CODE OF THE CULTURE OF LIFE



1. Jesus, “the Life,” is to be the center of our lives, our families, and our parish.
2. Created at conception in the image and likeness of God to live with him forever, and redeemed by the Blood of Jesus, every human person—no matter how strong or weak or “productive”—has an immense, absolute, eternal dignity and is always a good. Human life and its dignity must be protected.
3. The conscience, the inner sanctuary where God speaks to the human person of his loving and life-giving plan, must be formed in the truth and reverenced by all.
4. Every human person fulfills himself or herself only by making a free and sincere gift of self to God and to others, as Jesus did. As the example of St. Maximilian Kolbe teaches, human life and the family are worthy even of a heroic and prolonged sacrificial gift of self.
5. The sexual act is to be a sacred exchange of love in which married couples express with their bodies the sincere gift of self, making themselves (including their fertility, if they are so blessed), fully present and available to one another and to God, whose will is to create human beings in no other setting.
6. Fertile married couples, amazed at the fact that they are the ones on whom God relies to assist in his work of creating new human beings, responsibly fulfill this sacred trust when they make use of none but natural methods of family planning in the context of ongoing co-discernment of God’s plan. Considering their own good, as well as the good of any children God has already entrusted to them, and the good of society, they continually seek to hear God in the sanctuary of conscience and to carry out his will with trust in his Providence.
7. Married couples not blessed with fertility foster a culture of life by their loving desire to procreate, especially when this desire, guided by conscience, prompts them to commit to serving life in any of a huge variety of other ways. Through their loving commitment to God and each other, God showers his love and life on the world, often in surprising ways.
8. We were created out of love to love and to be loved for our own sakes, and so love is the only proper and adequate way to treat any human person. Rather than a rival to defend oneself against, every human person is first and foremost a brother or sister to be supported.
9. Every human person enriches us by his or her very presence.
10. We were created to live in solidarity, especially with the weak, the forgotten, the suffering, and those in need.
11. The family (nuclear and extended) is the irreplaceable sanctuary in which different generations come together to help each other to grow according to God’s plan and each one’s unique place in the family. “The future of humanity passes through the family” and so all other human endeavors and policies must support and serve the family in fulfilling this mission. Through the family, God’s life and love cascade into the world.
12. The human person is more important than things. Being who we are and are called to be is of far greater importance than what we have; possessions are only of value to the extent that they help us or others to be who we are called to be.
13. The terminally ill and the dying are at a critical stage of life and have a right to our presence, love, support, and prayer as they prepare to surrender all and return to God. They are in God’s hands and the moment of death is to be left in his hands. All ordinary care, such as nutrition and hydration (in most cases), is to be provided to them.
14. Jesus, by suffering to save us, made it possible for all human suffering, endured out of love, to be for others and to do great good.
15. Our relationship with those who have died in Christ does not end with death. They are our brothers and sisters. They love us, help us with their prayers, and remind us to live with our hopes set on heaven, where they will welcome us home. Any power death once had to frighten us or rob humanity of its dignity is defeated by this truth.
16. Every human life is a splendid gift from God and is to be embraced and celebrated. Every human life is a wonder worthy of a pause of veneration and contemplation.
17. Those who have contributed to the culture of death, upon their conversion and healing, can be the most eloquent promoters of a culture of life.
18. Mary reminds us to turn to God and pray and fast for the flourishing of a culture of life, trusting that God will provide.