

Building a Culture of Life

Resolution on Building a Culture of Life adopted by the 127th Supreme Convention on Aug. 6, 2009.

WHEREAS, in his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, Pope John Paul II called upon Catholics to become the “people of life and a people for life” to dedicate themselves to building a new culture of life; and



WHEREAS, contemporary threats to protecting human life from conception to natural death are the result of attitudes toward human life that have developed over many decades; and

WHEREAS, restoring a common respect for the sanctity of human life and the dignity of every human person will require much more than laws that ban or limit abortion, embryonic stem-cell research, euthanasia and similar threats against human life; and

WHEREAS, an effort to change the hearts and minds of millions of people will be much more demanding than enacting individual pieces of legislation; and

WHEREAS, the Culture of Life Fund established at our 126th annual meeting provides the foundation for pursuing a much larger goal of moving public opinion toward respecting the dignity of the human person and the fundamental right to life;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we commit ourselves to a long-term goal of building the culture of life that Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI have so strongly urged, and regard the establishment of the Knights of Columbus Culture of Life Fund as a significant step toward this goal; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Fund will be supported by an annual assessment of \$2 per member; that the Fund will be administered by the Board of Directors at its discretion; and that we encourage every member to make such additional voluntary contributions to the Fund as his personal resources may permit.

Defending the Right to Life

Resolution Defending the Right to Life adopted by the 127th Supreme Convention on Aug. 6, 2009.

WHEREAS, during an audience with the Supreme Board of Directors in October 2008, Pope Benedict XVI personally appealed to the Knights of Columbus to “defend the moral truths necessary for a free and humane society, including the fundamental right to life of every human being;” and



WHEREAS, that fundamental right to life is under attack throughout the world in rich and poor countries alike; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. Congress is now considering health care legislation that would accomplish by stealth many of the aims of the so-called Freedom of Choice Act, including federal funding of abortions for the first time since adoption of the Hyde Amendment in 1976; and

WHEREAS, a Knights of Columbus-Marist Poll conducted in May 2009 shows that 86 percent of the American people favor placing restrictions on abortion; and

WHEREAS, the Canadian Parliament will soon consider a measure to legalize assisted suicide; and

WHEREAS, international governmental and non-governmental agencies are attempting to force countries like Mexico, Poland and the Philippines to permit abortion on demand; and

WHEREAS, many other means of attacking and devaluing human dignity, including assisted suicide, euthanasia, and embryonic stem-cell research are becoming more widespread;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Knights of Columbus reaffirms its commitment to unconditional support for the right to life and full protection in law for every human being from conception to natural death; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we strongly oppose any effort to repeal the Hyde Amendment and other restrictions on taxpayer funding for abortions in the United States, and oppose any health care reform legislation that does not explicitly exclude abortion coverage for any health insurance plan, public or private; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we call upon legislators everywhere to adopt legislation protecting the religious conscience rights of doctors, nurses and other medical professionals, guaranteeing their right to refuse to participate in abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide or any other practice that is destructive of innocent human life or that conflicts with their sincerely-held religious beliefs; and

FURTHER RESOLVED, that we reaffirm our long-standing policy of not inviting to any Knights of Columbus event, persons, especially public officials or candidates for public office, who do not support the protection of unborn children against abortion or who advocate the legalization of assisted suicide, euthanasia and other violations of the right to life, and of not allowing such persons to rent or otherwise use facilities over which we have control, and of not bestowing on them honors or privileges of our Order of any kind, inviting them to serve as honorary chairpersons of events, celebrations or committees, speak at Knights of Columbus events, or hold any office in the Knights of Columbus.