

Bulletin Article for October 30, 2022

More on Impediments – Recognizing and understanding impediments in exchanges about life issues (euthanasia, physician assisted suicide, conscience rights, immigration, just wages, safe working conditions, racism, inclusion, transgenderism, desecration of the environment, deconstruction of the family, the matter of abortion, etc.) can help us navigate around them and enhance the exchanges. Two weeks ago we have talked about one kind of impediments—dissent pathologized. In the following, 3 other impediments to building a Culture of Life are highlighted. **1. *No Shared Universal Truths:*** The Church teaches there is a universal natural law by which each of us can apprehend the types of actions which are good and which are bad. That’s how, for example, we’re all able to understand that every member of the human family has intrinsic, equally shared dignity and that racism offends that dignity. However, many contest this teaching. For instance, one school says there are no universal truths, and only by chance my truth and yours may be the same. Another camp says only empirical knowledge is true knowledge: if you can’t see and measure it, demonstrate it by the scientific method, it can’t be known and hence can’t be accepted as a basis for discussion. **2. *Rejection of Logic & Consistency:*** Credible debate that doesn’t invoke faith claims requires logical coherence, meaning conclusions logically drawn from provable premises. However, as Matthew Petrussek (Associate Professor of Theology at Loyola Marymount in Los Angeles) observes, secular culture views reasoned argument as an “arbitrary and oppressive social construct” such that “even basic consistency is no longer a prerequisite for making moral and political arguments.” Personal feelings about behaviors related to life issues are now entitled to trump what logical analysis would otherwise conclude about their moral merit. **3. *Vocabulary’s Loss of Fixed Meaning:*** Archbishop Emeritus of Philadelphia Charles Chaput explains: “[T]he deeper problem, the one that’s crippling us, is that we use words like justice, rights, freedom and dignity without any commonly shared meaning to their content.” We speak the same language, but the words don’t mean the same thing. Our public discourse thus can never get down to what’s true and what isn’t. Words like “justice” have emotional throw-weight. Our important debates boil out to who can deploy the best words in the best way to get power. And the religious vision and convictions that once animated American life are no longer welcome at the discussion table. Think about it: what can “human rights” mean if science sees nothing transcendent in the human species, or if science doubts that a uniquely human “nature” even exists? Then there can be no inherent natural rights and hence no grounding of our whole political system.

Quote – “The mystery of the redemption of the human person is rooted in the loving involvement of God with human suffering. Hope is always possible. To those who care for the sick, the scene of the Cross provides a way of understanding that even when it seems that there is nothing more to do there remains much to do, because ‘remaining’ by the side of the sick is a sign of love and of the hope that it contains. Healed by Jesus, we become men and women called to proclaim his healing power and provide care for our neighbors, until the very end.” — USCCB Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities, “The Witness of the Good Samaritan: Palliative Care and Hospice.”

Our Prayer – For those nearing the end of life: May they receive care that respects their dignity and protects their lives as they place their hope in the promise of eternal life; *We pray to the Lord:*