

# Life Matters

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

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## St. Rose Pro-Life/Pro-Family Committee Officers

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## A Culture of Life

Archbishop Charles J. Chaput, O.F.M. Cap.

and Bishop José Gomez

Statement issued October 9, 2002

It's a good time [during the Respect Life Program] to reflect on God's great gift of life, the many public issues that flow from it, and the priorities we need to have in defending it. Next month, in the November elections, each of us will face the task, in the voting booth, of building a culture of life – or its opposite. Each of us will make that choice as an individual, but we'll bear the consequences as a community. So we need to choose well.

## But Both Candidates are “Pro-Choice”

Excerpted from the Priests For Life newsletter for September-October, 2006

What happens if two opposing candidates both support abortion? Then just ask a simple question: *Which of the two candidates will do less harm to unborn children if elected?* This is not “choosing the lesser of two evils,” *We may never choose evil.* But in the case described above, you would not be choosing evil. Why? *Because in choosing to limit an evil, you are choosing a good.*

Voting with a clear conscience also means that you consider how the outcome of the election in which you vote affects the balance of power. In other words, elections do not only put *individual candidates* into power; they put *political parties* into power. And it is not only the candidates who have positions. So do the parties.

## The Right to Life

By Pope John Paul II

In Christifideles Laici, 1988

“The common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights – for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture – is false and illusory if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition of all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination.”

## Carolyn's Place

By: Antoinette Bosco

Submitted by: Helga Roegele

Excerpted from Woman's Day, 12/13/1996

[*On November 4, 1991, a newborn infant was deserted at St. John's Catholic Church in Watertown, Connecticut. Discovered by Fr. Robert Rousseau, the newborn was given the name “Carolyn Marie.” She was healthy and soon adopted by a loving family, but that was not the end of it. The incident inspired Fr. Rousseau and a group of parishioners to establish, for women in need, a crisis pregnancy center with 24-hour-a-day availability, and all services free and confidential. It's called “Carolyn's Place.”*]

On November 4, 1992, the first anniversary of the finding of the baby, Carolyn's Place officially opened in a storefront on Main Street in Watertown. In the first two and a half years, the nondenominational center, supported by donations and fundraisers, logged and responded to more than 2,500 calls for help.

. With about 35 volunteers, Carolyn's Place offers “help, hope and love,” says Ellen [Ellen Cavallo, an involved parishioner]. Free of charge, a woman can receive confidential pregnancy testing and help in arranging financial, legal and medical aid. She also can get maternity clothes, layettes and educational and adoption information as well as help in finding housing or a place in a host home for the duration of her pregnancy.

## Lifelines

But the calls are the heart of this work at Carolyn's

Place, the volunteers say, and they have many stories to tell, like Pam's. She was a 21-year-old college student and already the mother of a 2-year-old. Distraught over being pregnant again, she reluctantly turned: to "Abortion" in the Yellow Pages. Seeing the ad for Carolyn's Place, she was caught by two lines: "We can help. All services free and confidential." She called.

"She just kept saying, "I don't think I could go through a pregnancy again" says Mary Arduino, the volunteer who took the call. "But once she knew we were there really to listen to her and to walk her through her alternatives, from medical to housing, her depression lifted and she began to have hope."

Volunteers helped Pam get into an apartment style group home, a place where the women have privacy but live like a family, sharing experiences and help. She decided to keep the child.

For another young woman, 16 and pregnant, the call—made from a pay phone at school—took all the courage she could muster. "My boyfriend and I wanted to do what was best for our baby," Linda says. "We had actually ended our relationship because we knew it was a mistake, and we didn't want our baby to pay the price. But I was so afraid of my father. He's an alcoholic, and I knew he'd get very abusive when he found out I was pregnant."

Linda talked to Ellen Cavallo almost every day for two weeks, often crying. "I knew she needed her mother's help." Ellen says, "but she said her mom was more afraid of her father than she was." Finally the decision was made for Ellen to be at Linda's house when she told her father she was pregnant.

The visit didn't go well, and the next day Linda's father made an appointment for an abortion. To make sure Linda didn't run away, he literally put her under house arrest—and since he was self-employed, he could stay home to police her.

