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Salzburg Declaration

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Abstract

This statement was made on September 6, 2015 at the 6th Ecumenical Confessional Congress of the IKBG accepted unanimously in Salzburg. It is based on a design by the lecturer Rev. Dr. Werner Neuer, which was brought into the final version with the additional participation of employees of the Theological Commission, among others. The declaration is primarily to be understood as a teaching letter. However, the signatories are also very concerned about concrete pastoral care for people in conflict situations.

Many Christians were willing and able to accept the alarming content of the document. As a reaction at the growing rebellion against life and him serving natural orders, the Christians wanted with the Salzburger Declaration in the name of the Gospel and the Christian Churches, for life and for one "Culture of Life" to bear witness.

Keywords:

human ecology, gender-ideology, human dignity, creation, fatherhood and motherhood, marriage and family, sexuality and procreation, ecumenism

The current threat to man's creatureliness (human creatureliness) and overcoming it. Living according to God's creative will.

A theological guide of the International Conference of Confessing Communities

This declaration was unanimously adopted on 6 September 2015 at the 6th Ecumenical Congress of Confessors of Faith of the IKBG (International

Conference of Confessing Communities) in Salzburg. It is based on a proposal (draft) by Pastor Prof. Dr. Werner Neuer, which was completed and brought into final form through the involvement of members of the Theological Commission and other members. The statement is to be understood primarily as a manual (scholarly writing). However, the signatories also had in mind the concrete pastoral care of people in conflict situations.

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Introduction: the current threat to human creatureliness and the need for an ecumenical human ecology [No. 1-5]

What prompted us to compile this statement

1. Since the emergence of the global environmental movement in the 1970s, our times have been marked by a great sensitivity to the preservation of creation. Christian churches have long recognised and supported the theological justification for this issue.

Pope Francis has reinforced the importance of the ecological issue in the light of the Holy Scriptures and the whole Christian Tradition (not only Roman Catholic) and developed it impressively in the Encyclical *Laudato Si*¹. For from the Judeo-Christian perspective of the world as God's creation there has emerged from the beginning the consequence (unfortunately too little considered) that creation, as an extraordinary work of God's love, is to be received with deep respect and esteem, and preserved and cared for in the way God intended (Gen 1, 28; Gen 2, 15).

Pope Benedict XVI praised the revival of the environmental movement in his speech in the German parliament on 22 September 2011: "Young people have become aware that something in our relationship with Nature is not right. That matter is not just material for our work and that the Earth has its dignity...We must listen to the language of Nature and respond accordingly"².

In his speech, the Pope lamented a reality that he said was largely overlooked: there is a *human ecology*. *And man has a nature, which he must respect* and which he cannot manipulate anyway. Man is not self-created freedom (Man does not give himself freedom). Man does not create himself!³ He is a creature and must respect his human nature.

¹ Papst FRANZISKUS, *Encyclical LAUDATO SI. On Care for the Common Home*, Freiburg/Basel/Wien 2015.

² Address of His Holiness Pope Benedikt XVI in the German Parliament, p.36 and others in Apostolic Visit of His Holiness Pope Benedikt XVI to Berlin, Erfurt and Freiburg 22-25 September 2011, Bonn, 2011, p.30-38. See on "Language and Nature" Rom1, 26ff; 2,14ff.

³ ditto. p. 37 (authors' emphasis)

Human ecology means that man *must treat his own nature properly* (not just the nature around him!), *by respecting the order of creation and God's commandments given to man for his good*⁴.

2. With the critical statement quoted in the Parliament, Pope Benedict has made his point: the complacent sensitivity of today's human beings to the non-human creation around them stands in contrast to a frightening blindness to the **destructive way in which humans deal with themselves and their own creation!** The reason for this statement is exactly this reality. *As Christians of various churches, we must affirm today that man, as God's creation, is threatened in unprecedented ways, even in peacetime!* While the ecology of the human environment has richly developed, only the ecology of man and mankind (so-called "Human Ecology") remains underdeveloped. In its place have come irrational ideologies, which endanger man because they contradict his creaturehood. With this a very dangerous situation has arisen: the threat today is nothing less than what the well-known Anglican writer C.S. Lewis called, with almost prophetic foresight in 1943, the "abolition of man" by man⁵. **The purpose of this Salzburg Declaration is to outline and explain this hitherto neglected "human ecology", what life according to God's creative will means from a Christian point of view for the preservation of man and humanity.**

3. If we look realistically and without prejudice, we must identify two serious threats to people today:

On the one hand, today's man is threatened, in peacetime, by an unprecedented destruction of his existence by humans: Especially at its beginning (before birth through abortion), but also towards the end of his life (through so-called active euthanasia) many people die today by man's own hand. [see No. 13-15].

2. On the other hand, the creaturely foundations of humanity (and thus of human "nature") are under basic threat [see No. 16-24]. Specifically, emancipatory ideologies (feminism, gender ideology, etc.) pose a real threat:

⁴ This is the sense in which this unusual notion of "human ecology" or "human ecology" should be understood.

⁵ C.S. LEWIS, *Die Abschaffung des Menschen*, Einsiedeln, 1993.

- to the two sexes created and desired by God, as a fundamental prerequisite for marriage and family, and therefore *to human dignity as man and woman, father and mother* [No. 18-24]
- and to the God-created order⁶ of marriage and family and the subordination of sexuality to the awakening of new life as the indispensable prerequisites of any decent society and civilization [No. 25-28].

4. As a result of these two threats to man and human “nature”, the previous ecumenical efforts and the desired unity of the Christian Church in truth and love are threatened at the same time, because the Protestant churches in particular react very differently to the above-mentioned dangers to man. However, for the credibility of the ecumenical concern it is essential that Christians, without prejudice to their confessional differences, speak with one voice in the central concern of a “human ecology” - and with a voice that is to be understood even by non-believers. For when it comes to the preservation of man and humanity, non-Christians are just as affected as Christians. Therefore, we are determined to make this statement not only for reasons of creative theology and ecumenism, but also for human reasons.

5. We wish to develop our concern for a “human ecology” in three parts [I.-III.] in that we

- first, we recall the **biblical testimony about creation**, for it is in the Judeo-Christian tradition the basis of the “ecology of man” (Part I.)
- then we describe the **current attack on man and his creaturehood, with special reference to gender ideology** (Part II)
- and, finally, to show the **need for a reconsideration of the biblical witness to human creation as a prerequisite for a “human ecology”** (Part III)

⁶ The word “Schöpfungsordnungen” is difficult to render in English, so I have chosen the variant of God’s created order of the world. By creation orders we can also understand human institutions such as the family, the church, the state, the economy. According to: Thomas SCHIRMACHER (ed.), *Die vier Schöpfungsordnungen Gottes: Kirche, Staat, Wirtschaft, Familie bei Martin Luther und Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, VTR, Nürnberg, 2001.

Part I: The biblical witness to human creation as the foundation of “human ecology”*What we confess and preach to the praise of God [No. 6-12]*

6. Since man and the foundations of the creation of the human being are more threatened today than ever before (see introduction), we Christians of various denominations are compelled to bring back the biblical witness to the creation of man, which is binding on all Christian churches, but which is much contested today. For the vision of man as a creature of God, which was already developed in the first pages of the Holy Scriptures (in Gen. 1-3), has for the traditional Christian theology of all Christian denominations a revelatory quality and therefore a normative character. Moreover, it had a major influence on the culture, legal system and ethos of many peoples up to the 20th century and contributed considerably to their well-being. It is also for the sake of humanity indispensable to society in the 21st century.

