NATIONAL CATHOLIC REPORTER
Published on *National Catholic Reporter* (http://ncronline.org)

Pope: Elderly, sick, unborn, poor are 'masterpieces of God's creation'

Carol Glatz Catholic News Service | Jul. 17, 2013
Vatican City

As Great Britain and Ireland debate right-to-life issues in current health care policies and legislation, Pope Francis encouraged Catholics there to uphold "the inestimable value of all human life."

"Even the weakest and most vulnerable, the sick, the old, the unborn and the poor are masterpieces of God's creation, made in his own image, destined to live forever, and deserving of the utmost reverence and respect," the pope said.

His encouragement came in a message made public in the run-up to the annual Day for Life, celebrated July 28 by the Catholic church in England and Wales. The Catholic Bishops' Conference of England and Wales published the pope's message Tuesday.

The message said the pope was praying "that the Day for Life will help ensure that human life always receives the protection that is its due."

He underlined that "the glory of God is seen in a living human being" and asked that all Catholics work "to let the light of that glory shine so brightly that everyone may come to recognize the inestimable value of all human life."

This year's Day for Life theme, "Care for Life: It's Worth It," is based on a homily then-Cardinal Jorge Bergoglio gave at a Mass in 2005 in honor of St. Raymond Nonnatus, patron saint of expectant mothers and midwives.

In his homily, the future pope said, "All of us must care for life, cherish life, with tenderness, warmth ... to give life is to open the heart, and to care for life is to expend one's self in tenderness and warmth for others, to have concern in my heart for others.

"Caring for life from the beginning to the end, what a simple thing, what a beautiful thing ... So, go forth and don't be discouraged. Care for life. It's worth it!"

Day for Life 2013 will focus on the care and protection of the elderly, people who are suicidal and their families, and the unborn and their mothers.

One of the initiative's "key aims is to build an environment of compassion and care that nurtures and sustains life, even in the most challenging of human events and personal circumstances," the British bishops said in a press release Tuesday.

The pope's message came as Irish lawmakers were considering new measures to allow abortions for women whose lives were somehow at risk either because of a medical condition or threats of suicide.

In Britain, Catholic physicians were leading an anti-euthanasia campaign to get government health care services

to end a controversial end-of-life protocol, after evidence of abuse and suffering was discovered.

Source URL (retrieved on *04/28/2015 - 14:47*): http://ncronline.org/news/vatican/pope-elderly-sick-unborn-poor-are-masterpieces-gods-creation