

Imago Dei (SOL Sunday) – Genesis 1:26-28

Today is another of the unique Sundays throughout the year where we emphasize something that absolutely needs to have special attention drawn to it. On January 13, 1984, President Ronald Reagan issued a proclamation making Sunday, January 22nd, National Sanctity of Human Life Day. Since then, every year, under republican presidencies only, the Sunday closest to January 22nd, has been recognized by the office of the President of the United States for this purpose. Even in the years where the office of the President did not officially recognize this day, Christian churches have maintained its observance and traditionally place Sanctity of Human Life Sunday on the third Sunday, every January.

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While most of the emphasis on this day is placed on promoting pro-life initiatives, it is important to also remember that God values human life in all its various stages, from conception to expiration. Will we continue to support Foothills Care Center? Absolutely, because it is a great organization that lives up to their core values and continues to lead the way in providing guidance, understanding, and compassionate support – Unconditionally for those struggling with pregnancy decisions. Other organizations which Mt Freedom is also involved include Collins Family Ministries, which promotes Christian family values and works to help struggling families keep their home together. This organization embodies the love of Christ by offering compassion, stability, and hope to children, young adults, and families in need—helping them flourish in Christ-centered homes. Oconee Christian Academy – is a private Christian school that combines faith and education. We support this school because they cultivate a Biblical worldview in every aspect of the education process and they work to help students grow as much spiritually as they do educationally. An organization that I personally became reacquainted with recently that has a similar purpose is Good News Club, which are weekly Christian programs for kids 5-12 years old, here in SC held in public schools, that teach Bible lessons, songs, scripture memorization, and build lasting relationships with kids who may never get the opportunity to go to church or hear about Jesus in their homes. We have people who volunteer with other organizations as well and donate time and resources to Lakeview Assisted Living, Foothills Assisted Living, and Lyla Doyle. What I hope to bring attention to is more than just the great work being done at FCC. Many people, including many of you, are doing great things to preserve life, at all phases, from birth to death.

Why is this important though? Christians are called to stand for life and seek justice for the most vulnerable among us—and one of the ways we can do that is by praying for life. In prayer, we can unite for the sanctity of human life by focusing on the preborn, families, and the many individuals involved in tirelessly promoting a culture of life in our world today. God wants it this way.

Imago Dei – All of humanity was created in God’s image. **Read Genesis 1:26-28.** Because of how God created man, human life inherently has a sacred attribute and therefore must be always

respected. From these words describing God's creation process, life should be seen as valuable and sacred. *Imago Dei* is the cornerstone that signifies how God views each of us. All conversation concerning human life must begin with this simple understanding and if we respect God as Creator, then we must wholeheartedly believe that humans are the capstone of creation, created in the image of God, and therefore ought to be preserved, always, across all phases of life. As Christians we must look at God's created order for our foundation and lean into other scripture such as found in the Psalms to substantiate our stance that all life is valuable. As creator and source of life, God's explanation of its beginning must be the only explanation we need.

Christianity is based on faith in the Almighty God, and in His creating power, both in natural and spiritual things. The Bible, being the Word of God, is the basis for how we conduct our lives. Our trust must be in God, the Creator, who knows all things – and in Him alone. As the masterpiece of creation, we are called to live before Him in reverence and awe, with full, unwavering faith in His boundless love, mercy, and grace.

Read Psalm 139