A. Creation as a gift of God’s love and man’s praise [No. 7-8]

7. In view of the present threat and revelation of the biblical image of man, we are urged to doxology and thankful confession that the Triune God has revealed Himself to us humans through His revelation in Holy Scripture, both his saving love shown in the Incarnation and Passion, Death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ and his creative love reflected in the goodness, beauty and glory of creation and its order and in his loving care for man. As Christians, we can understand “creation ... only as a gift”, “which comes from the open hand of the Father of all things”⁷. This gift is given to us, the totally undeserved humans, as an expression of God’s free love and it challenges us - even before all ethical tasks! - to awe-filled praise of the overwhelming wisdom and beauty that manifests itself in creation and that is found in full in the song of praise in the Psalms (see Pss. 103, 136, 146), but also in ever new variations revealed by scientific research. For us Christians - as Pope Francis has aptly put it – “the love of God (is)... the fundamental motive of all creation”⁸. All the more deplorable

⁷ Encyclical *LAUDATO SI* (No. 76).

⁸ Encyclical *LAUDATO SI* (No 77).

it is, when modern man, because of the “dark side” of creation loses sight of this fact and refuses to praise God properly. However, every human ecology must begin with this fact, namely the knowledge of man’s own creaturely state urges and compels them to praise and thank God (Rom 1, 20f). The Church has repeatedly expressed this doxological foundation of every “human ecology” in her prayers and hymns (see Francis of Assisi’s *Song of the Sun*). Martin Luther encompassed this in his confession of faith in the Small Catechism:

“I believe that God created me and all creatures, gave me body and soul, eyes, ears and all limbs, my reason and all my senses and still sustains them ... with all that is necessary for body and life, gives me from enough and every day ... and all this out of pure fatherly and divine kindness and mercy, without any merit or worthiness: for this I am indebted to thank and praise Him, to serve and obey Him”⁹.

Where man does not give God the thanks and praise he owes Him, therein lies the germ of lack of appreciation of creation, a germ which in turn can lead to abuse or exploitation of creation.

8. The foundation of a Christian “ecology of man” is precisely to recall this often neglected gift of all created life: Before God commands man, He gives him life and the capacity to work. Appreciation and gratitude for the gifts of creation entrusted to us humans is the premise of the whole “human ecology”! Only then can the ethical tasks resulting from creation be adequately developed to enable a true conversion to God the Creator and the order created by Him in the world.

B. The biblical testimony of man’s creation [No. 9]

9. In its first chapter (Gen 1-3), the biblical statement already leaves no room for doubt that God has made the whole of mankind and mankind his special source of freedom and love. From this biblical foundation emerge a series of nineteen fundamental statements about mankind as the source of all things, which today are still being challenged or explained:

⁹ *Small Catechism*, “Explanation of the First Article of Faith” (apud: *Unser Glaube. Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-luterrischen Kirche*, Ausgabe für die Gemeinde, 2013, p.470.).

The biblical revelation from its very first chapters (Gen 1-3) leaves no doubt that God built creation in freedom and love as a whole and man as his special counterpart. From this biblical revelation emerge the following ten fundamental statements about man as God's creature, statements which today are increasingly questioned or denied:

1. Man was created in the *image of God* (Gen 1, 26ff.) He was thus called to reflect God's eternal, natural love and to transmit it to his fellow human beings and non-human creatures. From his special position as God's personal counterpart follows his special dignity as a human being in relation to non-human creatures. This human dignity bestowed upon him cannot be lost and is not due to any merit. It is a basic requirement for any human legal and social order.

2. According to the biblical testimony, man is as **male and female** the image of God (Gen 1, 26f.). It is noteworthy that the biblical text attests that both being male and female are different but real aspects of being like God. It is on this truth that the individual, unchangeable and inalienable dignity of man and woman is founded. Man and woman can and should each for themselves in the way proper to their nature but also as a loving community, portray in spite of human frailty, sinfulness and provisionality, the mystery of the archetypal, self-giving, self-giving love (agape) of the Father, Son and Spirit - especially where they have received and passed on this divine love through faith in Christ (Rom 5, 5; see No. 31).

3. Because of their physical and soul diversity (which is reflected not only in but also in their biological capacity to reproduce), in marriage husband and wife are called to a **complementary and unmistakable community of unconditional love and fidelity** (Gen 2, 24), which is a reflection of God's eternal and unceasing covenant of love with man and which is willed by God as a lifelong covenant (Mk 10, 9; Rom 7, 2; I Cor 7, 39). Marriage is an order of creation established by God for the good of man.

4. Marriage between a man and a woman, as a **comprehensive community in spirit, soul and body** of unreserved love and fidelity, includes, on the one hand, the **loving completion and mutual happiness** of the two sexes in spirit, soul and body, and, on the other hand, **sexual reproduction** (Gen 1, 28) through acts of selfless yet responsible love.

According to the biblical understanding, marriage as an intimate (and in this sense initially private) community between man and woman is not to be misunderstood as “selfishness in two”, but is at the same time a public and legal community, because on it depend the future and well-being of **the state and society**.

5. Man and woman are empowered and called to give birth to **children** in marriage through conjugal communion and thus enable the family, the nation and humanity to have a future in accordance with human dignity (Gen 1, 28). This justifies the *special dignity of the man as father and the woman as mother*.

6. *Biological and bodily diversity* between man and woman allows not only the procreation of children, but also the support, support and upbringing of children by the father and mother. Therefore, they are called upon, as men and women, to bring out their spiritual and emotional differences in the process of family upbringing in a creative and constructive way. Therefore, **fatherhood and motherhood** are not only biological prerequisites for the birth of children, but at the same time, due to their mental and emotional differences, an essential prerequisite for shaping *the identity, education and socialisation of adolescents*.

7. From a theological point of view, the **family** resulting from marriage through the procreation of children, **as a community of parents and children** (like the marriage on which it is based, see point 3) must be seen as the order of creation and can also be considered empirically as the best premise for the security, well-being and happiness of the next generation.

8. **Marriage and family** presuppose years and decades of *practice in social behaviours* such as respect and consideration, justice and love and are, in this sense, *optimal preconditions for successful social interaction* between man and woman, parents and children, and therefore also for a prosperous coexistence of generations in **state and society**. Through the Ten Commandments, biblical revelation reinforces the fundamental importance of marriage and the family, dedicating three of them (the 4th, 6th and 10th) to it.

9. It follows from the above creative data that both marriage and the family are the **natural germ cells of the state and society** - a view that

the Christian faith shares with most non-Christian religions and cultures, despite fundamental religious and dogmatic differences.

10. The successful co-existence of men and women, parents and children in the family is important not only for the *state and society*, but also for the whole of **humanity** and its future. For the family is an indispensable condition for the **fulfilment of the cultural mandate** to shape the earth from generation to generation according to God's commandments (Gen 1, 28) and to build a civilisation based on measures of justice and love, which respects human dignity as well as the dignity of man and woman, father and mother, and protects it from all kinds of threats.

C. The biblical witness to the creation of man as a binding and rational revealed truth for all Christian churches [No. 10-12]

10. We are aware that aspects of the biblical witness to creation are always contested in and outside the church and were and are threatened by human selfishness. Too often, God's creative good will has been and is obscured or even trampled underfoot by Christians through error. Such failure is not an occasion for condemning moralism, but for merciful and helping love (cf. Lk 6, 36). But any failure does not change the fact that God's creative will, which is expressed especially in the *Ten Commandments* (Ex 20, Deut 5), has proven over the millennia to be an ethical guideline that promotes and preserves human well-being and happiness, which has been confirmed both *globally* through the life experience of many people in different cultures and in numerous empirical studies as vital and reasonable¹⁰. Moreover, no human failure can call into question the fundamental validity of God's revelation and commands, abundantly confirmed by experience and reason.

