

A Message for Pro-Life Day 2018

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

On this year's Pro-Life Day, I wish to make an appeal to everyone that, when faced with the choice between life and death, we must choose life (c.f. Deuteronomy 30:19).

Influenced by the culture of death, society seems to think that death can resolve a lot of difficulties! When a person is blocked in an impasse, he may think of suicide. When a woman has an unexpected pregnancy, she may choose to have an abortion in order not to affect her future. A patient with terminal illness may request euthanasia, so as not to be a burden to the family.

However, death is by no means a solution to any problem. When a person commits suicide, not only is the problem not solved, the family may also suffer from psychological trauma, and even fall into a more difficult situation. Actually, there have been suicides and murders in the community sadly following the suicide of a family member. When a woman chooses abortion, she may think that the problem is solved once and for all. In fact, not only has she taken away a tiny human life, she herself may also suffer from grief of various severity, which may be unexpectedly serious. When faced with a terminal illness, some people may regard euthanasia as an option. In fact, euthanasia is intentional killing of patients, and is different from the decision to renounce aggressive medical treatment. "When death is clearly imminent and inevitable, one can in conscience refuse forms of treatment that would only secure a precarious and burdensome prolongation of life" (*Evangelium Vitae* 65), yet has no right to terminate life directly.

Loving the Lord your God, heeding his voice, holding fast to him; for that will mean life for you (Deuteronomy 30:20).

Unfortunately, the secularised society pushes Christian faith to the edge of life. It makes people live as if God does not exist. Without the light of faith, everything becomes confused, and people are prone to worries, fear and even despair. For only Jesus Christ is our true shepherd, only He knows how to come out from the valley of death, only His rod and His staff can comfort us, and only He is our hope, especially when we lose hope, or when we are facing death (Cf. *Spe Salvi* 6).

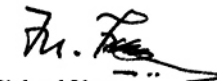
The Church respects and protects life at any stage. God's love impels us to go to anyone in need, showing them the mercy of the Father, giving hope to people in despair, comforting mothers who have lost their babies, relieving the worries of pregnant women, providing care and support to elderly people and terminally ill patients, and burying deceased fetuses.

Every Christian has an obligation to bring this hope to others. I appeal to all our brothers and sisters in the Lord, especially medical personnel, teachers and social workers, to bring the love of Christ to those in need in your respective fields, to cultivate in the next generation concerns for individuals and society, and to build a culture of life. We should be committed to a service of love, "to ensure to our neighbour that his or her life may be always defended and promoted, especially when it is weak or threatened" (*Evangelium Vitae* 77).



With my blessings for all your work and witnesses in promoting life, I remain

Sincerely yours in Christ,

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+Michael Yeung
Bishop of Hong Kong

3 May 2018
Feast of St Philip and St James