

## Dear Friends,

Whether Europe is culturally speaking growing together or not, is not an easy question. Many things point into that direction of growing together. One important fact is crystal clear: that our responsibility as Europeans for one another is growing. Also in this sense, the borders are diminishing!

Unfortunately a whole series of troubling, partly anti-life tendencies can be found all over Europe in a similar way. Take for instance these current ideologies: "Faith and God should be given no space in public", "There is no truth", "Everybody should realise themselves and not think too much of others", "Whatever is pleasurable and harms no one is licit", "Tolerance is the first commandment... as long as Christian positions don't have to be tolerated", "Women's work force must not be sacrificed for the sake of children", "My womb is mine – whatever I do to my unborn baby is my business alone" etc.. Objections to these quasi dogmas is not tolerated, and sometimes socially or even legally sanctioned.

About eight percent of the world's population live in Europe today. For most of the remaining 92% these above mentioned attitudes are unthinkable. "How many kingdoms have no knowledge of us" says Blaise Pascal in his 'Thoughts'. Maybe Pascal's attitude helps us to relativize the walls of rejection and encourages us.

Yet these anti-life attitudes do not remain without consequences. Europe faces a dramatic demographic decline. So much so, that a logical and tragic consequence of this phenomenon will soon befall Europe. Stephan Baier, a journalist and author, expands on this subject in the following article.

For a new culture of life!

Your Europe for Christ - Team

PS: don't forget to pray a daily Our Father for a Europe based on Christian convictions!

## Childless. The European Catastrophe.

## By Stephan Baier

In Europe birth rates have been catastrophically low for the past 30 years. 2.1 children per woman are necessary to keep the demographical balance. Currently, in Germany 1.36 children per woman are born; much like in most European countries. The consequence: Europe is aging! In the year 2050 two out of three Europeans will be older than 60. For society this means more senior citizens, less workers. Our social systems are very often made to reward childlessness and penalize families with more



children. Aging Europe needs nothing more than a baby boom, yet at the same time children remain the greatest financial risk to young couples. This paradox proves that political priorities have been set wrongly.

A mentality excluding children or even an anti-child attitude prevails. Mass abortions in Europe have led to a demographic catastrophe. Millions of children are aborted, because families, states and societies supposedly cannot afford more children, because other priorities have been set. Today the children aborted the last 30 years are missing! Childlessness is hereditary, since children not born cannot have children. For our generation, rather than five minutes to midnight it is already half past twelve!

Let us dare a turnaround, for we need a new re-evaluation of children and family in societal, juridical and financial terms. We need a new appreciation of life and motherhood. As mothers, many women feel neglected by society. Motherhood seems to have become one of the lesser options for women.

A society that does not wish to perish due to childlessness, must not only acknowledge the efforts put into raising and educating a child, but also remunerate it financially! And this is not a form of alms or a kind of social politics, but rather justice in regard to parents' efforts and political rationality. Demographer Prof. Herwig Birg says "The removal of economic exploitation of families is a necessary condition for the wish for children to become again an understood model of development of personality." ("Die ausgefallene Generation", S. 147).

Despite all public alms it is the parents who bear five-sixths of all costs in raising children. But 100 % of the senior citizens profit by this investment, the ones without children just as well as those who rendered the input. One can hold the opinion that raising children is simply a private pleasure, a luxury enjoyed by some couples. But if having children is indeed a private pleasure, if parenthood has nothing to do with society, so then for justice sake financial security in old age must be privatized as well. It cannot be just to privatize the costs of some matters (in this case, raising children), but at the same time socialize the benefits of it for everybody.

We have to learn again to take up responsibility; for our own lives, for children and the future of society. If Europe does not want to perish in its self-realisation egoism, then we need a new appreciation for mothers and fathers. Namely those people who personally take up responsibility for the future, that is, for children.

Stephan Baier is correspondent to the catholic daily "Die Tagespost" and author of several specialized books. He was born in Bavaria/Germany and is living with his wife Bernadette and their five children in Austria.

## **Further literature:**

- Frank Schirrmacher, "Minimum. The Fading and Re-emergence of Our Community", Blessing 2006, ISBN: 978-3-89667-291-9.
- Stephan Baier: "kinderlos. Europa in der demographischen Falle", MM-Verlag, Aachen 2006.
- Herwig Birg: "Die ausgefallene Generation. Was die Demographie über unsere Zukunft sagt", C.H.Beck Verlag 2005.