

THE NEW CHRISTIAN HUMANISM: THE LEGACY OF POPE SAINT JOHN PAUL II

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1. Introduction: Humanism, secular and Christian

- the possibility of Christian humanism
- Pope St. John Paul II and the rescue of the Western humanistic tradition
- inauguration homily: Christ knows what is in man
- scope of this presentation

2. *Redemptor Hominis* (1979): a new Christian humanism

- a. first encyclical: the program of the pontificate
- b. the mystery of our redemption in Christ
- c. *Gaudium et Spes* §22: “only in the mystery of the Incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light.”
- d. union with Christ the redeemer
- e. membership in the Church: Christ’s disciples

3. *Evangelium Vitae* (1995): the gift of life

- a. defense of life, analysis of the culture of death
- b. eclipse of God conceals a threat to human existence
- c. human fulfillment: not autonomy but theonomy

4. *Veritatis Splendor* (1993): the nature of freedom

- a. fundamental questions of the Church’s moral teachings
- b. “whoever loses his life for my sake will find it” (Mt 16:26)
- c. moral life: transformation in and conformation to Christ
- d. freedom: the capacity to choose happiness
- e. sin: the failure of freedom

5. *Fides et Ratio* (1998): human reason enlightened by faith

- a. defense of reason against unreason
- b. harmony of faith and reason
- c. capacity of reason to arrive at truth
- d. danger of religious credulity
- e. necessity of reason in theology

6. Conclusion

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