

Life Matters

The Newsletter of the St. Rose of Lima Pro-Life/Pro-Family Committee

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A Thought About Gift Giving

by
Fred Dwyer

Tis the season to be jolly, to share the joy we feel from the news of our Savior's birth. For most of us fortunate enough to live in this land of plenty, this season of joy brings about a flood of gift giving. We give to those in need, we give to our friends, our extended family, and most generously of all, we give to our children. Hopefully, there is none among us who would deliberately give a child a dangerous gift, it's unthinkable. Unfortunately there are many often requested gifts which are dangerous in very subtle ways, gifts which offer violence as entertainment. Prime examples are the many video games which focus on destruction and killing. You will hear people say, "I grew up watching action movies and I've played these action games and I'm not a violent person," or "It's just a game, the kids know it's not reality." On the surface those assertions may seem to make some sense, but here's where the subtlety manifests. No, we don't all become violent felons, but all of us who have been subjected to, and become involved in violent entertainment, are a little more violence prone than we might have been. The effect is cumulative. In some it may be angry impulses which are kept in check. In others it's just a "quick temper" which results in angry words, or it's "road rage" or "air traveler rage." It can and does lead to broken marriages, physical abuse, and even murder. Yes, the children do know they're just games, but games are excellent tools for learning. That's why we commonly use games to teach reading and numbers to very young children, and why we use war games to train armies. Whatever you practice in a game, becomes a little part of you. As exciting and challenging as these action entertainments are, and as much as they are desired by the children you give to, do realize that games, toys, movies, and TV shows which teach that humans are violent, are dangerous. The danger is subtle, you will not see an overnight metamorphosis, but when these gifts of violence are given, be aware the message they teach will be with the child every day for the rest of his/her life.

**Glory to God in the highest; and on earth
peace to men of good will.** Luke 2:14

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The Promise of Stem Cells: *Stem Cells* *Completely Cure Sickle Cell Patient*

From: The Pro-Life Infonet <infonet@prolifeinfo.org>
Source: CBS News; November 28, 2001

Pittsburgh, PA -- Stem cells are thought of as the Holy Grail of medicine. One young boy agrees with that. He made medical history because he's been cured of his life-threatening disease. The key to his cure **did not come from a human embryo**, where all the controversy is, but from something that is routinely tossed in the garbage - an umbilical cord. Umbilical cords were always considered medical waste. Not anymore. That's why new parents like Pam Dorne and Stephen Ayers of suburban Chicago have decided to save their children's umbilical cord blood. Dorne gave birth last spring to a baby boy, Kyle. After a baby is born, there is just a 15-minute window to retrieve the four to six ounces of blood in the umbilical cord. And in that blood are potentially lifesaving stem cells that can be saved for future use.

"This is really where, I think, so much of biomedicine is going to be going in the 21st century," says Dr. Andrew Yeager of the University of Pittsburgh. For instance, when stem cells from umbilical cord blood are injected into a person's vein, they migrate to the bone marrow and can create what Dr. Yeager calls a blood factory, replacing diseased blood with healthy blood. According to the National Institutes of Health, stem cells may one day be able repair the body's tissue and muscle and cure everything from spinal cord injuries to Alzheimer's. "It's not just pie-in-the-sky speculation," says Yeager. "There are studies that would suggest that other organ dysfunction - nerve damage, heart damage, brain-cell damage - might actually be fixed." It has the potential to make paralyzed patients walk and make Alzheimer's sufferers remember. That potential is what Dr. Yeager was counting on to cure a young patient named Keone Penn.

