

Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness and Protector of the Unborn

This outline is available for download at www.RespectLifeMissouri.org

Welcome & Opening Prayer for Life

Facilitator opens meeting with a “thank you” to all who have attended, introduction of new members, and a prayer. It is important that all participants feel welcomed and participate within their own comfort level.

Opening Prayer Prayer for Life

*Gracious and merciful Lord,
Thank you for the gift of our communion today,
and for the fellowship and education it provides.
Bless us as we share in the fundamental truth of our Catholic faith,
the gift and sanctity of all human life.
In the name of your Mother, the first tabernacle of the Body of Christ, we pray.*

*Hail Mary,
Full of grace...*

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Presentation -- Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness and Protector of the Unborn

NOTE: The Powerpoint presentation is available online for download.

- ❖ The presentation file has been updated into the same PDF format as this session outline so it should be just as easy to access. If no laptop/projector is available, a printout of individual slides can also be copied/printed and used as both a presentation and as a handout for participant notes.
- ❖ The content in the slide presentation is designed to be straight-forward but also to allow flexibility.
- ❖ The comprehensive nature of the written facilitator notes below has been provided to allow for diversity among groups, for an extended and on-going education, and for later reference on the topic. **Therefore, it is possible that all the content included in the facilitator notes will *not* be covered in a single session. Please review the information below for each slide and then create a presentation that is your own based on the needs of your particular group.**
- ❖ If necessary, the Respect Life Office can answer any questions or provide guidance on any topics in the slide deck. Please contact the Respect Life Office at (816) 756-1850 or francis@diocesksj.org if you cannot access the on-line files.

Slide 1 Introduction Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness and Protector of the Unborn

Slide 2 Topics for Discussion

- Understand the history of the Aztec people, their culture of death, and their conquest by the Spanish Conquistadors
- Discuss the miraculous story of Our Lady of Guadalupe and Saint Juan Diego
- Discover how Our Blessed Mother enabled Catholicism to spread throughout the Americas
- Learn how the events of almost 500 years ago are still impacting our world today
- Understand why Our Lady of Guadalupe is the Protector of the Unborn and learn what we can do to ensure everyone knows the message of our Blessed Mother

Slide 3 The Aztec Empire

Culture and History

In general, most Aztec culture and history is primarily known...

...from archaeological evidence as it is found in excavations such as that of the renowned Templo Mayor in Mexico City and many others.
...from indigenous bark paper codices.
...from eyewitness accounts by Spanish conquistadors such as Hernán Cortés and Bernal Díaz del Castillo.
...and especially from 16th and 17th century descriptions of Aztec culture and history written by Spanish clergymen and literate Aztecs in the Spanish or Nahuatl language, such as the famous Florentine Codex compiled by the Franciscan monk Bernardino de Sahagún with the help of indigenous Aztec informants.

The Aztec people were certain ethnic groups of central Mexico, particularly those groups who spoke the Nahuatl language and who dominated large parts of Mesoamerica in the 14th, 15th and 16th centuries.

From the 12th century Valley of Mexico was the core of Aztec civilization: here the capital city of Tenochtitlan, was built upon raised islets in Lake Texcoco. At its pinnacle Aztec culture had rich and complex mythological and religious traditions, as well as reached remarkable architectural and artistic accomplishments.

Although the form of government is often referred to as an empire, in fact most areas within the empire were organized as city-states.

Tribute and trade

Several pages from the Codex Mendoza list tributary towns along with the goods they supplied, which included not only luxuries such as feathers, adorned suits, and greenstone beads, but more practical goods such as cloth, firewood, and food. Tribute was usually paid twice or four times a year at differing times.

On the positive side, the empire promoted commerce and trade, and exotic goods from obsidian to bronze managed to reach the houses of both commoners and nobles. On the negative side, imperial tribute imposed a burden on commoner households, who had to increase their work to pay their share of tribute. Nobles, on the other hand, often made out well under imperial rule because of the indirect nature of imperial organization. The empire had to rely on local kings and nobles and offered them privileges for their help in maintaining order and keeping the tribute flowing.

