CHRIST OUR HOPE
IN EVERY SEASON OF Life

"Hold fast to the hope that lies before us. This we have as an anchor of the soul, sure and firm."

HEBREWS 6:18-19

RESPECT LIFE REFLECTION

Christ Our Hope: In Every Season of Life

From the time we are knit together in our mothers' wombs until we take our final breaths, each moment of our lives is a gift from God. While every season of life brings its own challenges and trials, each season also gives us new opportunities to grow in our relationship with God.

Today the gift of life is threatened in countless ways. Those who are most vulnerable, rather than receiving the protection they deserve, are all too often seen as a burden and as expendable. As new attacks on human life continue to emerge, we can be tempted to despair, but Christ instead offers us unfailing hope.

Hope is not false optimism or empty positivity. Christian hope is something much more profound and goes to the very depths of our identity as followers of Christ.

Hope is the virtue "by which we desire the kingdom of heaven and eternal life as our happiness, placing our trust in Christ's promises and relying not on our own strength, but on the help of the grace of the Holy Spirit" (CCC, 1817).

Like us, Christ entered the world through the womb of a woman. He willingly experienced the fullness of human suffering. He breathed his last on the Cross at Calvary in order that He might save us. Therefore, "God is the foundation of hope: not any god, but the God who has a human face and who has loved us to the end" (*Spe salvi* 31).

Christians know "they have a future: it is not that they know the details of what awaits them, but they know in general terms that their life will not end in emptiness" (SS 2).

For this reason, a woman experiencing a difficult pregnancy can find the strength to welcome her precious child into the world. A man facing a terminal diagnosis can see that the end of his earthly life is only the beginning of eternal life with Christ.

The Church teaches us that "the one who has hope lives differently" (SS 2). Christ's promise of salvation does not mean that we will be spared from suffering. Rather, the promise of salvation ensures that even in the darkest moments of our lives, we will be given the strength to persevere. By virtue of this Christian hope, we can face any challenge or trial. When the seas of life swell and we are battered by the waves, hope allows us to remain anchored in the heart of God. May we hold fast to Christ our hope, from the beginning of life to its very end.

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