Then, to Ellen's surprise, Linda's mother, called her "She started talking about her 'grandchild,' and it was like she had a spark of new life, and she said she would help if I could get Linda away. "

Using the ruse of a final exam, Linda was able to leave home and was taken to a shelter that serves abused pregnant women. Her mother also made her own move, leaving Linda's father. Today [1996], the two live with Linda's child far from her father, and Linda is going to college.

## **A Special Power**

The volunteers' lives are changed, too. They put to use skills many never knew they had. They receive the deep satisfaction of putting their beliefs into action. They are given special insight into the complexities of life. Says former volunteer Barbara Fydenkovez, "To say pro-life is one thing, but when you listen to the women, you find their situations heart wrenching. Nothing is as easy as you want it to be."

One day, Ellen took a call from a 14 year-old who had heard about Carolyn's Place from a school friend. "She was not only pregnant, we discovered, but also HIV-positive," says Ellen. "She had lived with her uncle, three brothers and a sister. She had been supporting her uncle's drug habit through prostitution, and she felt if she got pregnant, her uncle wouldn't want her to live there and she'd get out."

Ellen became so involved with the girl that she even let her stay in her home for a while. We did a lot of searching and found an aunt who was happy to take her in. Then, two months after she gave birth, she died. The baby is HIV positive but doing well[1996].

"I wasn't prepared to deal with a death," she continues. "It was a life-changing experience for me." And it made her resolve to work even harder to ease some of the suffering that she sees.

It is this kind of commitment that is at the heart of Carolyn's Place, and Father Rousseau, who is now [1996] a pastor at St. Ann's Catholic Church in Bristol, Connecticut, speaks feelingly of it, But his core respect he says, goes back to the mother who left her baby in his church. "By making that choice," he says, "she has positively impacted thousands of other people." Like her baby, she is in his prayers. "

*Carolyn's Place can be found on the Web at:  
<http://www.carolynsplace.net/carolynsplace.htm>  
Or may be reached by telephone at:*

*203 597-9050*

## **Abortions and Forgiveness**

By: Rachel Torres O'Leary

Is forgiveness and healing possible after an abortion? If someone would have asked me that question over fifteen years ago, I would have said

no. When I had my two abortions in college I thought I'd never feel forgiven or whole again. The circumstances surrounding my decision to abort were influenced by the lack of my partner's and family's support, the deception that my pregnancies were mere blobs of tissue and far from a baby yet, as well as my own shame of being unwed and pregnant. The view that this "simple procedure" would return my life to normal proved false very quickly. As the years passed I suffered from all sorts of post-abortion symptoms ranging from depression, alcohol and drug abuse, to promiscuity, and even suicidal urges. Spiritually I was dead and I drifted from the Lord and His Church.

Eventually, I began to soul search and when I finally returned to the Church I was encouraged by the healing sacrament of confession and the knowledge of how much my Lord loved me in spite of my sins. However, the pain still lingered...the depression persisted...the anxiety continued. When I married my beautiful husband and we were expecting our first child, the post-abortion pain unexpectedly resurfaced. When at six weeks I saw on the sonogram for the first time, the beating heart of my child, I relived the horror of my decision. Throughout that pregnancy and subsequently through two more, the pain and regret of what I had done was more than I could bear.

Then I learned about Rachel's Vineyard, a ministry which offers Christ-centered healing retreats for post-abortive women and men. At first it was hard to believe that such a retreat existed. Would it be confidential? Would they accept me even though I'd had two abortions? Through scriptural based meditations, Adoration, the Sacrament of Reconciliation, and a Memorial Service, the Rachel's Vineyard Retreat enabled me to grieve and feel my pain in a safe and loving environment, and experience the healing and forgiveness of our Lord. I was so blessed to learn that Pope John Paul II said, *"The Father of mercies is ready to give you His forgiveness and His peace. You will come to understand that nothing is definitely lost, and you will be able to ask forgiveness from your child who is now living in the Lord."* (The Gospel of Life, paragraph 99) Today, I am able to acknowledge the regret and pain of my abortions, but I can also walk in the grace and mercy of our Lord and be a testimony to His love and redemption.