Keone suffered from a case of sickle cell, a painful genetic blood disease. He was diagnosed when he was 6 months old. He was 5 when his sickle cell caused a stroke. "All I remember is I woke up and my mama was beside me and there was a basket beside me and a teddy bear," he says. "It was very scary, I mean, whew." For six years, Keone and his mother, Leslie Penn, were constantly in and out of an Atlanta hospital to receive transfusions to stave off another potentially deadly stroke. By the time Keone was 11, the transfusions were becoming less effective and he had excruciating pain in his joints and lower back. "The pain is usually so intense that even morphine, Demerol, those heavy-duty medicines don't really touch it," Leslie Penn says. "All you can really do is pray that he'll just go to sleep." Keone says he's tough, but at 15, he looks much younger. Sickle cell stunted his growth (he's just 4 feet, 9 inches, tall) and restricted what he could do. "I was impaired from doing a lot of things that normal kids do, like sports or anything or run," he says. "Couldn't play basketball. Because, you know, some people like roughhousing when they play basketball and they can knock you over and push you and that could really hurt me." The odds were that Keone had, at best, only five years to live. So Yeager decided to take a chance on a new procedure. Never before had stem cells from umbilical cord blood been used to treat sickle cell. "The goal here is that these stem cells, which are in a relatively high proportion in cord blood - higher than they would be in our own bone marrow and definitely higher than in our own circulating blood - could then be injected and would take hold and again, make more of themselves. And make a whole new blood factory." Yeager told the family he wasn't sure the procedure would work. "He just basically said, 'This is just a 50-50 chance and it's up to you all if you want to do it, I can't offer you any guarantees.'" Recalls Leslie Penn. Keone Penn remembers how his mother told him: "She came in the room looking very depressed. Pulled the chair up sat beside me in the bed and told me everything. And I almost started to cry. But she was very calm about it. She told me everything, said, 'You got-you may - have five years to live,' you know." Ordinarily, patients with a severe case of sickle cell, like Keone's, would have had a bone-marrow transplant. That's because until recently bone marrow was the only source for stem cells. But bone marrow transplants can be tricky because there must be a precise match between the person donating the bone marrow and the patient receiving it. In Keone's case, no match could be found. Stem cells from umbilical cord blood don't need an exact match. Dr. Yeager and his team found a match that was close enough in a cryogenic tank at the New York Public Blood Bank, which since 1992 has slowly been collecting donations of umbilical cord blood. Over Christmas vacation of 1998, after intensive chemotherapy to destroy Keone's bad blood, he was injected with the stem cells. After a few weeks, something extraordinary happened - the stem cells changed his entire blood system from type O to type B. "That concept there is the one that really blows my mind," says Leslie Penn. "The thought that your whole blood

type is changed. The umbilical cord cell's donor, he took on their blood type. A year later, doctors declared that the sickle cells in Keone's body had disappeared. Today, he is considered cured. It was umbilical cord stem cells that cured Keone, **not stem cells from human embryos.**

While the use of embryonic stem cells has generated fierce controversy, umbilical cord stem cells have attracted little attention and no political debate. And now it seems, more and more new parents have decided to bank their hopes on the stem cells in their newborn's cord blood. Moments after Pam Dorne gave birth to a baby Kyle, his cord blood was sealed, packed in dry ice, and given to a courier. Within hours, the package was on a plane bound for Tucson, Arizona, where the largest privately run cord blood bank in the country is located. There, a child's umbilical-cord blood is stored in a cryogenic tank at a temperature of minus 400 degrees Fahrenheit. Dr. David Harris, laboratory director of the Cord Blood Registry, says it takes only a small vial of cord blood to change a person's entire system. So far, Cord Blood Registry has collected about 30,000 samples from families willing to pay a \$1,300 flat fee and \$95 a year to analyze and privately store their baby's cord blood. The company has taken in over \$40 million so far, selling a kind of biological insurance. "Part of the issue when people bank," says Harris, "it is because they have a family history or they work or live in a place where there is a potential for cancer. But part of it is for peace of mind." According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, that peace of mind isn't worth the money. The academy says the chances a family will ever need to use its frozen cord blood are very small. What they say makes more sense is to donate cord blood to a public bank, the kind where Keone Penn got his stem cells. That is something Pam Dorne, an obstetrician, says she understands in her professional life. But her own personal choice was a private bank, she says, for one reason. "If the American Academy of Pediatrics could tell me that none of my children would ever have a problem," she says. "Or that if they had a problem, I would be guaranteed that there would be enough donors and somebody would match them, that would be perfectly reasonable. But I don't think anybody has that crystal ball." What saved Keone Penn's life, Dr. Yeager says, is a public blood bank and the umbilical cord blood from an anonymous donor. "If they wish to pay, that's absolutely fine." He says of patients. "But to look at a larger, greatest good for greatest number, I would contend that a volunteer donation to a public blood bank would make the most sense."