11. Therefore, we see in the basic biblical convictions mentioned **binding truths**, which are non-negotiable for the Church of Jesus Christ, because they are based on the biblical self-discovery of the Triune God and have also proven in historical experience to be profoundly adequate, useful and rational for man: God revealed them to men in Holy Scripture out of

¹⁰ See the summary of numerous studies on marriage and family; confirming in many respects the biblical view in T. SCHIRRMACHER, *Der Segen von Ehe und Familie. Interessante Erkenntnisse aus Forschung und Statistik*, idea-Dokumentation, Wetzlar, 2006.

love, so that they might live in a manner befitting their creaturely state, which has been entrusted to them, i.e. in accordance with God's creative will. We give thanks to God for the goodness, beauty and glory of His creation and for the goodness that has been placed in it, because it serves the life and order of creation. The praise and witness of the Church will never cease to praise God's revealed creative will and to witness to it, even when this witness is contradicted by people or even rejected. As members of the Church, we are engaged in this praise and witness **for the sake of God and man**, because we are convinced of the truth and enduring validity of the biblical view of creation, and therefore see the human being, his dignity and humanity threatened if the biblical image of man is abandoned.

12. After all, the basic biblical convictions mentioned were maintained by the Christian Churches, despite their different Catholic, Orthodox and Protestant confessions, until the twentieth century as a **fundamental common ground** for all Christians (in the sense of a *magnus consensus*), especially since they found confirmation in essential points even in pre- and non-Christian natural law traditions!¹¹ *Today, this common biblical witness is threatened in a way never before seen*, because influential groups, especially in Protestantism, under the influence of the spirit of the times, are overturning this common ground of the Christian churches and thus deepening existing divisions in the churches. This not only fundamentally endangers the **ecumenical effort** to unite the churches, but also the *unity within each church*. In terms of the biblical witness to the creation of man, there has long been a painful rift among the churches in Europe and North America, making a common witness of Christians and Christian churches to secular societies, worldviews and non-Christian religions less and less possible. The next part (II.) should make this clear.

¹¹ See, for example, the clear and striking natural law definition of marriage in the Roman jurist Modestinus (early 3rd century): "Marriage is the union of man and woman and a union for life, a communion of divine and human rights". (Quoted in W. WALDSTEIN, *Ins Herz geschrieben. Das Naturrecht als Fundament einer menschlichen Gesellschaft*, Augsburg, 2010, p. 106.) Waldstein shows how much the understanding of marriage and family in natural law resembles its biblical, i.e. Christian, meaning [pp. 105-121]. This is an impressive confirmation of St. Paul's affirmation that God's universal creative will is also witnessed among peoples. [Rom 2,14f]).

Part II: Current attacks on man and his creaturehood with special reference to gender ideology

What we deplore before God and man: [No. 13-28]

The basic aspects of the biblical view of the human creature that were elaborated in Part I are today often radically contested or even vehemently disputed. In what follows we wish first to highlight **the particularly serious mortal threats to man as God's creature** [13-14] and then to address the **threats to man's creaturehood**.

A. The threat to human life before birth [No. 13-14]

13. Today, man is often no longer seen in his special God-given position as a responsible partner to God, who has been given the strict command, *Thou shalt not kill!* (Ex 20, 13), and whose life, according to biblical understanding, is under God's special care and protection even before birth (cf. Ps 139,13ff; Jer 1, 5; Lk 1, 44) and is therefore absolutely unavailable. Instead, man is often understood in a false autonomy, as a **being called to unrestricted self-determination**. In Europe and North America today, it is alarming that not only dignity, but even human life and the right to life, are sacrificed to this ideal of self-determination or self-fulfillment both before and after birth.

14. Despite laudable efforts to preserve non-human creation (protection of animals, plants, environment and climate) and despite theoretical appreciation of human rights and the rule of law, **human life before birth** is threatened in many ways:

1. For example, many people consider abortion of unborn children to be a legitimately propagated and claimed expression of women's self-determination. We complain that in the midst of almost all industrial, democratically constituted countries, despite their claim to be a rule of law state, mass abortion of unborn babies has been tolerated, silently accepted or even claimed as a "right" for decades. According to statistics, more than 40 million babies worldwide fall victim to this mass killing every year. Abortion has long since become the leading cause of death worldwide in death statistics (due to starvation, disease, accidents or suicide)¹². As

¹² On figures see H. STEEB, "Ist die Kultur des Todes unaufhaltsam? Zwischenruf", in: *Lebendige Gemeinde* (edited by Ludwig Hofacker Association), 4/2006, p. 15.

Christians, we cannot accept this. **We mourn the countless children who have already fallen victim to this mass murder and demand with all our might that all legalized or legally tolerated killings stop!**

2. Particularly deplorable is the current practice of ‘screening’ by prenatal diagnosis and systematic abortion of *sick and disabled children*. While we do not wish to minimise the burden on families with severely disabled children, we must state very clearly: **A society that questions the right to life of sick and disabled children before birth undermines its ethical and constitutional foundations!** Where the right to life of the unborn sick and disabled is trampled underfoot, it can no longer be made plausible for the unborn disabled either. Such a society - however high its technological standard - is on the path of brutality and barbarism!

3. In addition to the examples mentioned, there are *other forms of prenatal killing* that are now widely accepted in our society. This includes, for example, the use of so-called contraceptives (such as the *morning-after pill* or the *steri-strip*), which in reality do not prevent conception, but rather implant the already fertilised egg in the womb¹³. Since human life begins with fertilisation, such **inhibition of fertilisation** is murder in the early stages of human life. **We complain that such forms of killing before nidation are no longer perceived or rejected as killing of humans, because the unambiguous biological beginning of human life through the union of the egg and the sperm during fertilization is today ignored or unrecognized by many.**

4. An ethically reprehensible, *frivolous and irresponsible* manipulation of *unborn life* is also taking place through the **test-tube fertilisation** technique. For through it many embryos are created, although they have almost no chance of survival (because only a small proportion of embryos created in this way survive to birth), or (in some countries) through the procedure of pre-implantation diagnosis, they are either consciously

¹³ Unfortunately, this effect also applies to the so-called ovulation-inhibiting contraceptive pill, whose mode of action is partly based on preventing the implantation of the fertilized egg: see EHMANN, “Die lebenszerstörende Wirkung der Antibabypille”, 40-49, in: *idea-DOKUMENTATION* 2010/2 Verfügungsmasse Mensch 39-60.

killed before implantation in the womb if they do not have certain *quality characteristics*¹⁴.

B. The threat to human life after birth [No 15]

15. Human life after birth is also **threatened** to a high, unfortunately increasing degree in today's industrialised countries. Now that so-called *active euthanasia* has already been legalised in the Netherlands, Belgium and Luxembourg, further efforts are being made to introduce it *throughout Europe* and eventually *the world*. Thus, after the legal protection of the unborn, which has largely been lost in Europe, there would have been another crack in the front of ethical principles¹⁵, and the "culture of death" (John Paul II) would have progressed further¹⁶. Just as man is forbidden to intervene to kill at the beginning of human life, so he is forbidden to do so at the end of life! By all this killing, man claims to take the place of God the Creator, the only Lord over life and death. In the case of euthanasia, such intervention is particularly reprehensible, because the possibilities of so-called modern *palliative medicine*, which specialises in the treatment of the terminally ill and dying, have advanced enormously in the last few decades (for example, in the treatment of pain). The international hospice movement, in which many Christians also participate, is trying to use this knowledge in a remarkable way as an alternative to euthanasia. Christian churches are by no means alone in secular society when they advocate terminal care appropriate to human dignity instead of a conscious and active termination of life through so-called "active euthanasia". It has not yet reached the point where the demand for euthanasia has taken hold in Europe or worldwide! **We therefore call on all Christian churches to resolutely reject such a violation of ethical principles on the front and try to prevent it!** At the same time, it is important to accept the enormous

¹⁴ On the ethical problems of fertilisation in a test-tube see R. GRAF, *Ethik in der medizinischen Forschung rund um den Beginn des menschlichen Lebens*, Darmstadt, 1999 und die *Instruktion der Glaubenskongregation DIGNITAS PERSONAE. Über einige Fragen der Bioethik*, Rome, 2008, Nr. 14-22.