In the commercial sector of the economy several types of money were in regular use. Small purchases were made with cacao beans, which had to be imported from lowland areas. In Aztec marketplaces, a small rabbit was worth 30 beans, a turkey egg cost 3 beans, and a tamal cost a single bean. For larger purchases, standardized lengths of cotton cloth called quachtli were used. There were different grades of quachtli, ranging in value from 65 to 300 cacao beans. One source stated that 20 quachtli could support a commoner for one year in Tenochtitlan. A man could also sell his own daughter as a servant slave or for future religious sacrifice, generally for around 500 to 700 beans for sale.

Mythology and Religion

Veneration of Huitzilopochtli, the personification of the sun and of war, was central to the religious, social and political practices of the Mexicas. Huitzilopochtli attained this central position after the founding of Tenochtitlan and the formation of the Mexica city-state society in the 14th century. Prior to this, Huitzilopochtli was associated primarily with hunting, presumably one of the important subsistence activities of the itinerant bands that would eventually become the Mexica.

According to myth, Huitzilopochtli directed the wanderers to found a city on the site where they would see an eagle devouring a snake perched on a fruit-bearing nopal cactus. (It was said that Huitzilopochtli killed his nephew, Cópil, and threw his heart on the lake. Huitzilopochtli honoured Cópil by causing a cactus to grow over Cópil's heart.) Legend has it that this is the site on which the Mexicas built their capital city of Tenochtitlan.

Human Sacrifice

For most people today, and for the European Catholics who first met the Aztecs, human sacrifice was the most notable feature of Aztec civilization. While human sacrifice was practiced throughout Mesoamerica, the Aztecs, if their own accounts are to be believed, brought this practice to an unprecedented level. For example, for the reconsecration of Great Pyramid of Tenochtitlan in 1487, the Aztecs reported sacrificed 2,000 prisoners over the course of four days. A similar consensus has developed on reports of cannibalism among the Aztecs.

Accounts by the Tlaxcaltecas, the primary enemy of the Aztecs at the time of the Spanish Conquest, show that at least some of them considered it an honor to be sacrificed. In one legend, the warrior Tlahuicole was freed by the Aztecs but eventually returned of his own volition to die in ritual sacrifice. Tlaxcala also practiced the human sacrifice of captured Aztec citizens.

The Cities

The capital city of the Aztec empire was Tenochtitlan, now the site of modern-day Mexico City. Built on a series of islets in Lake Texcoco, the city plan was based on a symmetrical layout that was divided into four city sections called *campans*. The city was interlaced with canals which were useful for transportation.

Tenochtitlan was built according to a fixed plan and centered on the ritual precinct, where the Great Pyramid of Tenochtitlan rose 50 m above the city. Houses were made of wood and loam, roofs were made of reed, although pyramids, temples and palaces were generally made of stone.

The Legacy

Most modern day Mexicans (and people of Mexican descent in other countries) are mestizos, of mixed indigenous and European Spanish ancestry. During the 16th century the racial composition of Mexico began to change from one that featured distinct indigenous (Mexicas and members of the many other Mexican indigenous groups) and immigrant (mostly Spanish) populations, to the population composed primarily of mestizos that is found in modern day Mexico.

The Nahuatl language is today spoken by 1.5 million people, mostly in mountainous areas in the states of central Mexico. Local dialects of Spanish, Mexican-Spanish generally, and the Spanish language worldwide have all been influenced, in varying degrees, by Nahuatl. Some Nahuatl words (most notably *chocolate* and *tomato*) have been borrowed through Spanish into other languages around the world.

Slide 4 The Spanish Conquistadors

The empire reached its height during Ahuitzotl's reign in 1486–1502. His successor, Moctezuma II had been *Hueyi Tlatoani* for 17 years when the Spaniards, led by Hernando Cortés, landed on the Gulf Coast in the spring of 1519. Despite some early battles between the two, Cortés allied himself with the Aztecs' long-time enemy, the Confederacy of Tlaxcala, and arrived at the gates of Tenochtitlan on November 8, 1519.

The Spaniards and their Tlaxcallan allies became increasingly dangerous and unwelcome guests in the capital city. In June, 1520, hostilities broke out, culminating in the massacre in the Main Temple and the death of Moctezuma II. The Spaniards fled the town on July 1. They and their native allies returned in the spring of 1521 to lay siege to Tenochtitlan, a battle that ended on August 13 with the destruction of the city. During this period the now crumbling empire went through a rapid line of ruler succession. After the death of Moctezuma II, the empire fell into the hands of severely weakened emperors before eventually being ruled by puppet rulers installed by the Spanish. In 1520–1521, an outbreak of smallpox (and then perhaps the plague) swept through the population of Tenochtitlan and was decisive in the fall of the city. It is estimated that between 10% and 50% of the population fell victim to this epidemic. Subsequently the Spanish founded the new settlement of Mexico City on the site of the ruined Aztec capital.