Meanwhile, Keone, a pioneer, is doing things he's never done before. "I discovered the other day that I like playing basketball," Keone says. "I never played basketball, 'cause I've always been disabled to play it and to have fun." Keone, who one day hopes to become a chef, still has some major health problems as a result of infections that occur in most stem-cell transplants. Because of steroids and other medication, he has arthritis, walks with a limp and will need joint replacement in his hips and knee. But the good news is the sickle cell that

was killing him is gone. "I love stem cells," he says. "I mean they saved my life. If it weren't for them I wouldn't, you never know, I probably wouldn't be here today."

Keone doesn't know where the cord blood came from or who is the owner. He says he would like to know, just so he could say, "Thank You."

Abortion Workers and Psychological Stress

By Father Frank Pavone, As printed in the National Right to Life News, Nov. 2001

The use of the gas chambers in the Nazi holocaust is common knowledge. What is not so commonly known, however, is the reason why the method of killing was changed from shooting to gassing. And that reason reveals a frightening parallel with what is going on in the abortion industry today. In the documents of the Nuremberg War Crimes Trials, we read the following excerpt: "Women and children were to be executed with the men. In this respect, the Einsatzgruppen leaders encountered a difficulty they had not anticipated. Many of the enlisted men were husbands and fathers, and they winced as they pulled their triggers on these helpless creatures who reminded them of their own wives and offspring at home. ... This was hard on the executioners, personnel experts reported to the RSHA in Berlin, and to relieve their emotional sensitivity, gas vans were sent to the rescue." ("XI: Opinion and Judgment: Appropriation of Personal Methods of Execution: Part 2, United States of America v. Otto Ohiendorf, et al. (Case 9: 'Einsatzgruppen Case'). District of Columbia: GPO, 1950. pp. 448-453.) Gassing was not bloody, and took place behind the closed doors of the vans. It reduced the stress placed on the killers. Abortion practitioners publicly admit a similar emotional stress on the clinic workers who have to deal with the body parts of aborted babies. In the book *Second Trimester Abortion: Perspectives After a Decade of Experience* (Berger, Brenner, Keith, eds., Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1981), there is a chapter called "Psychological Impact on Patients and Staff," in which we read that "soon after voluntary abortion became a legal reality, some authorities observed an unanticipated, strong, emotional reaction by the staff" (p. 242). Notice the similarity of the following quote with the one from the Nuremberg trials: "Nurses found physical contact with the fetus particularly difficult; it reminded them of the 'preemies' just down the hall and made them uncomfortable as they thought about their own potential future pregnancies." (p. 245)

We read further in the Nuremberg documents that even the method of gassing created problems for those who had to unload the bodies: "Becker then complained that members of the Kommando should not be required to unload the corpses. I brought to the attention of the commanders of those S.K. concerned, the immense psychological injuries and damages to their health which that work can have for those men, even if not immediately, at least later on. The Men complained to me about headaches which appeared after each unloading." ("XI," as above.) This is why the task of unloading the

bodies was eventually given to the Jews who themselves were destined for killing, In the abortion industry, the abortionist will leave to the nurses and the assistants the grim task of reassembling and disposing of body parts. ...

Pregnant and in need of help?

