we don't have to add to it by legal killing because it's better to accept what was thought 300-500-800 years ago. Those theologians and saints knew better than it is thought. As previously stated, it's not a condoning of the crime committed, but a defence of dignity of the human being, even the one who Pope St John Paul II said "even in his darkest moments a human being never loses his Dignity" Further, Pope Francis, in *Fratelli Tutti* wanted to stress that dignity exists " *beyond all circumstances*" with this he called on all people to defend human dignity in every cultural context and every moment of human existence, regardless of physical, psychological, social or even moral deficiencies. The declaration strives to show that this is a universal truth that we are called to recognize as a fundamental condition for our societies to be truly just, peaceful, healthy and authentically human"

The church over time has reversed many beliefs including slavery, usury, now death penalty. It cannot change its stance on abortion, intentional death because if it does so, it tries to override God's command "thou shalt not kill" Its care for the poor. Its mandate to spread the

Gospel of life but in great humility and understanding it can change a belief which at some time thought to be right but with more clear knowledge acknowledges that it was wrong.

I have lived through 6 papacies and slowly I have seen the church become “the field hospital” (Pope Francis) the house of God, the Global tabernacle, tabernacle in the church as not a lustrous box His lovely Dwelling Place (Ps 84) tabernacle itself holds the body of Christ.

What the author mentioned above sounds very pharasaical. Pharisees were not bad/wicked people, but as can be seen throughout the Gospels they made life so hard for the people they were supposed to spiritually care for that it became too hard to believe in God. We see it in the beginning of Paul’s life as a Christian and his activities before his conversion. Good people but merciless.

I don’t want that. I believe my God is Mercy and my Church which is the Tent of Meeting. The field hospital is his tabernacle. It’s not a charade. (something false) That’s its mandate.

The Holy Father Pope Leo as other recent popes cannot do other than respect, speak, call for mercy for all, including those on death row. We must reject the *Lex Talionis method* and believe in the Gospel, Mercy even for the greatest sinners.