Slide 5 The Miracle of Our Lady of Guadalupe

On December 9th, 1531, the feast of the Immaculate Conception, Juan Diego, a recent convert to the Catholic faith, was walking to attend the early morning Mass in Mexico City. Passing by Tepeyac Hill he heard the beautiful singing of birds, seemingly from heaven. Looking to see where the celestial music was coming from, he suddenly heard a young woman's voice affectionately calling his name, "Juanito." Reaching the top of the hill, he saw a radiant woman clothed in splendid light - the Ever Virgin Holy Mary, Mother of God. She told Juan that she desired him to be her special messenger to the Bishop of Mexico City. Juan was to tell the bishop that Our Lady wanted a church to be built where she could manifest her Son and hear the petitions of her spiritual children.

After being put off by the bishop's servants, Juan was finally granted an audience with Franciscan Bishop Fray Juan Zumarraga. The bishop didn't initially believe Juan Diego and asked him to return another day. Secretly, the bishop had been invoking the intercession of the Mother of God for help. As we know, the Spaniards had recently conquered the native Aztec people and were treating them harshly. Very few were willing to abandon their pagan gods and embrace the religion of their new dictators. All of this weighed heavy on the heart of Bishop Zumarraga, whom history now knows as the "Protector of the Native People." He wondered if Juan Diego's story was the answer to his prayers.

Dejected, Juan returned to Tepeyac and asked Our Lady to use someone else more worthy than himself. She assured him that he was personally chosen to be her ambassador. The next day he returned to plead with the bishop. Though impressed by Juan's persistence, he was still unsure. He sent Juan to tell the Lady he needed a sign in order to know if it was truly her.

Upon hearing the bishop's request, Our Lady told Juan to return the next day and she would give him the sign he needed. Returning home, Juan found his uncle ill and close to death. Instead of returning the next day, Juan stayed home and took care of his ailing uncle. Early on December 12th, Juan rushed to Mexico City in order to get a priest to administer the last rites to his dying uncle. On his way he went around the back of Tepeyac Hill in order to avoid Our Lady whom he knew would surely understand.

But Our Lady met him anyway telling him not to worry, his uncle was already healed. He was to learn later that at that moment Our Lady had appeared to his uncle, who was restored to health. She urged Juan to go to the top of the hill where he would find flowers miraculously growing. Juan was astonished to see so many vibrant flowers during the frosty time of the year. He cut them and gathered them in his tilma (cloak). Our Lady arranged the flowers with her own hands, rolled up the tilma and ordered Juan not to unfurl his tilma until he was in the presence of the bishop.

After being harassed by the bishop's servants, Juan was finally brought in to see him. After recounting every detail of his conversation with Our Lady, he let down his tilma and the flowers fell to the floor. Juan was surprised when everyone in the

room also fell to the floor on their knees. The image of Our Lady had miraculously appeared on Juan's tilma! Repenting for his unbelief with abundant tears, Bishop Juan Zumarraga promised to build the shrine that Our Lady had requested.

Soon the church was built and the holy image transferred. The story spread like wildfire and people began to stream in to see the heavenly image and hear the story from Juan Diego. They learned that the mother of the Catholic God had appeared to one of their own kind and spoken to him in his native language. Many miracles started happening and in the following years some 10 million were baptized and converted to the Jesus Christ!

Pope John Paul II declared Blessed Juan Diego the greatest evangelist of all times.

Slide 6 The Blessed Virgin's Message to the Aztec People

The Aztecs had an elaborate, coherent symbolic system for making sense of their lives. When this was destroyed by the Spaniards, something new was needed to fill the void and make sense of New Spain...the image of Guadalupe served that purpose.