America's Crisis Pregnancy Helpline: 800-67-Baby-6
Bethany Christian Services: 800-238-4269
Birthright: 800-550-4900
Caret: 800-395-HELP
Catholic Home Bureaus: 212-371-1000
Exts. 2127 & 2187
Carolyn's Place: (203) 597-9050
Good Counsel Homes: 800-723-8331
Nurturmg.Network:800-TNN-4MOM
Pregnancy Hotline: 800-848-LOVE
Several Sources Foundation: 800-NO-ABORT

Fides et Ratio: An Exhortation to Recover a True Metaphysic

By: Robert K. Carlson, condensed by: Queta Donovan

In his *eacyclical*, *~Fides et Ratio*, the Holy Father chose, in the twentieth year of his pontificate, 1998, as he had done so often in the past, to encourage once again his Brother Bishops and spiritual children to "be not afraid" **to reflect on truth.** "Sure of her competence as the bearer of the Revelation of Jesus Christ," he says, "The Church reaffirms the need to reflect upon truth... ". More specifically, in his reflection on truth, he exhorts philosophy to recover a true metaphysic - restore its sapiential dimension and true dignity and therefore function-as the *Ancilla fidei*. We are, the Holy Father believes, suffering from a metaphysical crisis of truth. This has caused a profound dilemma: if we deny the efficacy of reason to know the truth about real being and God, if there is instead a "widespread distrust of the human being's great capacity for knowledge," then how can truth be restored by national argument? What must or can be done to restore our trust in the natural capacity for knowledge? The Pope, in speaking for the Church, answers that he feels impelled "to bear witness to the truth" because "in reaffirming the truth of faith, we can both restore to our contemporaries a genuine trust in their capacity to know and challenge philosophy to recover and develop its own full dignity".

"Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth." The Pope, like a prudent father, eschews polemic, Instead — *Cor ad cor loquitur* - he invites his spiritual children to consider what he and other witnesses say about the path to

(continued)

Pro Life/Pro Family Membership Form

Name _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Address _____

Email _____

___ I expect to be able to attend the once a month meeting (7:30 p.m. 1st Tuesday of the month)

___ I don't expect to be able to attend the once a month meeting, but would still like to participate.
Would you:

___ Please keep me informed via mail

___ Please keep me informed via email

___ Please call upon me when you need help

___ I would like someone to telephone to suggest what I might be able to do to help.

**Would you care to do any of the following for the Pro Life/Pro Family cause?
(please check all that apply)**

___ Pray The Rosary Each Day

___ Attend morning Mass once per week

___ Say a special prayer at home each day

___ Pray The Rosary Once Per Week

___ Make a donation to Pro Life

___ Help with a time donation at a Pro Life event

___ Read a Pro Life information book

___ Listen/watch a Pro Life tape or video

___ Attend the Pro Life March in Washington D.C.

___ Give a Pro Life tape/book/video to a friend

___ Write a personal letter to a newspaper or government official

___ Attend the Tuesday night prayer at St. Rose 9:00 to 10:00

___ Pray in front of an abortion clinic once a week

___ Help a parent once a week

___ Other? _____

Maybe you always wanted to do something for the pro life/pro family cause, but never knew just how to get involved. Here is an opportunity to make a difference in our community, and maybe even the world. Pro life/pro family is not just meetings and marches. What you view as a small offering of time or effort can be so very important, that one extra prayer, that one small donation, that one phone call to a friend, each can contribute in so many ways, ways that you may never realize, to the building of a better world. **You can make a difference.**

When completed please return this form to the St. Rose Parish office, for the attention of Mariotte Corson.

truth. This sets the personal tone of the **encyclical**. He touches the heart, which makes the reason and will of the reader receptive to his words that persuade. In this age of anxiety, brought on by our metaphysical crisis of truth, where else might one go to hear the authentic voice of tradition that touches the heart than to the Vicar of Christ, who speaks for the Church and bears witness to the symbiotic relationship between faith and reason, a twofold path to truth? *Fides et Ratio* declares that man is continuously on a journey to discover truth. Because he is a spiritual creature made in the image of God and is therefore rational, which constitutes his true dignity as man, he wonders, raises fundamental questions and seeks free answers: Who am I? Where have I come from? Where am I going? and so forth. The core of these questions is the quest for the meaning of life, and here "begins, then, the journey which will lead [man] to discover ever new frontiers of knowledge".