*Rachel Torres O'Leary runs the Spanish Rachel's Vineyard Retreats for the Diocese of Bridgeport. For more information she can be reached at torresoleary@yahoo.com. All inquiries are confidential.*

## Defending Men's Rights

By Celeste Vodola

Before the primaries this past summer, our house was barraged by postcards, pamphlets and computer-generated telephone messages trying to convince us that each candidate was better than the others. While all of this was annoying, I was truly insulted by the final call, which started out by noting a particular candidates' endorsement by the National Abortion Rights Action League (NARAL).

As an adult female and mother of five daughters, I do not see how unrestricted access to abortion and other forms of contraception is a benefit to me or any other female. I do see, however, how it benefits men.

The most obvious and brutal evidence of this is the well publicized fact that abortions of girl babies outnumber abortions of boy babies. In countries such as China and India, the larger percentage of abortions is to eliminate unborn female babies. This strategy has caused an inequality in the male/female ratio in China, specifically, which would not otherwise occur in nature. This is beginning to cause many societal problems in China, as the first generation of China's one-child only policy reaches marital age.

In addition, unlimited access to surgical and chemical abortions allows men to have a constant 'out' for their actions. Coercion to have an abortion comes in many forms. It may be as obvious as a man leaving his family or female partner, or as simple as the statement, "I told you that I didn't want any more children, take care of it."

Contraception has long been touted as a triumph for women's freedoms, but the opposite is the case. Consistent use of contraception by women continues to allow men to walk away from their responsibilities. Why should a teenage male worry about his sexual activity when he knows that a woman can get morning after pills?

As long as abortion remains legal and accepted in this country and around the globe, men will always have an 'out' for their actions. They do not need to take responsibility for a pregnant woman, because she has "options"

What men do not realize is that this same availability that allows them to ignore their own child also gives them no rights with regards to that child. Even if a man wants a woman to continue her pregnancy, he

has no legal right to prevent her from getting an abortion

We need to ask ourselves: Was Jesus ever not Jesus?

Because Jesus is fully human from the moment He “was conceived by the Holy Spirit,” we should follow the example of St. Joseph in protecting women and the unborn.

## **Vote & Pray For Marriage That It May Be As Blessed As Mine**

By Queta Donovan

I want to share my thoughts on marriage and how and why I vote on same sex-marriage laws. I feel a compelling need to let you know how I feel because I know how beautiful, how fulfilling marriage can be. In His love, the Lord instituted marriage. I can only begin to grasp the importance of marriage. In all His love and wisdom God created man and woman to multiply. How beautiful is love. We have many beautiful marriages in the Parish. We have many good families and many beautiful children; we are so blessed in Newtown. The Lord made us perfect in His image; man and woman. It is incredible how in coming together they share in and touch the power of creation! How can we accept something that is against Him? Worse still, how can we vote for same-sex marriage laws? If we are silent or if we don't vote we allow other people to do what they want.

I was really impressed when I found out about France! This country did a study about the effects of same-sex marriage in other countries. They too saw that it was not good for their society!

*“Report on the Family and the Rights of Children’ was released on January 25, 2006. Although the committee recommended increasing some rights given in PACS, it recommended maintaining prohibitions against marriage, adoption, and access to medically-assisted reproduction for same-sex couples, arguing that these three issues were inseparable and that allowing them would contravene a number of articles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, to which France is a signatory (although many UN nations do grant some or all of these rights to same-sex couples). Referring to the rights of children as a human rights issue, the report argued that children ‘now have rights and to systematically give*

*preference to adult aspirations over respect for these rights is not possible any more.’ [2] Because of these prohibitions, left-wing members of the committee rejected the report. [3]” (-sex marriage in France From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia.)*

We need to stand up and vote with our faith to protect our Children and restore the way of the Lord.

When I vote as an American I feel an emotion that only someone with two nationalities can understand. It is my honor and duty. I can feel the tears flowing from my eyes from the emotion of being able to vote in two countries... I have two chances to praise Him!

I praise God for our liberty, for our freedom to express ourselves, for the fact that our vote will really be counted! I pray for all creation and the whole world! The United States impacts the entire world one way or another!