- Her hands are folded in supplication; her posture indicating that she is interceding for us at the throne of the God. The luminous light surrounding the Lady is reminiscent of the "woman clothed with the sun" of Revelation 12:1. The rays of the sun would also be recognized by the native people as a symbol of their highest god, Huitzilopochtli. Thus, the lady comes forth hiding but not extinguishing the power of the sun. She is now going to announce the God who is greater than their sun god.
- The Lady is standing upon the moon. Again, the symbolism is that of the woman of Revelation 12:1 who has the "moon under her feet." The moon for the Aztecs was the god of the night. By standing on the moon, she shows that she is more powerful than the god of darkness.
- The eyes of Our Lady of Guadalupe are looking down with humility and compassion. This was a sign to the native people that she was not a god since in their iconography the gods stare straight ahead with their eyes wide open.
- The angel supporting the Lady testifies to her royalty. To the Aztecs only kings, queens and other dignitaries would be carried on the shoulders of someone. The mantle of the Lady is blue-green or turquoise. To the native people, this was the color of the gods and of royalty. The stars on the Lady's mantle show that she comes from heaven.
- She appeared on December 12, 1531. The stars that she wore are the constellation of stars that appeared in the sky that day!
- The gold-encircled cross brooch under the neck of the Lady's robe is a symbol of sanctity and showed that her God was that of the Spanish Missionaries, Jesus Christ her son.
- The girdle or bow around her waist is a sign of her virginity, but it also has several other meanings. The bow appears as a four-petaled flower. To the native Indians this was the *nahui ollin*, the flower of the sun, a symbol of plenitude. For them, this was the symbol of creation and new life. The high position of the bow and the slight swelling of the abdomen show that the Lady is with child.

The miraculous image was to have a powerful influence on the advancement of the Church's mission in Mexico. In only seven years, from 1532 to 1538, more than eight million Indians were converted to Catholicism.

Here are a few of the loving terms given to Our Lady of Guadalupe by the converted Indians...

Virgencita -- "*The Little Virgin*"

La Morenita -- "*The Little Dark-Skinned Woman*"

La Guadalupana -- "*The Guadalupan*"

La Reina de México -- "*The Queen of Mexico*"

La Paloma Blanca -- "*The White Dove*"

La Emperatriz de las Américas -- "*The Empress of the Americas*"

Slide 7 That's Amazing!

Juan Diego's *tilma* is preserved behind bulletproof glass and hangs twenty-five feet above the main altar in the basilica. For more than 475 years the colors of the image have remained as bright as if they were painted yesterday, despite being exposed for more than 100 years following the apparition to humidity, smoke from church candles, and airborne salts.

Many consider it miraculous that the tilma has maintained its structural integrity over nearly 500 years, since replicas made with the same type of materials normally last only about 15 years before disintegrating. In addition to withstanding the elements, the tilma is said to have resisted a 1791 ammonia spill that made a considerable hole, which was reportedly repaired in two weeks with no external help.

In 1921, an anarchist placed an offering of flowers next to the image. A bomb hidden within the flowers exploded and destroyed parts of the interior of the shrine, including a crucifix that is now on display in the new basilica. The crucifix,

approximately 3 feet high, is bent backward in a deep arch and lies across a large cushion. Nevertheless, no harm came to the *tilma* and legend has it that the crucified Son protected his Mother

Photographers and ophthalmologists have reported images reflected in the eyes of the Virgin. In 1929 and 1951 photographers found a figure reflected in the Virgin's eyes; upon inspection they said that the reflection was tripled in what is called the Purkinje effect. This effect is commonly found in human eyes. The ophthalmologist Dr. Jose Aste Tonsmann later enlarged the image of the Virgin's eyes by 2500x magnification and said he saw not only the aforementioned single figure, but rather images of all the witnesses present when the *tilma* was shown to the Bishop in 1531. Tonsmann also reported seeing a small family—mother, father, and a group of children—in the center of the Virgin's eyes

Richard Kuhn, who received the 1938 Nobel Chemistry prize, is said to have analyzed a sample of the fabric in 1936 and said the tint on the fabric was not from a known mineral, vegetable, or animal source.

In 1979 Philip Serna Callahan studied the icon microscopically with infrared light and stated that portions of the face, hands, robe, and mantle appeared to have been painted in one step, with no sketches or corrections and no apparent brush strokes.