¹⁵ It is a set of arguments (Dammbruch or slippery-slope) that describe a negative development as a result of a moral action or decision. According to these arguments, this evolution is irreversible. Therefore, these arguments highlight the devastating consequences of a qualitative change.

¹⁶ See *Encyclical Evangelium Vitae*.

challenge, as Christians, to stand by the growing crowd of dying in need of help and terminally ill people in our society, to witness to them the hope of faith and to offer them the **necessary help to enable them to die a death full of dignity** in spirit, soul and body.

C. The threat to human existence posed by gender ideology [No. 16-24]

16. In addition to the deadly threats that destroy man's existence as a creature of God, **threats to humanity and the state of created being** have increased in recent years and decades, **threats** that do not threaten man with physical death, but seek to pervert him into the very created being willed by God, so that we must speak of an attempt to destroy human beings. Seeking to pervert created beings, so that we must speak of an attempt to abolish man. **The characteristics of man as a created being**, summarized above in ten points [I. 1-10] are - as the following explanations show - threatened today in part in an unprecedented way.

17. Over the last 20 years, the ideology of **genderism** has been and is above all that which, in continuation and radicalization of the beliefs of *Feminism* and the *Homosexual Movement*, has laid the axe to the Judeo-Christian image of man by denying the bisexual nature of man fundamental to Scripture and thus denying the polarity of male and female and now attempting to impose this gender denial in the form of the so-called "gender mainstreaming" program in an almost totalitarian manner worldwide.

18 The following excursion should at least outline the **main beliefs of genderism**:

1. The core belief of genderism is the conception that people's "gender" is not a biological, i.e. natural, creaturely given fact (which is expressed in English with the term sex), but ultimately a sociological identity, which can be freely constructed and chosen by people (which is expressed in English with the term gender). According to this view, there is not a natural predisposition of manliness and femininity, i.e. two genders of different nature and appearance, but - depending on the choice of the person concerned - a fundamentally indeterminate variety of gender identities which cannot be determined in principle, especially since, according to gender ideology, the *sexual orientation in question* is part

of the gender identity, which contributes significantly to its pluralization: Predominantly intended sexual orientations are expressed in the forms LGBT (i.e. lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans [-gendered or -sexual]) or LGBTTIQ (*lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, intersex and i.e. queer* expressions of sexuality)¹⁷. All these sexual orientations are seen in genderism as **equivalent alternatives to heterosexuality**, which finds its natural expression in traditional marriage and family. The new conception of sexuality as a multiplicity of self-determined forms that breaks down the duality of male and female also includes a principled multiplicity of forms of sexual life, which should be seen as equivalent to traditional marriage and family.

2. The **intellectual originator** of this ideology is the American professor of rhetoric and philosophy *Judith Butler*, whose book *Gender Trouble - Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, published in 1990, was fundamental to the spiritual foundation of genderism.¹⁸ By lifting the ban on incest and eradicating all “heterosexist signatures” in all domains, Butler seeks to dismantle the normality of gender polarity (i.e. being male and female, fatherhood and motherhood), heterosexuality, marriage and family and to debunk their supposed naturalness as fiction or a purely linguistic construct.¹⁹

3. The **intellectual impact** of Butler’s genderism on Western industrial societies has been and is enormous: in a few years, under the strong influence of green and left-wing parties, movements and groups (in German-speaking countries especially since 2000), numerous professorships and research centres for so-called gender studies have sprung up (in Germany, now over 200!). The influence on culture, society (especially on the education

¹⁷ It is estimated in gender theory “thousands of different gender variants among us humans” (according to Pastor Annette Behnken in: *Sunday Word* on ARD TV on 27.6.2015)

¹⁸ German translation, *Das Unbehagen der Geschlechter*, Frankfurt a.M., 1991.

¹⁹ See G. KUBY’s briefing paper *Gender. Eine neue Ideologie zerstört die Familie*, Kisslegg, 2014 and her extensive studies: *Die globale sexuelle Revolution. Zerstörung der Freiheit im Namen der Freiheit*, Mit einem Geleitwort von Prof. Dr. Robert Spaemann, Kisslegg 2012. A very well researched and analysed briefing on gender theory is provided by the working group’s 40-page booklet: “Jugend und Familie” (“Youth and Family”), in: *Die Gender-Ideologie: Pseudowissenschaft mit verhängnisvollen Folgen für die Gesellschaft!*, Zürich, 2014.

and training of adolescents) and politics that has since been exerted in the name of so-called “science” is considerable, although the scientific claim is highly dubious and not at all generally recognised²⁰. The influence on the ways of thinking and mentalities of young people in particular can hardly be overestimated, although this influence is also resisted in the name of “common sense”.

4. The intellectual effect of genderism is reinforced by a **targeted manipulation of traditional language** in the sense of a **so-called gender-neutral language**, which first removes all supposedly masculine terms and language peculiarities in the sense of a “feminist linguistics”, and finally devises a “language” that is supposedly “gender-neutral”²¹. This means that, for example, terms such as “father” or “mother”, which are determined by traditional gender polarity, can be replaced by the gender-neutral term “parent”. The manipulation of language described is intended to be normative, and it makes (partly already successful) claims to increasingly determine the linguistic form of laws and administrative ordinances and to develop into a *prescribed language* that gives citizens more and more freedom to see their own language.

5. The ideological influence of genderism on people is particularly important where it affects **children’s sex education**. The outrageous concept of so-called “Diversity Sex Education” (which in part has already been included in the World Health Organisation WHO standards) in which even young children are urged to be sexually stimulated and children are generally trained towards so-called “sexual self-determination” and acceptance of various forms of sexual behaviour as equivalent²².

6. **The political and social effect of genderism**, which is still underestimated by many, is - although by no means democratically legitimised! - extraordinarily large: it is taking place at the United Nations²³, at the

²⁰ On the un-Christian character of genderism see “Jugend und Familie”, pp. 9-20 and H.P. Klein, who sees the integration of gender ideology “into concepts of teaching and training ... as an unacceptable interference with freedom of research and education” (Heldenhafte Spermen und wachgeküsste Eizellen [FAZ 21.5.2015]).

²¹ On language manipulation see G. KUBY, *Die globale sexuelle Revolution...*, pp. 174-192 (see note 17).

²² See Zukunft - Verantwortung - Lernen e.V.

²³ The English term *gender* was used at the UN World Conference on Women in Beijing in 1995 in place of the former biological term *sex* to overcome “forced normative heterosexuality” and implement genderism. (see G. KUBY, *Die globale sexuelle*

European Union²⁴ and at the national level²⁵ and is already shaping current politics on a large scale, especially in Europe and the Western world. The challenge, fundamental to genderism, that human beings have two genders has an almost culturally revolutionary socio-political consequence, namely: *all non-heterosexual forms of sex and life* are normatively equated with heterosexuality in state educational institutions and the abrogation of *the special status of marriage* (as an exclusive community of men and women) and the *family* (as an exclusive community of parents and children) as the foundation of a humane and sustainable state. The radical effects of gender ideology on the states of the world can be seen, for example, in the fact that by 2015, in just 14 years, the institution of marriage in some 20 states had been legally opened to homosexual forms of life²⁶, even though it has been understood throughout human history as an exclusive community between man and woman.

