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Homework #4
Fall 2025

Spe Salvi- key ideas that captured my attention:

“Paul reminds the Ephesians that before their encounter with Christ they were “without hope and without God in the world” (*Eph 2:12*).

“The one who has hope lives differently; the one who hopes has been granted the gift of a new life.”

Before my Emmaus Retreat in 2013, I went about my life without God and without hope. Although I tried finding fulfillment in earthly pleasures, relationships, and possessions, a painful sort of emptiness remained. I imagine Paul observed the transformation of the Ephesians. Their life “before Christ” and their life “after Christ”. I often think of my life in this same manner. In my before Christ era, I felt hopeless and distraught. By contrast, once I began to cooperate with God’s grace and began to encounter Christ at Mass, prayer, and scripture, I began to feel hope; which in turn, brought joy and peace into my life. “The one who has hope lives differently; the one who hopes has been granted the gift of a new life” (*Spe Salvi*). I desire to live differently because of my hope in Christ. I have a desire to “put on Christ” and freely share God’s graceful gift with others.

As a new high school theology teacher, I have a humble desire to be an instrument in God’s hands. Only God can transform the hearts of my students, of this I am aware, yet through my vocation, I hope to be a light of faith and hope to my students. I ask God to help me be authentic and genuine when evangelizing and assisting with faith formation. I ask Him to fill me with the grace needed to be the teacher my students need.

“By virtue of their Baptism they had been reborn, they had been given to drink of the same Spirit and they received the Body of the Lord together, alongside one another.”

“Now this is certainly an aspect of progress that must not be concealed. To put it another way: the ambiguity of progress becomes evident. Without doubt, it offers new possibilities for good, but it also opens up appalling possibilities for evil—possibilities that formerly did not exist. We have all witnessed the way in which progress, in the wrong hands, can become and has indeed become a terrifying progress in evil. If technical progress is not matched by corresponding progress in man's ethical

formation, in man's inner growth (cf. *Eph* 3:16; *2 Cor* 4:16), then it is not progress at all, but a threat for man and for the world.”

Junior year theology curriculum involves learning about the Sacraments and Catholic Morality. “By virtue of their Baptism they had been reborn, they had been given to drink of the same Spirit, and they received the Body of the Lord together, alongside one another” (*Spe Salvi*). I recently assigned a Baptism project where I asked students to gather information (date, priest or deacon’s name, parish name, godparents, baptismal certificate and pictures) about their Baptism. In addition, students were asked to reflect on the baptismal promises their Godparents made on their behalf and explore the meaning and significance of baptism, as it relates to our Catholic faith. Students then submitted the assignment via slide presentations. My hope is that this project would “spark” spiritual dialogue between my students and their parents.

Spe Salvi discusses how good and evil exist behind progress. As an educator, I observe the good technology adds to our classroom, yet, according to *Spe Salvi*, “if technical progress is not matched by corresponding progress in man's ethical formation, in man's inner growth (cf. *Eph* 3:16; *2 Cor* 4:16), then it is not progress at all, but a threat for man and for the world.” Many of my students have admitted their lack of discipline when using technology. These technological gadgets seem to “control” them. Children are exposed to good and evil information when searching online. As an educator, I emphasize the need to set aside our gadgets and spend time in silence with God. I encourage my family, friends, and students to attend Mass, read scripture, spend some time with our Lord in Adoration and/or prayer, and simply seek God each day.

Spe Salvi discusses the life, trials, and transformation of Saint Josephine Bakhita. In class, I often bring up Saint Carlo Acutis. He has sparked interest in many of my students, especially because he managed to only play video games for one to two hours a week! What a great example for both children and adults. Saint Carlo Acutis exercised his freedom by placing God first in his life. Although he became ill, he was filled with hope in God and shared this hope with others. I pray my students are filled with this same hope in Christ.