

“Two Ways there are, one of Life and one of Death, and there is a great difference between the Two Ways.”

The above quote comes from the “*Didache ton Dodeka Apostolon*” (Διδαχὴ τῶν δώδεκα ἀποστόλων) or “The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.” The “Didache” represents the earliest known Christian work outside the New Testament. It nearly made the canon of inspired Scripture but instead became the first practical manual on how to live the Christian life. St. Athanasius recommended it to catechumens preparing for baptism. Written between A.D. 70 and 90, (its author is unknown) it reduces all the duties of a Christian to two ways: the Way of Life and the Way of Death; and note the statement “and there is a great difference between the Two Ways.”

In it you find liturgical instructions on baptism, fasting, prayer and the Eucharist. Also included are disciplinary regulations concerning the duties of the community toward teachers and traveling apostles, the Sunday obligation of participating in the Eucharistic sacrifice, the duty of electing worthy leaders in the Church, and the need to maintain peace in the community. Finally, the epilogue foretells the Second Coming of Christ.

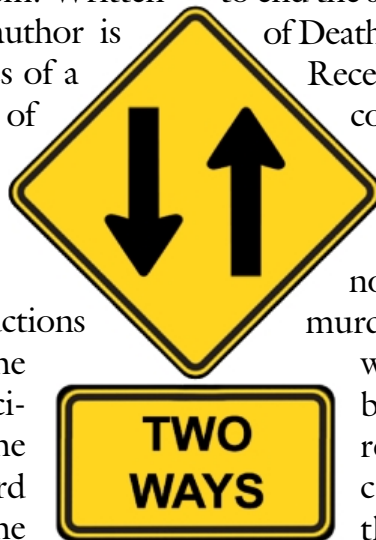
Echoing the words of Christ, the Didache reminds us that we must choose either “the broad and comfortable road that leads to perdition,” or the “narrow road that leads to eternal life.” We must choose. Eternity is at stake. The Didache shows us that from its very beginnings the Christian Faith was always seen as a way of life or a worldview. With baptism into Jesus Christ, one’s life becomes radically different, never the same again.

Our baptism should impel us to bring the world to Christ, not become like the world. This uniqueness rooted in baptism, for which many Christians were willing to die for, not being mainstreamed, attracted many pagans to Christianity.

The “Way of Life” presented in the Didache serves as a timely reminder in the month of January when many people pray for and march to end the scourge of abortion and the Culture of Death (the Way of Death in the Didache).

Recent events strongly suggest that a concerted effort is underway to have the Catholic Church “update” its teaching on abortion. They further suggest that many Catholics today no longer consider abortion to be murder. And this effort comes from within the Church, abetted even by some with high positions of responsibility. We are told that we can’t be “stuck on one issue” to the detriment of others (e.g.,

fighting poverty, education, etc.). By doing so we are acting “Amish like” and cutting ourselves off from the mainstream. Instead we should be “dialoguing” with and “building bridges” to those who “don’t share our opinion on this issue.” Their actual objective is not so much to have the Church become “pro-choice” as such, but that she cease all condemnation of abortion admitting that it is a “complex and delicate” issue best left to individual “conscience.” We see the results in Catholics literally fighting other Catholics on this. The Adversary uses the oldest of tactics against the Church; *divisa et impera* (divide and conquer). Why this



confusion among Catholics when the Church has remained faithful to her teachings all her existence? Because we are now confronting what the Didache calls “the Way of Death” which is not simply different opinions on different issues, but the Anti-gospel itself. Let us look at what has infiltrated our society and the Church and seeks to shut out God from all human existence.

In the 1930s a group of radical Marxist intellectuals fled Hitler’s Germany for the United States. Known as the “Frankfurt School” (from where they came) they ensconced themselves in the universities from which they spewed forth their poison. What would be called the 60s came directly from these people. Known in the universities as “Critical Theory,” it is Marx filtered through Freud and Sartre. They reject all religious values on the grounds that they are no more than the product of a particular historical epoch and therefore no more deserving of respect than any other values. They advocate a “non-judgmental” attitude to human behavior. They believe that there is no such thing as right and wrong and they



Detail of Michelangelo's
The Last Judgment



The Pentecost.
The Berthold Missal, Early 13th Century.

have in fact succeeded in removing these terms from public discourse. Consequently, whole swathes of public and personal life are no longer deemed to have a moral dimension. Thus there is no difference between people who are married and those who are co-habiting. Both have “partners.” Sexual activity is deemed morally neutral, no more than a lifestyle choice or a matter of personal preference. In sexual education programs for school children terms such as right and wrong, purity and celibacy are not used, as they are deemed meaningless. There is no suggestion that sex outside marriage might be wrong and no distinction is made between homosexual acts and heterosexual love between married couples. Contraception is presented as a non-contentious issue and abortion as the indisputable right of every woman.

The above ideology—secular religion—now dominates our education system, media and entertainment. Turn on the TV and you get

this served up in virtually every sitcom and show. Our children get indoctrinated with this in school as the courts strip away more parental rights. Also, this has seeped into the Church.

It first targeted Christian anthropology, which taught that God created us male and female: equal but distinct and complementary. Equality does not mean sameness. This ideology however rejected both masculinity and femininity in favor of an androgynous “human nature.”

Accordingly, nature did women an injustice by making them, instead of the men, the childbearers: hence their term the “slavery of the womb.” This childbearing put the woman in an unequal position *vis a vis* the man. Therefore abortion is necessary to equalize the playing field. Or, since a man cannot become pregnant, a woman should be able to become unpregnant at will. She doesn’t even need a reason. Here you have the “legal” underpinning of abortion today. At least 2 members (probably more) of the Supreme Court hold this position.

Also the unity of the human person, unity of body and soul, was jettisoned in favor of an atomized approach epitomized by the following: “*I don’t care what he/she does in his/her private life as long as they do the job well.*” Instead of being a new creation in Christ, we are cosmic orphans cast adrift in a meaningless universe having to create our own meaning. As our Maronite prayer says, “*Adam yearned to be a god.*” And so do we.

Much of what is touted as the “New Theology” is simply this “Critical Theory” with a theological veneer and its acceptance by many prominent Catholics has caused the current state of affairs preventing the Church from speaking with one voice.

In the Didache we find the following: “Do

not kill a fetus by abortion, nor commit infanticide.” From the earliest time the Church has considered abortion to be in fact murder. The Didache’s teaching flows directly from the 5th Commandment: “*Thou shalt NOT KILL.*” As mentioned in the “God’s big-mouths” articles, the Church humbly receives this from Her Lord and remains faithful to it. Here lies one of the fundamental errors of some of these prominent Catholics along with most of the mainstream media. They deny the Divine Origin of this command and deny the Church’s divine nature; seeing Her as simply another human agency. Terms such as “church rules,” “church regulations,” “some issues,” are used precisely to press home the point that these are not divine commands, the Church is not a divine institution and therefore these can and should change.

Also the Church distinguishes between a “Primary Good” and a “Secondary Good.” Life is a primary good: the most basic of all goods. Issues like housing, education, the economy etc., are secondary goods. We may not permit a secondary good to equal or override a primary good. It makes no sense to support secondary goods without protection of the most fundamental right of all; your life.

The Didache reminds us of the same message that God’s big-mouths constantly preached to the people. We must choose whom we will follow: the Lord God or the world. We can’t have both. The choice involves eternity. The Way of Death has surged forward precisely because so many Catholics have forgotten eternity and that this life is our preparation for it.

The Didache, the Two Ways, calls us to say along with Joshua (leading the Chosen People into the Promised Land) “*As for me and my house, we will obey the Lord.*” ✠