While the encyclical endorses the efficacy of human reason in all endeavors to know natural truth, such as science and the liberal arts, its main focus is on philosophy. Why? The Church especially values philosophy, the Pope explains, because "She sees in philosophy the way to come to know fundamental truths about human life [and] considers philosophy an indispensable help for a deeper understanding of faith and for communicating the truth of the Gospel to those who do not yet know it." It should now be clear why the entire encyclical is, in one sense, an exhortation to recover a true metaphysic. If the harmony of revealed and natural truth which allows the Holy Father to specify their relationship correctly is dependent upon the principle of the unity of truth, and this principle is grounded in the ontological and logical principle of non-contradiction, metaphysics is absolutely necessary. Why? Because it is the philosophical science that explains and defends these principles, and also explains and defends the ability of the human mind to know objective truth and the definition of truth upon which the harmony of revealed and natural truth depends.

"The unity of truth is a fundamental premise of human reasoning," the Pope argues, "as the principle of non-contradiction makes clear. Revelation renders this unity certain..."

Therefore, as we move into this third millennium, the Holy Father exhorts philosophy to recover a true metaphysic in order to move beyond the crisis of truth and meaning that threatens the harmony between the twofold order of knowledge of faith and reason, and that threatens even theology itself, which is dependent upon that harmony. "If I insist so strongly on the metaphysical element," he says, "it is because I am convinced that it is the path to be taken in order to move beyond the crisis pervading large sectors of philosophy 'at the moment...' (83)

Pope John Paul II's exhortation to recover a true metaphysic is both timely and necessary, given the

contemporary situation. "Surveying the situation today," he says, "we see that the problems of other times have returned.

He writes that "in some contemporary theologies .. a certain rationalism is gaining ground, especially when opinions thought to be philosophically well founded are taken as normative for theological research... There are also signs of a resurgence *offideism*..."

The Vicar of Christ thus invokes Catholic tradition to bear witness to a skeptical world. We must "be not afraid" of the truth: the human spirit needs the two wings of faith and reason to find the fullness of truth: metaphysics alone - reason gazing on the "newness and radicality of being" - guarantees their harmonious relationships; and a bird can not fly with only one wing.

Deliver a Pro-Life Message to Washington

The annual January Pro-Life March on Washington affords the opportunity to express, in a most dramatic way, your absolute opposition to the legal sanction of abortion on demand. The Bush administration has proven to be the most pro-life leaning of any in recent years. Please demonstrate your support of those leanings. A strong showing this January is essential to prove that our resolve is not fading. Through the selfless act of giving up a day, arising early and returning home late, we can say in a unified voice: The killing of the unborn is unacceptable in this nation of "liberty and justice for all." This year, after the horror of September 11, it's particularly important to reaffirm our belief in the value and the sanctity of every life. While people now are generally more aware of that value, there are still many who do not view the unborn as individuals deserving of the same respect as the rest of us.

The reverse side of this page is a reservation form for the Pro-Life March. Please consider joining your St. Rose family for this great demonstration of our Pro-Life beliefs.

Pro-Life & Pro-Family Internet Sites

Parent's Television Council: <http://www.parentstv.org/>
Pregnancy Centers: <http://www.pregnancycenters.org/>
Priests For Life: <http://www.priestsforlife.org/>
Pro-Life Infonet: <http://www.prolifeinfo.org/>

Pro-Life Physicians

Richard R. Romanowski, MD, 1000 Youngs Rd., Williamsville, NY 14221 OB/GYN 716-688-0411
Milan Beres, MD, F.A.C.S., P.C., 1681 Barnum Ave., Stratford, CT 06497
Stephen A. Spaulding, MD, P.O. Box 610, 116 N. Catherine St., Montour Falls, NY 14865, 607-535-6080 - Family Practice - includes OB
Dr. Dana Jock & Dr. Mamate Bharucha, 3180 Main St., Bridgeport, CT - 203-374-0404