

Newsletter No. 3

"The Twist of the Wrist changes the Universe."

Dear friends,

We often hear the concept of a "Culture of Life". But what does it really mean? Answering my question, a Ukrainian professor handed a cookie to me over a coffee table: "See how you accepted this cookie? You held your hand open - you don't seize it from my hands. That is the culture of life: we receive life, instead of tearing it towards us. The twist of the wrist changes the universe."

A very simple formula: accepting children, however and when they are given to us, not forestall the end of life, respecting the other in his or her weaknesses and difficulties, and so on.

Hannah-Barbara Gerl-Falkovitz is one of today's most facetted philosophers, who concentrates particularly on issues of 20th century German Christian philosophy. She teaches philosophy of religion at the Technical University of Dresden and has summed up for us in the following her thoughts on the question "The Culture of Life, what is it?".

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For a new Culture of Life!

Your "Europe for Christ!" Team

PS: Don't forget: The daily Our Father for a Europe based on Christian values!

"What is the 'Culture of Life'?"

by Hanna-Barbara Gerl-Falkovitz

We are all alive. But where does this life come from? From parents or forefathers who wanted precisely that child and 'brought him or her about' accordingly? Of course, parents constitute a human and spiritual condition of a child's life, but this is by no means conscious or aimed at. This simple thought thus can be concluded by the fact that parents also have to discover their child as a stranger first.

And even more: the child itself has to accept him- and herself in a process of maturity, discovering limits and incapacity at the same time as potential and motivations.



The culture of life means: To live one's life as a gift. More precisely: a gift from beyond. The culture of life also means to wish this gift to others. And this from the beginning of life till the end

of it. Under the appearance of an independent "dropping the curtain", old people are forced in "voluntary" death. Under the pretext of the right to choose, women are forced to kill their own unborn child. Under the pretext that women should be freed, fathers are refused their children, without being asked.

The culture of life means: To be allowed to transmit life, to welcome children on this crumbly-bumpy earth notwithstanding all the obstacles; it means strengthening fathers and mothers, it means being happy to become grandparents.

The culture of life means: To be allowed to die, when the time comes, and to grasp ones own death as the passage to a new everlasting life. It means to hold on with the help of others while going through the painful experience of having to let go, and not to have to hide shamefully one's own bodily decay. Instead of taking care of the "waste" it is asked of us to take care of the other together.

Such sentences can only be said because we owe our life to a Living One. European culture has of

old drawn from this experience. It is time to reopen our horizon for the Culture of Life.

Further reading suggestions

- Encyclicals "Veritatis Splendor", 1993, and "Evangelium Vitae", 1995.
- H.-B. Gerl-Falkovitz, Eros Glück Tod, und andere Versuche im christlichen Denken,
- Gräfelfing (Resch Vlg.) 2001.
- Eberhard Schockenhoff, Ethik des Lebens, Freiburg (Herder) 2001.
- Robert Spaemann, Personen. Versuche über den Unterschied zwischen 'etwas' und 'jemand', Stuttgart (KLett-Cotta) 2. Aufl. 1998.