

Global Life Campaign

GLC Series Extra

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Ecuador's First Congress of Bioethics: Life is a Gift of GOD

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Ecuador's **First Congress of Bioethics: Life is a Gift of GOD**, was held in Ambato (about 2 hours south of the national capital city of Quito), on Saturday, 27 April 2019. The conference was sponsored by the Apostolado Provida Ambato, and the Conference of Bishops, department of Pastoral Familiar, headed by Monseñor Danilo Echeverria and coordinated by Mrs. Amparo Medina. Bishop Echeverria of Quito opened the event, then Thomas Jacobson and Isabel María Salazar (Ecuador) spoke, then Dr. Pilar Calva Mercado from Mexico, and finally Fr. Inocente Berrelleza from Mexico. Music was provided by Darío Astudillo from Baños, Ecuador, who wrote and composed beautiful songs about the sanctity of conception and human life, and the family, taken from the Bible and Catechism.



Bishop Echeverria congratulated the Apostolado Provida Ambato ministry that has grown so much in 10 years, working in the church to promote life and family. He was proud of them for hosting this Congress, and having experts from other countries come and train in things necessary to understand in the midst of the current crisis. I was surprised by his humility, kindness, boldness, and humor. He is a joy to be with.

Dr. Calva is a bioethicist who spoke with knowledge and wisdom about genetics, conception, and the dangers of contraception. She explained what occurs when various types of contraception are used, including how the so-called "emergency contraception" chemicals alter the lining of the uterus to prevent a fertilized embryo from attaching, and how various types of contraception can have a similar effect and are related to breast cancer. Dr. Calva had the privilege of working closely with the late Dr. Jerome Lejeune (1926-1994), who discovered the Downs Syndrome gene, and then was horrified that his discovery was going to be used to eliminate such babies, so invested the rest of his life loving and seeking to protect their lives.



Fr. Berrelleza spoke about a ministry he leads to help people, especially men, be restored after a great loss in their lives, such as the death of a child. He explained, with real life stories, 6 steps from trauma to healing – though not necessarily sequential: shock, denial, anger, depression, acceptance, and learning. I was surprised at the depth of the compassion of Christ that flowed through this man of God.

Thomas and Isabel Maria gave a presentation with a long explanatory title: **“Why Ecuador Should Restore Its Good Foundations, and Restore Full Protection of Human Life, and Not Choose a Path of Self Destruction by Authorizing Increased Access to Abortion.”** This presentation was unique, especially in the first part, giving first the Biblical foundations for the sanctity of human life, human rights, civil government and law, and then showing how good church doctrine was built upon this foundation, and later good constitutions and laws, showing the harmony between these and natural moral law (also given by God) and a rightly informed conscience (based in the Law of God written on every human heart). After I gave Biblical truths and principles, then Isabel Maria would give the corresponding provision in the Social Doctrine of the Church.

In the second part, Isabel Maria shared about the noble history of Ecuador in protecting the sacred gifts of human life, motherhood, and family through their constitutions and penal codes, and consecration as a nation to the heart of Jesus, which established the spiritual and moral foundations of the nation. Then she shared the specifics about the current proposed changes to the Organic Penal Code and Organic Health Code, which are troubling and contrary to the beliefs of most Ecuadorians, the Constitution, and the national foundations.

In the third part, I spoke about the history, policies and abortion data nations, giving Ecuadorians lots of reasons to not make the same tragic mistakes of Russia, China, the United States and so many other nations.

In the fourth part, I addressed “How does GOD look at all this,” speaking from the evidence and truth in Scripture.

In the fifth part, we asked the question, “How should Ecuadorian’s respond?” First, I described what Ecuadorians’ can expect if the National Assembly authorizes increased access to abortion (all the things I mentioned have already occurred or are occurring in the United States and many other nations). And then we gave our recommendations focusing on humility, remembering, repenting, restoring, and taking responsibility.

The PowerPoint slide presentation, in English or Spanish, is posted on the Global Life Campaign website (click the button below), though the first part only contains summaries, and does not have the church doctrine quotations. If you want the full text, contact me by email.

Please keep Ecuador and its National Assembly in your prayers, especially that they will not authorize increased access to abortion.

This photo is of some of the leaders, staff, and speakers of the event.



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“So innocent blood will not be shed in the midst of your land which the LORD your God gives you as an inheritance, and bloodguiltiness be on you” (Deuteronomy 19:10).