19. With its radical questioning of manhood and womanhood, motherhood and fatherhood, marriage and family, gender ideology offers multiple areas of attack not only from a theological perspective (see #20; 25-27) but also from a secular (e.g. empirical-scientific²⁷ or philosophical²⁸) perspective. Its individual or social ethical consequences are also deeply

Revolution..., p. 100 f.) Since 2011, UN Resolution 17/19 (17 June 2011) has legitimized genderism at the UN level and the resulting gender mainstreaming policy agenda has been put on the UN multilateral agenda (see “Jugend und Familie”, pp. 22-26). See also Economic and Social Council resolution (see 24.7. 2013): “The gender perspective shall be mainstreamed in all policies and programmes through a system-wide action plan”. Quoted from G. KUBY, *Gender. Eine neue Ideologie zerstört die Familie*, 2014, p. 19.

²⁴ In the EU, at least since the “EU Roadmap for combating homophobia and discrimination on grounds of sexual orientation and gender identity”, which was approved by a majority (the so-called Lunacek report) Leitlinie der Politik (see “Jugend und Familie”, pp. 26-28 and G. KUBY, *Gender. Eine neue Ideologie zerstört die Familie*, pp. 20-23).

²⁵ Since 1999, the federal government has made gender mainstreaming the “guiding principle and integrated approach” of German policy. (G KUBY, *Gender. Eine neue Ideologie zerstört die Familie*, p. 22).

²⁶ See the Wikipedia article “Ehe”(marriage) with the latest figures.

²⁷ See for example the studies of Manfred Spreng (see note 41 below).

²⁸ See the studies of philosopher Harald Seubert (see note 41 below) and Hanna-Barbara GERL-FALKOWITZ (e.g. *Frau - Männin - Menschin: Zwischen Feminismus und Gender*, Kevelaer, 2009).

problematic (regardless of specifically Christian beliefs). **As responsible citizens, we strongly protest against the utterly totalitarian, not at all democratically legitimised attempt to implement the gender agenda from childhood in Europe and the world. We are resolutely against the planned agenda of gender ideology to re-educate people and its associated infringement on freedom, democracy and the rule of law.**

20. As much as we Christians are open and grateful for the many non-Christian but reasonable objections to genderism from science, philosophy or ethics, at the heart of our critique as Christians is the idea that **the anthropology of gender ideology is totally incompatible with the vision of man of biblical revelation.** According to **the biblical picture of man**, man's gender duality is constitutive of his human existence (see #9.2). Not only the explicit biblical statements about the human being created by God out of love, but all the Scriptures from the first to the last chapter presuppose the polarity of the sexes. *Being male and being female, fatherhood and motherhood, sexuality and fertility, marriage and family* as orders of creation established by God for the benefit of man are, according to the biblical understanding, *indispensable basic facts of creation anthropology and theology*, which are essentially shared not only by Christians and Christian churches, but also by Judaism (and, moreover, by many people of other religious faiths!). We Christians therefore see in these creaturely provisions of biblical revelation *the foundation of a "human ecology"*, on whose recognition and development depends a truly human future, i.e. a future fit for human beings. A questioning or even destruction of this foundation leads to the *dissolution of man* in the sense intended and created by God. The duality of man as male and female is not merely a reproductive and, in this sense, purely functional property of man, but - much more - **an image of the loving nature of the Triune God**, who has called man to love as his own image. This love as love given (Rom 5, 5) must take concrete form in a particular way in the communion between man and woman, that is, in **marriage** as a community of love, and in the cohabitation of parents and children, that is, in the **family**, as a community of love "extended" to include children²⁹. The gender duality

²⁹ To the extent that in the family, love transcends the double objective between spouses, in that it includes the children as the fruit and at the same time as the third recipient of love, it can be seen in it to a certain extent, please. theologically a parable of the Trinity, as long as one sees the radically incomparable nature of this analogy (the incomparable love of God in relation to all human achievements of love and the

of man and woman thus illustrates in a special way *man's vocation as a loving subject capable of mutual care (zum liebenden Miteinander und Füreinander)*! This vocation can only be pursued if man and woman practise that unconditional love and fidelity to each other which finds its unique expression in marriage and if, in their sexual community, they are especially open to the emergence of new life. This particularly beautiful and lasting fruit of love in community gives the man and woman the dignity of fatherhood and motherhood. Through the living context of conjugal love and procreation, man and woman fulfil their vocation to love in a special way - to a love that proves its truly creative potency by participating in the creation of new life: the extension of marriage to the loving community of parents and children in the family shows clearly how much the two sexes are the indispensable basis for the realisation of love in marriage and in the family as the foundation of a worthy future for humanity.

21. The denial of gender duality in genderism with its consequent relativization of marriage and family shows how much the idea of personal freedom has replaced that of love in gender ideology: ignoring the requirements given by its Creator, gender ideology supports freedom of self understood in terms of a libertine self-development of the human being, who is encouraged to choose his or her gender identity. The free choice of "gender identity", replaces the loving relationship between man and woman that God intended and therefore misses love as the origin and goal of a truly human and Christian "human ecology"! At the same time, it ignores God's love as the origin and purpose of human existence. With the **separation of freedom and love**, man misses that indissoluble coexistence of love and freedom which is characteristic of the nature of the Triune God. Here the warning of Pope Benedict XVI applies: "Where freedom to create becomes freedom to create oneself, the Creator himself is denied, and so ultimately man, a divine creation, as the image of God, is degraded in the very essence of his being"³⁰.

personal Trinity in the Holy Trinity in relation to the personal diversity of the family, which is not limited to the number of three persons).

³⁰ Word of 21.12.2012 [cited after (ZENIT.org) accessed 22. 12.2012].

The complete absence of the love dimension in gender ideology underlines in a painful way how far this is from Christian thinking, whose inner core - even where creation is concerned! - is always love revealed in Christ.

22. These allusions may be enough to show that genderism completely misses the biblical understanding of man as a creature called to community and love! Gender ideology produces a **destruction of the biblical understanding of human creation and love**, which removes the basis of the character of Christian ethics as *creation ethics* as well as its character as *love ethics*. The Christian Church, if it wishes to remain faithful to Holy Scripture and its confession of faith, cannot but reject genderism in no uncertain terms! The goal of “human ecology” and gender ideology are mutually exclusive!

23. Blatantly and obviously, gender ideology rejects man’s creaturehood, by its ignorance of man’s obviously sexually structured body, which - apart from rare unwanted developments - exists throughout the world either in male or female form. The biblical testimony about the two sexes of human beings is not a belief that can be accepted “blindly” and remains unquestioned, but is based on a sensible reality that every person observes every day and whose biological evidence, from the outward appearance to the microbiological level of the body cell, cannot be challenged with rational arguments³¹.

There is a significant *psychological-emotional* difference between the sexes due to the body-soul relationship, which is not a mere postulate, but rather based on a plethora of empirical studies³².

24. **In view of the above findings and in view of the agenda of gender ideology, introduced through strong political pressure, Christianity is called to resolute resistance!** At the same time, Christianity, by uncovering the errors of gender ideology (above all its inadequacy to

³¹ This fact - among many others - shows the irrationality, even the absurdity of gender ideology! See the interview with Mathias VON GERSDORFF, “Gender - eine absurde Ideologie”, in: *Kirche heute*, 2015/8-9, pp. 6- 8.

