

Babes-a-Leaping

Songs of the Nativity, Part Two

Luke 1:39-45

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I. Songs of the Nativity

II. The Visit

A. The actions of Mary

B. The response of John

C. The words of Elizabeth

III. A Primer on Infants

A. Infants are Sentient Beings (Ps 8:2)

First, infants are sentient beings. In other words, infants – including those in the womb, including a _____ – are aware of their surroundings, have feelings, recognize voices, have emotions, etc. They are sentient beings – they hear, they respond, they exist in relationship with those around them.

B. Infants are Persons (Ps 139:13-16; Jer 1:5; Gal 1:15)

Second, infants are persons – individuals with unique personalities, feelings, desires, longings, and emotions. Part of the meaning of personhood is the ability to relate to others. As beings made in the image of our _____ God, part of what it means to be human is to exist in community, in relationship. Infants while in the womb experience these relationships.

It is precisely because infants are sentient and persons that _____ is a criminal act and makes both its practitioners and patients guilty in the sight of God. The Word of God is quite clear – you shall not murder! To take the life of an unborn child is murder as sure as taking the life of an adult.

Contrast this with the evil claims of philosophers Alberto Giubilini of Milan, Italy and Francesca Minerva of Australia. They write:

The moral status of an infant is equivalent to that of a fetus in the sense that both lack those properties that justify the attribution of a right to life to an individual... Both a fetus and a newborn certainly are human beings and potential persons, but neither is a '_____ ' in the sense of 'subject of a moral right to life'. We take 'person' to mean an individual who is capable of attributing to her own existence some (at least) basic value such that being deprived of this existence represents a loss to her. This means that many non-human animals and mentally retarded human individuals are persons, but that all the individuals who are not in the condition of attributing any value to their own existence are not persons. Merely being human is not in itself a reason for ascribing someone a right to life.

C. Infants are Members of God's People (Ps 22:9-10; 71:4-6; Lk 18:15ff)

God has consistently held out His promises not only to believers but also to their children, welcoming their children into covenant with Him and enrolling them in His Church. No wonder, therefore, that Jesus was so upset with his disciples when they attempted to prevent babies from being brought to Him. "Jesus is too important, spiritual things are too important than to be encumbered with burping, peeing, pooping little distractions." But Jesus rebuked them, he took the *infants* in his arms, and he blessed them. "*Let the little children come to me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of God.*" These children are here to teach us what it means to be children of our Heavenly Father, to teach us to trust Him, to depend upon Him, and to follow Him. Infants are members of God's _____ community.

IV. Application

A. Get to Jesus! (Mt 21:14-17 cf. Ezek 16:20-21; Mal 2:15)

B. Find Joy in Jesus

C. Get Others to Jesus (Est 9:22)

V. Conclusion