

INTO YOUR HANDS – OCTOBER 2025

See the Beauty of Creation

As a child, I shared a room with my younger brother. I have fond memories of waking up in the morning to the sound of our mother coming into our bedroom and pulling back the curtains on the window. She would sing to us, “Good morning! Time to rise and shine!” The bright morning light would pour through the window, summoning us to begin a new day.

This memory of my mother might serve as a fitting metaphor for life. We all need, at times, to pull back the curtains and allow the light of a new day to find welcome in our life and awaken us to new purpose. With the Light of Christ shining upon us and our world, stirred from sleep and freed from the darkness that envelops us, we might gain new perspective.

In an interview with the *Los Angeles Times* in 1996, singer-songwriter Joni Mitchell spoke about how she came to write one of her hit songs. “I wrote ‘Big Yellow Taxi’ on my first trip to Hawaii,” Mitchell said, “I took a taxi to the hotel and when I woke up the next morning, I threw back the curtains and saw these beautiful green mountains in the distance. Then, I looked down and there was a parking lot as far as the eye could see, and it broke my heart.”

The memorable lyric to that Joni Mitchell song—*They paved paradise, put up a parking lot*—awakens us to see more clearly how easily we can close our eyes and surrender to the darkness. We find ourselves going through life asleep and unaware of the pavement covering over the beauty of our creation and preventing us from appreciating the gift of creation and developing a respect for life.

The month of October each year offers us the opportunity to be re-awakened and renewed in our care for all creation, including the sacred gift of life. We are invited to throw back the curtains and let in the light of a new day so that we might acknowledge the sanctity of life before us. God

summons us to “rise and shine”, find our way out of the slumber that engulfs us and recognize the sacred gift we have been given. And, whether the life we see before us is in a mother’s womb, a lonely jail cell, a crowded city street, or a quiet tree-filled forest, we cannot simply close the curtains and go back to sleep. We are summoned to embrace each new day with purpose, knowing that all we say and do must serve to awaken others to appreciate the sacredness of life.

Too many in our human family find themselves asleep in the darkness, closed off and blind to the truth of life’s value from conception to natural death. The late Dr. Bernard Nathanson, an abortion rights advocate turned anti-abortion activist, was quoted as saying, “Fewer women would have abortions if wombs had windows.” If we had windows into each other’s minds, hearts, and souls, perhaps we might be more respectful and more loving toward one another and toward the world around us.

When our windows are covered over and our hearts paved over, like the paradise of Joni Mitchell’s song, we urgently need God’s amazing grace to enter in, like my mother coming into my brother’s and my childhood bedroom. We need to be awakened to the beauty of creation and the possibilities of a new day. Rubbing the sleep from our eyes, we can allow God to assist us as we embrace wholeheartedly the call to care for creation and the responsibility to proclaim respect for all life.