³² See the numerous researches summarizing the representation of spiritual-emotional differences in D. BISCHOF-KÖHLER, *Von Natur aus anders. Die Psychologie der Geschlechtsunterschiede*, Stuttgart, 2002.

creation), should contribute to overcoming it, which contradicts not only the Judeo-Christian image of man, but in many respects also a widespread *sensus communis*. We therefore welcome the **unequivocal statements** of Pope Francis³³ and his predecessor Benedict XVI³⁴ against genderism, as well as the clear pastoral letters of the bishops' conferences of Slovakia³⁵, Poland³⁶, Portugal³⁷, Hungary, Croatia and Northern Italy³⁸, and Bishop Huonder of the Diocese of Chur (Switzerland)³⁹. In addition, we refer to the ecumenical confessional statement "Resist Gender Ideology"⁴⁰ and other critical statements on gender ideology by Christian groups and authors⁴¹. We

³³ See e.g. his general audience of 15 April 2015, where he deplores the "erasure of sexual difference" that can be seen in genderism [see Die Presse.com accessed 15.4.2015]. see also his stark assertion that gender ideology "is demonic" [kath.net accessed 11.3.2014].

³⁴ Benedict XVI. spoke on 21 December 2012 about "the profound untruth of this theory" [of genderism] and the anthropological revolution it contains.

³⁵ *Pastoral Letter of the Slovak Bishops' Conference on the First Sunday of Advent 2013*, www.stjosef.at/dokumente/Hirtenbrief%20SK_2013_12_01_A4.pdf

³⁶ *Conference of Polish Bishops: Pastoral against Gender Ideology*, Jan. 9, 2014, www.kath.net/news 44419.

³⁷ Medrum. Christliches Informationsforum, 7.1.2014.

³⁸ Herder Korrespondenz 69 (3/2015): "Der Begriff 'Gender' als Anathema" (Rebeka Anic).

³⁹ Vitus HUONDER, *Hirtenwort zum Genderismus*, 17. Dezember 2013, www.kath.net/news 44051.

⁴⁰ *Widersteht der Gender-Ideologie! Gemeinsamer Aufruf von Christen aus den drei Hauptkonfessionen (Resist Gender Ideology! Joint appeal of Christians from the three main confessions)*, 10.12.2014, <http://www.bekennntnisbruderschaft.de/dokumentationen.html>.

⁴¹ Cf. in addition to the publications already mentioned by G. Kuby and "Jugend und Familie": M. v. GERSDORFF, *Gender - Was steckt dahinter?*, Illertissen, 2015; D. KLENK, *Gender Mainstreaming: Das Ende von Mann und Frau?* Gießen, 2009; I.M. THÜRKAUF, *Gender Mainstreaming. Multikultur und die Neue Weltordnung*, Flaach 2013; - Kirche in Not, *Gender-Ideologie - Ein Leitfaden*, München, 2013; C. RAEDEL, *Gender Mainstreaming. Auflösung der Geschlechter?*, Reihe kurz & bündig, Holzgerlingen, 2014; ders., "Gender- Dekonstruktivismus und Gender-Mainstreaming als Herausforderungen an Theologie und Kirche", in: C. HERRMANN (Hg.), *Leben zur Ehre Gottes. Themenbuch zur Christlichen Ethik*, Bd. 2: *Konkretionen*, Witten, 2010, pp. 85-114; A. SPÄTH (Hg.), *Vergewaltigung der menschlichen Identität. Über die Irrtümer der Gender- Ideologie*, Ansbach 2012 (mit Beiträgen v. H. Seubert u. M. Spreng); M. SPRENG, *Es trifft Frauen und Kinder zuerst. Wie der Genderismus krank machen kann!*, Ansbach, 2015.

regret that in Protestant theology⁴² and in the EKD (Evangelical Churches of Germany) we can see a partial affirmation of gender ideology, which has even been institutionally anchored by the opening of a study centre for the problems of this ideology in Hanover in April 2014⁴³. This makes it impossible - at least for the time being - to take the urgently desired and in fact necessary ecumenical common perspective and position on gender ideology that the church owes to today's society.

D. The consequences of gender ideology for parenthood, marriage and family, sexuality and reproduction [No. 25-28]

25. At least as deplorable and questionable as gender ideology as such are the consequences it has for the understanding of *fatherhood and motherhood, marriage and family, sexuality and reproduction, the correct understanding of which is of the utmost importance for a "human ecology"*:

26. Because gender ideology denies being male and female as a basic aspect of being human, **fatherhood** and **motherhood** have also lost their significance for the view of man. "Fatherhood" and "motherhood" cease to be fundamental determinants of human being and are reduced to the biological causality of new life. According to the biblical understanding, fatherhood and motherhood are much more than mere participation in the biological process of procreation. Rather, they are gifts of God that determine the being of parents forever and give them permanent dignity (with rights and duties). They entitle and oblige them to raise their children before all other people and before all institutions of state and society, as well as to lifelong care and co-responsibility for their lives, which does not simply end when the children are grown and have a partner or children. Unfortunately, it can be seen that this natural and therefore pre-state responsibility of parents is often disregarded today, with the state and society issuing the claim that the development and socialisation of children belongs to them as fully as possible from birth (e.g. in the sense

⁴² Cf. I. KARLE, "Da ist nicht mehr Mann noch Frau ...". *Theologie jenseits der Geschlechterdifferenz*, Gütersloh, 2006.

⁴³ At the opening of the EKD Gender Study Centre in Hanover on 7 April 2014, President Nikolaus Schneider's press statement that the centre will "take the gender approach as its basis" to "systematically integrate gender perspectives into decision-making processes and church activities". Quoted from http://www.ekd.de/chancengerechtigkeit/vortraege/20140407_pressestatement_st.

of gender ideology or other worldviews). Such a claim is diametrically opposed to biblical anthropology, which gives fatherhood and motherhood (and therefore indirectly grandparents) a very high priority. This is evident not least in the fact that the second table of the Decalogue begins with the commandment: “You shall honor your father and your mother!” (Ex 20, 12a). The continuation “that you may live long in the land which the Lord your God gives you” (Ex 20, 12b) underscores the fundamental importance this command has for the biblical ethic of creation. In contrast, there is today a lamentable loss of appreciation and elevated importance of fatherhood and motherhood, which contributes significantly to the fact that respectful interaction between people (especially towards the elderly) is in many cases declining. Particularly painful in our societies is the *lack of appreciation of motherhood* and its worrying consequences for the development and well-being of children⁴⁴. This is reflected, for example, in the fact that mothers who temporarily or fundamentally give up paid work outside the home for the sake of children and family face greater social rejection and severe economic disadvantage (particularly in terms of pension provision). **In any case, the “human ecology” requires a new appreciation of parenthood and its significance for society.** Christian churches could and should make an important contribution to this!

27. The loss of appreciation for fatherhood and motherhood goes hand in hand with the lack of appreciation that the institutions **of marriage and family** in our societies experience - a development that began before the advent of gender ideology but has been reinforced by genderism. Although marriage and family occupy a very important place in Scripture as divine orders of creation founded by God for the good of humanity, they are experiencing a decline in their importance in society that meanwhile almost threatens their existence. *All the constitutive characteristics of traditional marriage* (its indissolubility, its exclusivity as a legitimate place of sexual communion, its openness to children and the sexual duality of the spouses) *are highly controversial today*. Genderism in particular, together with the gay and lesbian movement, wants to abandon the polarity of the two sexes, which has been unquestioned throughout humanity for millennia, as a

⁴⁴ Cf. M. SPRENG, *Es trifft Frauen und Kinder zuerst ...*, pp. 7-13.