The Lord has always been the principal reason for me to vote. I am not only a Christian but a Roman Catholic! I can choose the best for the Lord in my country!

As a U.S. citizen I have the opportunity to tell the Lord and the whole world that He, the Lord is the most important part of me. I need to defend His laws of love for all families, not only here at home but around the globe. To let them know that we the people of faith have been and are very blessed and happy with the laws of our Creator, and we give our children an example of love.

My personal toast for my very blessed and happy marriage:

### **The Best Wine On My Table**

Kevin, before we shared as a couple the wines on our table, I saw in your eyes, all the love of the Lord. The Lord was so pleased... He poured out His wine, and you poured into my jars, the wine of your table.

You have been at my side for 35 years, with my thirst for your wine... at your table!

Your wine pure and young, with the Lord, was inebriating and delightful

Oh, how we enjoyed champagne in our youth, and the adventures.....

The tasting, countries, mansions, aging, everything with the wine of the Lord on our table.

There has been port wine, white..., and red in our vineyard!

The dessert wine on our table of your love with the Lord has been very delicious.

Praise the Lord, that we have always shared the wine of the Lord!

The jars in our home have been filled with love and the wine of the Lord.

Years with abounding cheer together, and with many blessings flowing from the jars.

Your wine and the wine of the Lord changed everything into an elixir of love.

Your wine has grown better every year; you always serve the best wine on my table!

So beautiful and tasteful, is your wine and your love I think it is because your wine is so close, to the wine of the Lord!

How blessed we are... with the wine of the Lord!

Praise the Lord!

Pray for marriages.

## **Information From The Abortion Industry**

Excerpted from <http://priestsforlife.org>

According to the Alan Guttmacher Institute [*which favors the "freedom to terminate unwanted pregnancies" (Mission statement)*], in 2000, 1.31 million abortions took place in the United States. Some 52,000 of these occurred on women who were 16 to 20 weeks pregnant; some 13,000 occurred on women who were 21 weeks or more into their pregnancy. According to CDC government data, over 64,000 abortions in a year are performed on women who had had three or more previous abortions.

From 1973 through 2000, more than 39 million legal abortions occurred in our country.

Abortions are done mostly for non-medical reasons. As the abortion industry itself admits on the website of the Alan Guttmacher Institute, "On average, women give at least 3 reasons for choosing abortion: 3/4 say that having a baby would interfere with work, school or other responsibilities; about 2/3 say they cannot afford a child; and 1/2 say they do not want to be a single parent or are having problems with their husband or partner."

As the University of Detroit Law Review points out, "The Supreme Court's decisions...allowed abortion on demand throughout the entire nine months of

pregnancy" (Paul B. Linton, *Enforcement of State Abortion Statutes after Roe: A State-by-State Analysis*, Vol. 67, Issue 2, Winter 1990).

### **Quote from an Abortion supporter**

"...The abortion-rights folks know it, the anti-abortion folks know it, and so probably, does everyone else. One of the facts of abortion is that women enter abortion clinics to kill their fetuses. It is a form of killing ...you're ending a life."

(Ron Fitzsimmons, Executive Director, National Coalition of Abortion Providers, New York Times, 26 February 1997)

## **Do We Really Comprehend the Magnitude of Abortion in America?**

From <http://priestsforlife.org>

The National Vietnam Memorial in Washington DC is a shiny black wall that stretches 492 feet and lists the names of the 58,022 known Americans killed in that war. If such a wall listed the names of the children killed by abortion since 1973, the wall would be about 60 miles long! The casualties of our wars put together are fewer than the casualties from abortion in a single year. [*That 60 mile wall could stretch along the roadway from St. Rose through Hartford, on to Manchester, ending at 720 Main St. in that city, but of course most of these little ones are never even given a name to be engraved on such a monument.*]

## **Planned Parenthood and the Business of Abortion**

By Ken Concannon

As published in the Arlington Catholic Herald, Arlington Virginia in the issue of 2/3/05

As we commemorated in January the 32<sup>nd</sup> [33<sup>rd</sup> in 2006] anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* decision, it would be appropriate to recognize the most notable beneficiary of that decision — the international conglomerate known as Planned Parenthood. With the possible exception of the government of China, Planned Parenthood is the premier purveyor and promoter of abortion throughout the world.

