

## **RESPECT LIFE HOLY HOUR REFLECTION FOR JUNE, 2024: The Hound of Heaven and the Dignity of the Human Person**

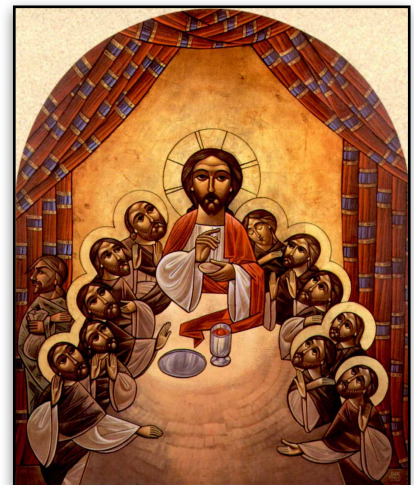
We often speak rather casually about “the dignity of the human person”. What does that expression mean? And from whence is that dignity derived?.

The story of creation in the Book of Genesis culminates in God creating man and woman in His image and likeness (Genesis 1:26), making humans unique in all of creation. It occurred to me that, after creating man and woman, God could have easily and disinterestingly allowed time to pass and the universe and mankind to move on willy nilly, the way many people claim. However, historical evidence demonstrates that that did not happen. Rather, God took a special interest in the creature created in His image and likeness. Throughout recorded history, God has been like ‘the hound from heaven’. Why is that? Could it be that in mankind He saw His image and that of His Son? Could it be that He wanted to share with us the same infinitely loving relationship He shared, through the Spirit, with His Son? Considering all of the times mankind has failed to “follow Him”, it is mind-boggling and humbling to see what the God of the universe has been willing to do to repair the damage wrought by mankind’s failures and to continue to mold us into His image and likeness. Let’s take a brief survey of some of the things He has done.

He led the Israelites out of slavery, fed them in the desert, provided them with prophets and duties (commandments) which would help them follow Him. However, laws, the words of the prophets and sacrifices of priests failed to bring mankind into the relationship for which God designed us. Much like Eve, we often chose to do things “our way”. Still, after each misstep, God found an ever-more creative and drastic way to bring us back into relationship with Him, eventually taking on our humanity and becoming one of us. And what did we do? We killed Him! Unsurprisingly, not even death could deter our God. Knowing that mankind would kill Him, He defeated sin and death by rising from the dead, giving mankind yet another fresh start. Could there be any love greater than that? Well, the answer to that question is a resounding, “Yes”!!!

Taking on our humanity and giving us a fresh start through His death and resurrection, was not enough. He knew our hearts all too well. He knew that we, like the Israelites, would continue to fail Him unless He took an even more drastic measure and found a way to dwell not only with us but WITHIN us!!! He found a way to DIVINIZE us!!! Through the power of the Holy Spirit, He created a Church, a priesthood and sacraments, most especially the Eucharist, so that throughout the rest of time, if we choose, we can consume Him, Body... Blood... Soul... and Divinity, making Him one in us and us, one in Him.

So getting back to the subject of human dignity... from whence is it derived? Certainly not from anything we have done!! It is pure gift from the fount of perfect love... from a God willing to die for us!!!



St. John Paul II, pray for us!  
June 4, 2024