constitutive element of marriage and open it up to non-heterosexual forms of life. Opponents of such a redefinition of marriage face the charge of “homophobia” or discrimination against homosexuality, even though they affirm not only the traditional Christian and Jewish definition but also the millennia-old human understanding of marriage. The traditional concept of the **family** as a *natural community of parents and children* growing out of marriage is increasingly dissolved by the addition of all possible forms of educational communities or social units (with one, two or more different-sex or same-sex educators or different “gender identities”, with children of their own, adopted or in foster care) can *in principle* be seen as *equivalent models of living together*. **Given this development, the Church has more than ever the task of re-emphasising the uniqueness of marriage and the family as the good ordinances of creation.** For they have proven themselves over the millennia, despite all challenges, to be remarkably stable forms of life that serve human well-being. It is deplorable that today they are often attacked, or at least challenged in terms of their normativity and their model character, even though both are to be found not only in the German Constitution, but in many constitutions under the “special protection of the state order”⁴⁵. No other model of parents and children living together has been shown to be equal in terms of stability and development of life. Instead, it must be stated that today both traditional marriage and the traditional family are threatened in their special legal and social status and thus in their existence as particularly socially important as fundamental communities. There are strong political efforts to equate *same-sex partnerships* with marriage, at least legally and socially, or even to extend the terms “marriage” and “family” to such forms of life. **Christian churches because of their confession of faith cannot accept such legal, social or even conceptual equality of marriage and same-sex partnerships! Because according to the testimony of biblical revelation, the order of creation, which includes marriage and family, are not human inventions, but God-given (and thus predetermined to**

⁴⁵ This is the wording of the German Constitution Art. 6 Paragraph 1. As the civil law and legal theory expert Bernd Rüthers has pointed out (FAZ 168 [23 July 2015] 5), there can be no doubt that the Constitution, by the history of its composition, understands marriage as a “long-term life partnership of a man with a woman” and does not in any way take into account a possible equality of same-sex partnerships.

the state and society!) foundations and institutions, which man cannot redefine or manipulate at will⁴⁶. What is different, according to God's will, is not to be regarded or treated as equal by humans!

Apart from the international elimination over the last 25 years of the special status of marriage through the introduction of same-sex partnerships (since 1989) or so-called same-sex "marriages" (since 2001), the legal, social and financial situation of the **family** is deplorable compared to its privileged position (not legally, but) *de facto* already for decades (long before the advent of genderism) of childless partnerships, because in Germany, but also in other countries, the considerably higher financial needs, especially of large families, is not adequately taken into account either in taxation or in retirement benefits.

Unfortunately, despite repeated warnings from the Federal Constitutional Court, Germany's political leaders have not brought any significant improvement to the social and economic situation of the family. It is no exaggeration when the former Archbishop of Cologne, Cardinal Meisner, summed up the situation with the following phrase: "No divine foundation in our society is so neglected, even despised, as the family, from the highest representatives of our state to the decisions of our courts"⁴⁷. When marriage and the family are considered to be the foundations of the state and society and that they play a fundamental role in a dignified future, this development can only be deplored. At this point the Christian perspective and non-Christian human wisdom meet: when Martin Luther says that "the family... is the source of the blessing and beatitude of nations", and Confucius, as a representative of Eastern wisdom, says: "If the family is in order, the state will be well; if the state is in order, the great community of men will live in peace". These remarks by people otherwise so religiously different show how much our society has largely abandoned the fundamentals that are essential to a "human ecology".

⁴⁶ Luther considered "the praise of marriage as a creation and ordinance pleasing to God" as belonging to the characteristics of the church (*notae ecclesiae*), by which it proves to be the true church of Christ! Cf. CL 4,333f.

⁴⁷ Quoted after PUR-Magazin (2014/2) S. 5. Cf. analysis of former Prime Minister of Saxony-Anhalt Prof. Werner Münch: "Wie Politik und Rechtsprechung den besonderen Schutz von Ehe und Familie aufgekündigt haben". in: Institut für Demographie, *Allgemeinwohl und Familie* e.V. (IDAF), Aufsatz des Monats 7/2015.

28. The same can be said of the current tendency to separate **sexuality and procreation**. A far-reaching consequence of this trend, which has been intensified by gender ideology since the 1960s, is the *demographic development in Germany and Europe*, which almost everywhere has led to an unprecedented peacetime halving of the birth rate and a preponderance of the death rate compared to the birth rate⁴⁸. This development, which is extremely alarming in terms of providing for retirement and maintaining social, economic and humanitarian standards, has also had the initially neglected consequence of ignoring the fundamental difference between *heterosexuality and homosexuality*. *Heterosexuality*, by virtue of God's creative will, is open to new life and secures the future of humanity, whereas *homosexuality* is a form of sexuality that is fundamentally incapable of procreating and securing a future for human beings. The fact that in the Judeo-Christian tradition this obvious fact was decisive for the normativity of heterosexuality and not towards the often supposed discrimination against homosexuals has been and is largely overlooked. Anyone who considers the emergence of new human life and the unique quality of life associated with children as irrelevant to the existence, well-being and future of a society has failed to understand the "added value", the particularity and exclusivity of heterosexual love. Indeed, it has nothing to do with "homophobia" to consider that all people (including those who feel homosexual) owe their lives to the fundamental fact that God endowed the sexuality of men and women with this unique procreative potency, that new human life may arise through an act of love. Shouldn't this fact lead everyone, including those with homosexual tendencies, to value *the* sexuality of men and women? It is obvious, not least for this reason, that in the divine order of creation, marriage and the family are entitled to appreciation and "protection by society and the state", which was sincerely recognised in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights. **In any case, the evident biblical and theologically creative orientation of human sexuality towards the awakening of new life will have to remain an indispensable cornerstone for a "human ecology" in the future.**

⁴⁸ See the almost prophetic prognosis of the French historian P. CHAUNU, who predicted developments more clearly than most politicians as early as 1980, in: *Die verhütete Zukunft*, 1980.

Part III. The need for a new reflection on the biblical revelation of human creation as a prerequisite for a “human ecology”

What we ask before God and man [No. 29-34]

A. The lack of “human ecology” and its consequences

29. Our analysis in Part II showed the serious consequences of the lack of “human ecology” for society and the state, a warning that Pope Benedict XVI uttered in the German Bundestag in 2011 [see 13-28 above]. The complacently high priority enjoyed by the preservation of extra-human creatures in most political, social and ecclesial groups stands in deplorable contrast to the *alarming mass threat to human life before and after birth*, which in Western democracies for decades has become common practice not only legally but also factually [see above no. 13-15]. Pope John Paul II’s impassioned warning about a “culture of death” in his encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* 20 years ago (1995) has not ended since then. The situation has even worsened in some respects. The European Parliament’s decision for the so-called “human right to abortion” (on 10 March 2015) taken by almost two thirds of the votes (405: 239) has renounced the most basic human right, the fundamental right to life, and has thus praised and propagated a Europe that has completely abandoned the rule of law and humanity - and thereby its own principles!⁴⁹ **As professing Christians of various denominations, we protest strongly against this decision, which is fatal to the future of Europe literally and figuratively and must therefore be reversed!**

30. Our analysis has also shown that **the natural foundations of the human being are deeply threatened by gender ideology** and its consequences. [see No. 16-24] Genderism, which is in some respects comparable to the ancient heresy of Gnosticism, denies the sexual duality fundamental to the Judeo-Christian anthropology of human beings as God’s will for creation, and therefore the gift of male and female, of fatherhood and motherhood. By this, the special nature of sexuality as male and female, as the “normal form” of sexuality, becomes moot, and other forms (gay,

⁴⁹ Cf. pro. Christliches Medienmagazin, 10.3.2015.

lesbian, bisexual, transgender, etc.) of sexuality are assumed to be “equal” alternatives. Particularly disturbing is genderism’s attempt to use so-called “diversity sex education” to encourage pre-school children to experiment with sexuality in different ways and to promote early sexualisation, which of course cannot yet be in any way relationship-oriented but only puts (physical) pleasure first [see above No. 18.5]. Another consequence of genderism, the extent of which can hardly be overestimated, is that the institutions of marriage established by God as the order of creation for the benefit of humanity and the resulting family lose their normative character as role models. [see No. 26-27]. This relativises precisely those fundamental institutions which are of essential and therefore indispensable importance for the well-being of children, the state, society and the whole of humanity and whose protection and support are rightly emphasised not only in the German Constitution but also in the UN Constitution⁵⁰ and internationally in the constitutions of many countries. By questioning the dual sexual nature of man, masculinity and femininity, fatherhood and motherhood, which goes hand in hand with the relativisation of heterosexuality, marriage and the family as God’s order of creation for the benefit of mankind, the creaturely foundations of the human being are called into question, and thus the very basis of true humanity. The destructive consequences for state and society are devastating in the long run. The relativisation of the **procreative sexuality of men and women**, which accompanies gender ideology, in favour of other forms of sexual orientation, which lack the potency of fertility - and therefore of future sustainability - is, in view of drastic demographic development, highly questionable.