As anyone familiar with its operation knows, the Planned Parenthood Federation of America (PPFA) is the colossus of the abortion industry. Last year the organization and its affiliates raked in \$810 million

to promote and supply its own peculiar version of what it calls "family planning." Its income came primarily from three sources: private contributions and bequests — \$191 million; government grants and contracts — \$265 million; and clinic income — \$306 million.

Within its clinics, Planned Parenthood provides a variety of "family planning" services, ranging from adoption referrals, to sterilizations, and the big money maker, medical and surgical abortions. But the emphasis is clearly on abortion.

Thanks to the *Roe* decision, Planned Parenthood's abortion business in this country brought in \$104 million last year, accounting for more than a third of its clinic income and nearly one-fifth of all abortions performed, by anybody, nationwide. For every adoption referral to an outside agency, Planned Parenthood aborts 138 babies in its clinics.

According to STOPP (Stop Planned Parenthood) International — a project of the American Life League that has been tracking the PPFA operation for 18 years — PPFA, which is technically a non-profit organization, turned a net profit for the 18th year in a row. Last year's profit of \$35.2 million brought its total profits over the 18-year period to \$538 million.

So how does PPFA spend all that money? Most of it goes to running the clinics, performing abortions, etc. After that, the biggest expenses in Planned Parenthood's budget last year were: \$89.9 million for "management and general;" \$44.2 million for "sexuality education;" \$40.6 million for "fundraising;" and \$39.4 million for "public policy." Two items in that list — "public policy" and "sexuality education" — merit some exploration here.

Although I could find no explanation of what exactly "public policy" expenses were, I think it's safe to assume that this category is for Planned Parenthood's lobbying efforts on behalf of (a) itself, and (b) its agenda. Getting politicians to kick in \$265 million of the taxpayers' money to your organization requires lobbyists, well-paid lobbyists, who sell the Planned Parenthood organization while selling its unfortunate agenda.

A perusal of the PPFA Web site will take one to a series of policy statements that define the Planned Parenthood world view. Under headings such as "Reproductive Freedom," "Population," "Abortion," "Universal Access to Sexuality Education," and

"Adolescent Services," PPFA spells out its frightening agenda. It's one in which abortion on demand should be made available to those who can afford it at reasonable cost, and those who can't at government expense. It's one in which developing countries should be encouraged to limit their population. And it's one that promotes guilt-free sex among adolescents.

I found this paragraph especially alarming under "Adolescent Services":

"Planned Parenthood opposes any limitation or restriction on the access of adolescents to confidential reproductive health services, including contraception and abortion. Planned Parenthood also supports a range of activities designed to reduce adolescent pregnancy and childbearing, such as expanded sexuality education, increased service accessibility, enhanced public awareness, behavioral research, and the development of contraceptive methods specially suited to adolescents."

PPFA and its affiliates pursue the sexuality education/adolescent services policy in a number of ways. For example, where parents and school officials are dumb enough, Planned Parenthood representatives are invited to provide sexuality education to teenagers while selling them leaky condoms, among other things. (In a recent *Consumer Reports* issue, the magazine rated Planned Parenthood's own brand of condoms the worst of 23 varieties studied.)

Planned Parenthood has traveling vans that offer university students access to emergency contraception ("EC" in Planned Parenthood lingo). According to the NARAL Pro-Choice America Web site: "EC availability varies by school. For example, students at the University of Virginia can get EC 24-hours a day, seven days a week, while students at the College of William and Mary can only get EC on weekdays."

And the latest maneuver in the Planned Parenthood assault on our children involves forming relationships with Girl Scout councils — e.g., jointly-sponsored Girl Scout/Planned Parenthood events, awarding badges based on participation in Planned Parenthood events, etc. At last count, 26 Girl Scout councils in 14 states have formed such relationships. As far as we know, there are none in Virginia — yet [Feb., 2005].

*Concannon is a freelance writer from All Saints Parish in Manassas.*