MEXICO CITY (California Catholic Daily, March 31, 2009) - A day before receiving the Planned Parenthood Federation of America's highest honor – the "Margaret Sanger Award" – U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton paid a visit to the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City, leaving a bouquet of white flowers "on behalf of the American people," and asking the basilica's rector, "Who painted it?" In response to Clinton's question, basilica rector Msgr. Diego Monroy responded, "God!"

Slide 8 The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe

The shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe, *La Villa*, is a place of extraordinary vitality and celebration. On major festival days such as the anniversary of the apparition on December 12th, the atmosphere of devotion created by the hundreds of thousands of pilgrims is truly electrifying.

The old Basilica was finished in 1709. It's slowly sinking into the ground. You can easily see that it is not level.

The framed *tilma* hangs above the main altar in the new *Basílica de Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*. Built between 1974 and 1976, the new Basilica is one of the most-visited religious sites in the world. Its seven front doors are an allusion to the seven gates of Celestial Jerusalem referred to by Christ. It has a circular floor plan so that the image of the Virgin can be seen from any point within the building. The interior of the new Basilica holds 20,000 people.

There are often 30 Masses offered during the course of a single day, each Mass for a different group of pilgrims as well as the general public.

Pope John Paul II loved Mexico, loved Our Lady of Guadalupe, and visited the country five times during his tenure as pope.

In one of the pictures here you can see the *Jardin del Tepeyac* (Tepeyac Garden) on the side of rocky Tepeyac Hill where Our Lady of Guadalupe appeared to Juan Diego.

Slide 9 The Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Old Basilica - Begun in 1695 and finished in 1709 this basilica succeeded the Chapel of Tepeyac as the shrine of the Image. However, because Mexico City is built on a lake bed the basilica has both settled and been subject to the ravages of the earthquakes experienced by the city. Today it is leaning considerably and has been closed for the safety of the public.

New Basilica, with its round Baptistry - Dedicated in 1976 the new basilica can hold 20,000 people and gives an unobstructed view of the Image and the altar to all. There are 1000 subterranean pillars to support the structure, but no internal ones. Between the altar and the wall upon which the Image hangs is a space where the people can pass on a conveyor belt system to view the Image above. Each day from 6 a.m. to 1 p.m. and from 4 p.m. to 8 p.m., the Holy Mass is celebrated each half hour for the sake of the pilgrims.

Statue - Standing adjacent to the Basilica, between the old and new one, is a statue of Pope John Paul II, dedicated in 1981 to celebrate the 450th anniversary of the apparitions and the first anniversary of the Pope's initial visit to the Shrine of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

Chapel of Tepeyac - On this site once stood the Aztec temple to Tonantzin, the venerated mother of the Aztec gods. It is here that the true Mother of God chose to appear to Juan Diego and supplant the idolatrous worship of the indigenous peoples with worship of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Father and the Holy Spirit. In this chapel the holy image initially was venerated, cared for by Juan Diego, who lived on the premises. Today only a replica hangs here, the original image is in the modern basilica.

Galleon - The masts of a ship were carried to the site in the 1700s, in fulfillment of a vow to build a shrine on Tepeyac if Our Lady would save the ship's crew from a tropical storm. The masts were carried on the backs of the sailors from Vera Cruz on the coast to Tepeyac and today are encased within the modern monument.

Capuchin Chapel - The parish church of the region, it has also suffered from sinking. It is believed that Juan Diego is buried on the site.

Chapel of the Well - Dedicated in 1777 this chapel is built over a sulphurous spring from pre-Columbian times, one that is reputed to have medicinal properties.

Chapel of the Indians - This first church on the site is especially frequented by native Americans.

Carillon - Completed in 1991 this bell and clock tower shows computerized images representing the four apparitions of Our Lady to Juan Diego, as a means of catechesis. Standing 76.5 feet tall, it can play 38 different chimes and 23 melodies.

Plaza of the Americas - A great open plaza permits the attendance of many hundreds of thousands beyond those who can enter the Basilica. On such occasions the front walls of the Basilica can be rolled aside permitting a view of the interior from the Plaza. Here often can be seen various peoples singing, dancing and exhibiting the culture and costumes of their regions for visitors - a testimony to the unity of the various indigenous peoples in the Catholic faith which has been accomplished by the Virgin of Guadalupe. Here also, as at other religious shrines in Latin countries, can be seen penitents completing the last stage of their journey to Our Lady on their knees.