Because in the long term, the social and humanitarian standard of the industrial society and the situation of the elderly, the sick, the poor and the socially disadvantaged will be endangered by the low number of births that has persisted for decades. Given the losses in humanitarian quality that have already occurred (e.g. increasingly expensive medical care and the impending lack of medical care), we as Christians and responsible citizens watch this development with great concern. It underlines the urgency of a “human ecology”. **At the same time, as Christians, we must say a**

⁵⁰ See *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) Art. 16, para. 3. See also *UN International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights* (1966) Art. 23.

firm no to the various alternative forms of life whereby *the* supposedly “autonomous” human being *rebels against* or tries to copulate with *life according to the divine order of creation*.

B. New reflection on biblical revelation as a prerequisite for a “human ecology”

31. In view of the developments described, we - Christians and non-Christians alike - urgently need a **new reflection on biblical revelation** as a reliable foundation for a “human ecology”. We would also like to encourage non-believers or faith seekers to take biblical revelation seriously as the basis for a “human ecology”. For it serves not only the welfare of believers but also the welfare of people in general. A “human ecology” grounded in Scripture (i.e. a life according to the good order of God the Creator) serves everyone and provides reasonable guidance! For us Christians, such a life is not primarily a “duty” or burden, but rather God’s friendly invitation to us humans to engage in such a life consistently and happily, even if it is demanding and challenging. The certainty that in our actions we can rely on the merciful, good, all-powerful and ever-helpful Creator of the universe, who is happy to give people who truly want to fulfill Him the necessary strength and wisdom (Prov 2, 7). We are aware that a mere “reconsideration” of biblical revelation would be insufficient if we relied only on our own human possibilities. Therefore, we are grateful to God as Christians, for we can also rely on the powers of Christ’s salvation. For God endows believers through the Holy Spirit with His own divine love (agape) (Rom 5, 5), which the Apostle Paul characterized in an unparalleled but fitting way in the “Hymn of Love” (I Cor.13): “*Love endures long; love is kind, love does not pity, does not boast, does not boast. Love does not behave unkindly, does not seek its own, does not burn with anger, does not think evil. It does not rejoice in unrighteousness, but rejoices in truth. He suffers all things, believes all things, hopes all things, endures all things*”(v. 4-7). Despite the fragmented nature, imperfection and provisional nature of our actions, this love is not only about preserving the life of creatures, but also about their development and flourishing. The “ecology of man” that corresponds to human nature is based not only on respect for the “*external*” orders of creation, but more profoundly on

the love given by God as a power that motivates and moves the centre (“innermost”) of the person. For only this is capable of corresponding both to the innermost structure of the creature and to the essence of the Triune God and of establishing the correspondence between the divine archetype and the image of man-creature. It is also this love that enables us humans to live a life according to the order of divine creation, even in the conditions of human sinfulness. Precisely where life according to God’s order of creation can become a hard trial because of our sin or threatens to become “impossible” because our determined orientation towards God’s exacting measures (e.g. regarding the indissolubility of marriage) runs up against our human “hardness of heart” (Matt 19, 8), we can count on God’s help. For God’s love proves its worth especially “when it hurts” (Mother Teresa) or when painful sacrifices have to be made. A life according to God’s creative will will never be free of self-denial, suffering and sacrifice from the perspective of human sin. Even a “human ecology” cannot simply abolish the damaged reality of fallenness, which Jesus points to in the Gospel of Matthew chapter 6 in reference to the daily “plague” of human life (v. 34).

And yet, despite the provisional and fragmentary nature of our earthly existence, there already exists, thanks to the salvation and “Resurrection of Christ”, the grace-filled reality of an “ecology of man”, a life open and permitted by God, according to the divine order of creation witnessed to in the Bible, towards which we Christians of different confessions together want to encourage and guide.

C. Recovering a “human ecology”

32. For a credible recovery of the necessary “human ecology”, we Christians need **unity in faith and life, in truth and love**. The common character of the witness of the faiths of the Roman Catholic, Orthodox, Anglican and Reformed confessions (often and increasingly at odds with the concepts of today’s new Protestantism) is great enough in the basic questions of creation ethics to make visible the goodness and beauty of the order of creation and to witness to the unbelieving world that it can be lived. This, of course, is not based on the moral possibilities that remain to us sinners, but on the reality of God’s forgiveness and the love received

from the Father, who enables his children - despite all their failures and mistakes - to live a life of grace (see No. 31).

33. In the present situation, such a common witness requires overcoming the serious divisions and tensions that have arisen, especially within part of the Protestant churches, on the issue of alternative forms of life to marriage and family or ideologies contrary to creation (such as genderism). Where these divisions cannot be overcome at this time, professing Christians in their churches should not hesitate to find **a common public confession of apostolic truth** together with Christians in other churches and publicly declare that they are one in the teaching of the “One, Holy, Sovereign and Apostolic Church”⁵¹. This is all the more important since the anti-creation ideologies I have mentioned often work under massive political pressure, lacking any democratic transparency, fairness or tolerance (see #18.4-6; #20). These ideologies must be resolutely opposed not only for the sake of *truth*, but also for the sake of *the freedom* they threaten. Above all, they must also be opposed for *the sake of God*, for they obscure the wisdom, glory and immeasurable beauty of God’s creation, which to praise and glorify is our mission throughout life and eternity.

34 Therefore, we would like to conclude this statement with **Psalm 8**, that great hymn-like three-millennium-old revelation of God’s glory in man as the “crown of creation”, which can almost be described as the MAGNA CHARTA of a biblical “ecology of man”.

⁵¹ The four essential characteristics of the Church of Jesus Christ mentioned here are found in the Symbol of Faith of NICEEA and CONSTANTINOPOL (the so-called “Creed”, in German NIZÄUM) which belongs to the common confession of the Catholic and Orthodox Church, the Lutheran and Anglican Church. The term “Catholic” in this confession is still pre-denominational (since there has been no schism in the church). Therefore, it is not limited to the Roman Catholic Church, but refers to the whole Church (encompassing any specific confession).

*O Lord our God, how wonderful is Your name in all the earth! That Thy
glory is exalted above the heavens.*

*Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast given praise for thine
enemies, that thou mayest make the enemy and the avenger bitter.*

*When I look at the heavens, the work of Your hands, the moon and the
stars that You have founded, I say to myself:*

*What is it about man that you remember him? Or the son of man, that
you search him out*

*Thou hast made him little compared to the angels, and hast crowned him
with greatness and honour.*

*Thou hast set him over the work of thy hands, thou hast subdued all
under his feet.*

*Sheep and oxen, all of them; even the beasts of the field;
The birds of the air and the fishes of the sea, the ones that walk the paths
of the seas.*

O Lord our God, how wonderful is Your name in all the earth!

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Spirit
as it was in the beginning, and is now, and ever shall be.
Amen.