

From Pontiff to Pew (continued):

world' (John 12:31) who held him in the bondage of sin" (GS, 13).

Furthermore, the Constitution *Gaudium et Spes* affirms that human dignity concerns the whole person and, therefore, dualistic views must be overcome: the human being "though made of body and soul, is one". Reducing the body to an "object" to be disposed of arbitrarily is always a denial of the dignity of the person: "man is not allowed to despise his bodily life" and "is obliged to regard his body as good and honourable since God has created it and will raise it up on the last day", while ensuring that it does not become enslaved by "the evil inclinations of his heart" (GS, 14), since we are all wounded by sin.

Finally, *Gaudium et Spes* recalls the three most significant expressions of the dignity of the person: intelligence, which makes the human being an insatiable seeker of the truth (no. 15); conscience, through which he gives unity and meaning to his life (no. 16), and freedom, which makes him the responsible agent of his own decisions (no. 17). These dimensions are closely connected to one another: it is in conscience that truth is recognized as such, and freedom can experience it as its foundation and possibility. The Holy Spirit, who gives life in Christ, makes us free and constantly assures us of our dignity as children of God, delivering us from fear and guiding us towards the ultimate goal, that life in its fullness beyond death which Christ has promised us. It is only in Him that the mystery of the human person finds true light; from Him we receive light on the enigma of suffering and death; and with Him we journey towards the Resurrection.

Dear brothers and sisters, created in God's image, through Christ and for His sake, we have received a unique and indelible dignity. Let us commit ourselves to promoting and defending it always, with the light and strength of the Gospel.

2026 Wedding Anniversary Celebration Information - Bishop Mark Bartchak and the Family Life Office cordially invite all couples celebrating 1, 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40, 45, 50, 55, 60+ years of marriage in 2026 (and their families) to attend the Annual Wedding Anniversary Liturgy. Couples may attend Sunday, September 13 in ALTOONA at Cathedral of the Blessed Sacrament or Sunday, September 20 in JOHNSTOWN at St. John Gualbert Cathedral. Both locations are handicap accessible. Liturgies in each location begin at 2:00 p.m. Most Rev. Bishop Mark will be the celebrant and homilist at each celebration. Refreshments/snacks will be available after the mass for anniversary couples and their families.