Evangelization/Catechesis – Spreading Our Blessed Mother’s Pro-Life Message Outreach Planning

Slide 10 Spreading Our Blessed Mother’s Pro-Life Message

Mary's appearance put an end to the worship of stone gods and the ritual of human sacrifice. We pray for Mary's help today to bring an end to the human sacrifice of God's children through abortion and to convert non-believers.

Pope John Paul II visited the shrine in the course of his first journey outside Italy as Pope on January 31, 1979, and again when he beatified Juan Diego there on May 6, 1990. In 1992 he dedicated to Our Lady of Guadalupe a chapel within St. Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. At the request of the Special Assembly for the Americas of the Synod of Bishops, he named Our Lady of Guadalupe patron of the Americas on January 22, 1999 (with the result that her liturgical celebration had, throughout the Americas, the rank of solemnity), and visited the shrine again on the following day. On July 31, 2002, he canonized Juan Diego before a crowd of 12 million, and later that year included in the General Calendar of the Roman Rite, as optional memorials, the liturgical celebrations of Saint Juan Diego Cuauhtlatotzin (December 9) and Our Lady of Guadalupe (December 12).

The origin of the name Guadalupe has always been a matter of controversy. It is believed that the name came about because of the translation from Nahuatl to Spanish of the words used by the Virgin during the apparition. It is believed that she used the Nahuatl word *coatlaxopeuh* which is pronounced "koh-ah-tlah-SUH-peh" and sounds remarkably like the current Spanish word *Guadalupe*. 'Coa' means serpent, 'tla' can be interpreted as "the", while 'xopeuh' means to crush or stamp out. It has also been suggested that "Guadalupe" is a corruption of a Nahuatl name "Coatlaxopeuh", which has been translated as "Who Crushes the Serpent". In this interpretation, the serpent referred to is Quetzalcoatl, one of the chief Aztec gods, whom the Virgin Mary "crushed" by inspiring the conversion of indigenous people to Catholicism.

Some theologians also associate the Virgin of Guadalupe with a special relationship between the indigenous peoples of the American continents and the Catholic Church. This perspective developed as the scriptural terms of truths "hid ... from the wise and prudent" but "revealed...unto babes" (Matthew 11:25), but later developed into the "spiritual mestizaje of the Americas.

For pro-life Catholics, Our Lady of Guadalupe calls us to preach and teach the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the guidance of the Blessed Virgin Mary as the Mother of God and our Merciful Mother. We must stir into flame Faith in Jesus Christ and His Church in the hearts of all peoples and nations, to reconcile them to God and to promote and proclaim the sanctity and dignity of all human life from conception to natural death.

Pope John Paul II said, "People today put more trust in witnesses than in teachers, in experience than in teaching, and in life and action than in theories. The witness of a Christian life is the first and irreplaceable form of mission." We must be witnesses for life and for Jesus, to bring conversions in the New Evangelization and to end abortion and the culture of death through the intercession of Our Lady of Guadalupe.

The Holy Father asked for a "New Evangelization." The United States bishops entrusted this evangelization to Our Lady of Guadalupe. They said, "We entrust our commitment to giving birth with new fervor to the life of the Gospel in our hemisphere, to Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas." She truly was the first Christ-bearer, by her maternal intercession, may her faithful sons and daughters be renewed and discover afresh the joy and splendor and promise of being bearers of the good news. May we walk in step with the Holy Father behind our Lady of Guadalupe in the Third Millennium!

Closing Prayer

Slide 11 Prayer for Life

*O Mary, bright dawn of the new world,
Mother of the living, to you do we entrust the cause of life.
Look down, O Mother, upon the vast numbers of babies not allowed to be born,
of the poor whose lives are made difficult,
who are victims of brutal violence,
of the elderly and the sick killed by indifference or out of misguided mercy.
Grant that all who believe in your Son may proclaim the Gospel of Life
with honesty and love to the people of our time.
Obtain for them the grace to accept that Gospel as a gift ever new,
the joy of celebrating it with gratitude throughout their lives,
and the courage to bear witness to it resolutely,
in order to build, together with all people of good will, the civilization of truth and love,
to the praise and glory of God, the Creator and lover of life.
Amen.*

Pope John Paul II, Evangelium Vitae, no. 105