

“Who do you say that I am?” Throughout the centuries artists have been intrigued with this very question. Inspired by the way, and the truth and the life, they have used every medium known to man, and every passage of the Gospels to answer that very question.

- In the Annunciation, Jesus is known but to an Angel who asks Mary if she will be the Mother of God. With Mary’s humble yes, the Holy Spirit comes upon her and the power of the Most High overshadows her. “Behold, I am the handmaid of the Lord. May it be done to me according to your word” (Lk 1:38).
- “Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains forever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being.” (CDF, *Donum vitae*, intro. 5)
- On Thursday, Attorney General Merrick Garland wielded the power of the Justice Department to challenge the Texas Heartbeat Bill. “The United States has the authority and responsibility to ensure that no state can deprive individuals of their constitutional rights through a legislative scheme specifically designed to prevent the vindication of those rights.”ⁱⁱ
- The right to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness are unalienable rights bestowed by our Creator on every human being created in the likeness and image of God. These rights do not come from the constitution, nor do they come from a single individual, nor can the state mandate a law to take them away. Every human being has a fundamental right to life from the moment of conception until natural death (CDF, *Donum vitae* 3).
- Our Catechism teaches life begins much earlier than the 6-week mark when we can detect a heartbeat. “Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person - among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life” (CCC 2270).
- “Since the first century the Church has affirmed the moral evil of every procured abortion. This teaching has not changed and remains unchangeable. Direct abortion ... is gravely contrary to the moral law: You shall not kill the embryo by abortion and shall not cause the newborn to perish” (CCC 2271, *Didache* 2,2 et al).
- To those who would claim that abortion is a human right, one must ask where is the freedom of choice for the child in the womb? The Prophet Isaiah reminds us: “He is near who upholds my right; if anyone wishes to oppose me, let us appear together. Who disputes my right? Let that man confront me. See, the Lord GOD is my help; who will prove me wrong?” (Is 50:8-9).

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- In the manger, the life within the womb of Mary sees the light of day. Vulnerable, defenseless, the infant Jesus brings joy to the world. God is with us.
- Magi come to offer him homage. Herod wants to destroy him. Like countless refugees around the world, the Holy Family must flee his homeland seeking protection in neighboring Egypt until it is safe to return home.
- As we see the face of the homeless, Jesus wants us to see him in the suffering. “For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, a stranger and you welcomed me, naked and you clothed me, ill and you cared for me, in prison and you visited me” (Mt 25:35-36).

- Jesus wants us to see and respond with justice for the poor. He wants to see us demonstrate our faith with works ... “releasing those bound unjustly, untying the thongs of the yoke; setting free the oppressed, breaking off every yoke?” (Isa 58:6).

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- In the Pieta, the famous sculpture of Michael Angelo, a grief-stricken Mary cradles the dead body of the Son of God. Jesus Christ has poured out his life for us on the cross that we might be set free from sin. He has given us an example of how we are to pour out our lives for the good of others.
- On 9/11, F-16 jets scrambled to intercept Flight 93 as it veered off course hoping to strike terror in the hearts of every citizen by crashlanding into the White House. Aware of the tragedy of the Twin Towers, the passengers on Flight 93 fought back against the terrorists and drove the plane into a field in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. They sacrificed their lives in order to prevent a greater loss of life. Amidst the trauma and horror of that day, we find hope in their resistance to evil through their ultimate sacrifice.ⁱⁱ

“Who do you say that I am?” The question that Jesus posed to his disciples is ultimately a question for you to answer. The Son of Man suffered greatly. He was rejected by the elders, the chief priests, and the scribes. He was crucified and rose on the third day. Inspired by the way, the truth and the life, may you help Jesus to carry his cross.

ⁱ catholicnewsagency.com/news/248933/texas-abortion-law-challenged-in-court-by-biden-administration

ⁱⁱ CBS News 9-9-21, Fighter pilots recall mission to take down Flight 93 on 9/1