

Growing Old Deacon George Collins

God made us to grow old, for aging is a special source of His grace. Aging increases the dignity and fullness of our baptism. It is the fullness of our religious commitment to give glory to God. Even when there is a struggle which helps to develop the virtue of empathy and forbearance to inspire the young, the disheartened, the frustrated, the disillusioned and the least of the least. This inspires a more fruitful way of life, for these are the opportunities for all the faithful to be loving and generous as a community of faith.

Older age inevitably brings on increasingly physical weaknesses, but it also can bring on an increasing moral strength when it has a focus and a faith in God's plan of life. Without the older generations life would be incomplete, for there would be no roots to civilization or growth to history, nor faith in an eternal plan to guide them; only the doom of repeating life's mistakes endlessly. Older age can also bring about a stubbornness to try new ways in the face of new trials; but all must be seen in the light of giving glory to God, which the older generations can reinforce.

The fruit of aging is a wisdom that society cannot do without. It forms a balance to the rashness of youth. The wisdom of this age is a carnal concept of spurious wisdom. The possessors think of themselves wise, when they are foolish. They are technically advanced but morally and perceptually twisted. They lack the experience of the totality of life and the end value of their actions which only aging can bring. The ultimate experience of wisdom is love.

One of the highest form of love is empathy; the knowing and fulfilling of another's needs without a loss to their dignity. This can be understood of the crucifixion as God's total commitment to the love of mankind and His creation. Empathy can only come from the pain of a similar experience. If you have never experienced pain, you can not understand the fullness of empathy. If we have experienced pain, then the crucifixion makes sense as a source of love to which we can aspire to its heights through empathy. This develops a source of purpose in our lives to inspire others to greatness in the

sight of God. Euthanasia destroys this opportunity to greatness, which destroys life's integrity and destroys God's plan for life. Life is His greatest gift to us.

A dam that springs a small leak no longer has integrity; it is only a matter of time before it collapses. Our social moral fiber is very similar. We started to collapse with the legalizing of divorce. The collapse continued with the legalizing of abortion. Today we are faced with the possibility of legalizing euthanasia; the mandatory limit to family size and the scourge of forced sterilization. This is a contraceptive mentality that encourages people as sex objects to be abused, dehumanized and then discarded. Suicide has been glorified and encouraged by making a person feel guilty about their disability. [Do not be a burden on society even if your burden was caused by that very society. Your usefulness is at an end.] This is selfishness personified.

Did we not fight this very corruption of human dignity a mere seventy years ago in Europe under a different name? The beauty of aging is that we can recognize the same faults and consequences that proceed from this ideology. History repeats itself for the ignorant and they call it progress. The more things change, the more they stay the same.

When the president said we are no longer a Christian nation, unknowingly he was more right than wrong. We are promoting the culture of death as stated by Pope John Paul II. All this in the name of humanity and economy. We are supplanting man's plan of life for God's plan of life. Even many Christian lawmakers can't see the difference, for their allegiance is to politics; their new god. The resulting flood of disaster will destroy all human dignity and plunge the world into a new dark age.

Is this the use of freedom we are inculcating; the freedom to choose slavery and murder? We first destroy life by abortion; then we destroy daily life through contraception and sterilization, then we destroy the fulfillment of life through euthanasia. Some even destroy life in the name of God which is an abomination. We are being brainwashed to these distorted ideas of freedom. We seem to reject the blessings of fertility and life and freedom in favor of degradation and selfishness. This gives life a loss of purposefulness

and a uselessness to old age. Oh, death where is thy sting? We will certainly find out at the resurrection when it is too late.