

Psalm 139:13-16 God values all human life! Epiphany 3 Sanctity of Life Sunday January 23, 2011  
By Pastor Kenneth Mellon, Trinity Lutheran Church & School, 1268 Pleasant Valley Rd., West Bend, WI

Grace and peace from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen.  
God's Word to help us value life is written in Psalm 139:13-16  
These are God's Words. His Word is truth! Amen!

Dear Friends, in Christ,

Today is sanctity of life Sunday. It's a time to remember that God gave human life as a precious gift and each life should be highly valued. Many people in our nation, even some within certain churches, have taken a different view of life. They say that if an unborn child is not wanted, if he or she wasn't planned, if the child's birth will create problems, then the baby's life isn't important. They would say, terminate the pregnancy. But, God would say, You are ending a child's precious life. No matter how big or small, how young or old a person may be:

### **God values all human life!**

**We know that because, first, He made us.** God did not create us from the ground or from a rib, like with Adam and Eve. Yet, the Lord is just as much our Creator. The Bible states of God, "*You created my inmost being; You knit me together in my mother's womb.*" (v.13) Without God giving it, there would be no life. There would be no pregnancies. But God has a purpose for giving life on earth to each new generation. He has a reason for every human life to exist. How frustrated He must be when so many lives are taken by abortion or by murders on the streets. God is the giver of life and only He is the one who should take it.

God has made each of us unique. The Psalmist wrote, "*I praise you because I am fearfully and wonderfully made; your works are wonderful, I know that full well.*" (v.14) Each of us is distinct. Yet, God as our Creator highly prizes us. He knew our name before we were born. The Psalmist wrote, "*All the days ordained for me were written in Your book before one of them came to be.*" (v.16) He tenderly formed us thinking about our future. He planned and prepared for each new life. How can people not value the gift that God has given? All people should be glad. They should be in awe of God and of the intricacy of all life.

Sometimes people get it right. There is instances when people pull together to save life. Medical research tries to cure diseases. Rescue squads race to save an injured or ill person. There are instances like when the miners were trapped underground in Chile, and it took an international effort to get them out alive. God was blessing the efforts to save them, even as He was with the miners to keep them alive.

But sadly, sin has too often affected people's thinking. They want to be in charge of life rather than let God be in charge. They usurp a right to life that belongs to the Creator alone. Too often people take life during a robbery or innocent people die in the cross fire of wars or violent shoot-outs. And unborn children never get to see the light of day before they are murdered. The Bible describes God as furious over the taking of any human life. He said, "*Whoever sheds the blood of man, by man shall his blood be shed.*" (Genesis 9:6) God said to Cain after he killed Abel, "*The blood of you brother calls out to me from the ground*" (Genesis 4:10) for justice. Think how much angrier God is when the blood of over 53 million aborted babies cries out to Him for justice. It has been 38 years since abortion was legalized in our nation. How has God let our nation stand so long with such sin? "*He is patient, not wanting anyone to perish*" (2 Peter 3:9,) not even people who at this time have so little value for human life.

**Second, human life was precious enough to God that He sent His Son.** God could have sent Jesus from heaven as an adult. But, God had a different plan. *“God formed Me in the womb...” (Isaiah 49:5)* Isaiah wrote this, but it’s clearly the Jesus speaking. He was fearfully and wonderfully made inside Mary. Imagine if Mary had lived today. She was probably 16 and unmarried. Without knowing any other circumstances, many well-meaning people would tell her to get an abortion. But Mary knew of the child inside her and God’s reason for putting Him there. God provided for them until Jesus grew to be a man. All the days of His life were determined by God so that Jesus accomplished all that God wanted Him to do.

God had one purpose in mind when He sent Jesus, to bring precious lives to Him. We should be amazed that God is so patient with all sinners. He doesn’t strike them down immediately, but gives them opportunities to stop sinning and to turn to Jesus before the Day of Judgment. Yet, too often the world has used God’s extra time of grace to bring more harm to their lives and the lives of others. It grieves God to see what a mess the world is in. But, He remains determined to give people forgiveness and life.

God knew that saving human life would come at a price, the life of His own Son. Jesus said, *“The Son of Man ... came to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many.” (Matthew 20:28)* Jesus said, *“When I am lifted up (on the cross), I will draw all people to myself.” (John 12:32)* As we believe in Jesus, we are certain that our sins are forgiven and we have eternal life. The book of Hebrews describes that great blessing we have: *“You have come to... the heavenly Jerusalem, the city of the living God. You have come to thousands upon thousands of angels in joyful assembly, to the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven. You have come to God, the judge of all men, to the spirits of righteous men made perfect, to Jesus the mediator of a new covenant, and to the sprinkled blood that speaks a better word than the blood of Abel.” (Hebrews 12:22-24)* Truly God values human life to give us such blessings in Christ!

**Third, since Jesus has done so much to save life, we Christians are to value human life too.** Over the past months, floods have devastated many countries. As tragic as that must be for people, their lives have been devastated even more by their sins. A flood self-destruction is sweeping across our world. As more people grow up not knowing God’s Word, the disdain for human life will grow, and there will be more drug and alcohol abuse and many more harmful sins committed, like abortion. Since we value human life as God does, we know that the most important thing these people need is to know God’s saving truth.

How can we reach people before it is too late for them and before there is more loss of innocent human life? We pray that God gives us opportunities to speak with those who are troubled and who grieve over life that is lost. We can tell them that Jesus loves them, died to forgive them, and wants them to be with Him forever. We can support Lutherans for Life counseling centers and other counseling centers which help people in crisis situations. We want to show all people that God really does care about their lives, no matter who they are. Jesus’ forgiveness covers all sin. If only they will believe it and receive it!

We thank God that He so highly valued us that He sent Jesus to cover our sins and give us eternal life. None of us deserves such love, but God knew us before we were born and planned for us to be with Him through His Son. So celebrate life and spread the good news! Amen.