

*"We recall that a dress cannot be called modest which is cut deeper than two fingers' breadth under the pit of the throat, which does not cover the arms at least to the elbows, and scarcely reaches a bit beyond the knees. Furthermore, dresses of transparent material are improper." ~Pope Pius XI, 1928*

According to Archbishop Meyer (Milwaukee, 1956), modesty is the virtue that prompts us to follow accepted standards in the way we dress and behave. Chastity, reverence for our bodies and souls, is preserved through modesty, associated with humility and self-restraint, and severely lacking today. Modesty today is on trial, whereas to speak of it, even in Catholic circles, is to invite sarcasm and ridicule.

In Genesis (1:28), "...God blessed them saying: increase and multiply, and fill the earth..." Why? Our Catechism teaches us that answer: to populate heaven with souls that will glorify God without end. Pro-life on earth, we "increase and multiply." Pro-life eternally, we follow moral standards to "attain eternal happiness in heaven." God's Ten Commandments, the Precepts of the Church, the letters from His true Vicars in Rome...those are our moral standards, and they have not changed since the days of Pope Pius XI.

The sex instinct plays a noble role in the propagation of the human species. Modesty is the natural bridle of that instinct. With modesty standards relaxed, the bridle is loosened. The imagination runs out of control; the will becomes soft. Impurity imprisons a man in material things. The physical man loses the sense of the things of God, acting more like an animal than a man or woman. The influence of the spirit in man diminishes. Impurity outside the bonds of marriage surges, pregnancies result. Abortions increase. Permissive modesty standards-

increased abortions-fewer souls on earth-fewer souls in heaven...It follows that interior and exterior modesty embodies the truly pro-life spirit.

"When modesty ceases to be the chief ornament of one sex, and the integrity of the other, society is upon a wrong basis." (Steele) In these days, shameful attention is drawn to the baser parts of our nature and our anatomy by immodest clothing. Over one hundred years ago, hemlines gave an inch, sleeve lengths gave an inch, necklines gave an inch, bathing suits gave an inch. New fabrics are sheer and cling to every curve. The Popes spoke out. We did not listen. We took a mile.

It is time for men to step forward and take part in the moral renewal of our culture, but women have their part to play as well. In Genesis (2:18), "...the Lord God said: It is not good for man to be alone; let us make him a help like unto himself." We are meant to have care for our own souls and the souls of others. That is called love. While pagan Rome was indulging in morally corrupt behavior, Christian Rome gave us St. Agnes, St. Cecilia, and St. Sebastian. To counteract pagan influences today, be modest, be feminine, be pro-life.