



A SPECIFIC APPROACH

Pope Francis warns about a risk present in the field of bioethics: reflecting on human life while disregarding human experience, and reducing life to a biological idea or a universal and abstract concept, detached from relationships and history.

To avoid this reductionism, he uses the terminology of “flesh” and refers to the dynamics of generation. “Flesh” refers to the most profound connection between “body” and “earth” by which all creatures share the same elements of which they are composed. It is a truth often overlooked or devalued: “We forget that we ourselves are earth (cf Gen 2:7). Our own body is made of elements of the planet, its air is that which gives us breath and its water enlivens and restores us.” (Laudato Si’, 2). Starting with our origin from one single Father, “all of us, beings of the universe, are united by invisible links, and we form a sort of universal family” (LS 89). Because of this, we find ourselves sympathetic with the earth: the damage to its soil is, for each of us, like an illness, and the extinction of a species like mutilation (cf idem).

It is, for the rest, an interaction in two senses: “The acceptance of our bodies as God’s gift is vital for welcoming and accepting the entire world as a gift from the Father and our common home, whereas thinking that we enjoy absolute power over our own bodies turns, often subtly, into thinking that we enjoy absolute power over creation. Learning to accept our body, to care for it and to respect its fullest meaning, is an essential element of any genuine human ecology. (LS 155).