

# Life Matters

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

Autumn 2007

Volume VIII, Number II

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

*Editor of Life Matters – Fred Dwyer*

*Chairperson – Celeste Vodola*

*Secretary – Lillian Gustilo*

*Treasurer – Queta Donovan*

*Spiritual Director - Fr. John Inserra*

## My R.SVP. to Rudy Giuliani

By Bishop Thomas J. Tobin

As published in the Rhode Island Catholic, May 31, 2007

I probably would have written this article anyhow, so distressed was I. But then I received an invitation to attend a fundraising luncheon for presidential candidate Rudy Giuliani, and that absolutely confirmed my decision. The fundraiser [was] scheduled for Providence [the first week of June]. For \$500, I could attend a reception with the former New York City Mayor. For \$1,500 I could attend a reception with a photo-op.

The first thought that came to my mind is that I'm not charging enough for my Confirmation photos!

Nevertheless, and more to the point, I have no idea why I received an invitation to Giuliani's fundraiser. I don't know the mayor; I've never met him. I try to avoid partisan politics. Heck, I'm not even a Republican. But most of all, I would never support a candidate who supports legalized abortion.

Rudy's public proclamations on abortion are pathetic and confusing. Even worse, they're hypocritical.

Now, this is what we got from Rudy as he attempted to explain his ambiguous position on abortion in a speech at Houston Baptist College earlier this month: "Here are the two strong beliefs that I have, here are the two pillars of my thinking... One is, I believe abortion is wrong. I

think it is morally wrong. .. The second pillar that guides my thinking... where [people of good faith] come to different conclusions about this, about something so very, very personal, I believe you have to respect their viewpoint. You give them a level of choice here... I've always believed both of these things."

What? This drivel from the man who received high marks, and properly so, for his clear vision and personal courage in healing New York City, and by extension the nation, after the horrific terrorist attacks of September 11?

Rudy mentions the two pillars of his position. But you know what happens if you sit on a stool with two legs? Yep, it collapses, and so does Rudy's position, and along with it his integrity and reputation.

Rudy's explanation is a classic expression of the position on abortion we've heard from weak-kneed politicians so frequently in recent years: "I'm personally opposed to but don't want to impose my views on other people." The incongruity of that position has been exposed many times now. As I've asked previously, would we let any politician get away with the same pathetic cop-out on other issues: "I'm personally opposed to . . . racial discrimination, sexual abuse, prostitution, drug abuse, polygamy, incest . . . but don't want to impose my beliefs on others?"

Why is it that when I hear someone explaining this position, I think of the sad figure of Pontius Pilate in the Gospels, who personally found no guilt in Jesus, but for fear of the crowd, washed his hands of the whole affair and handed Jesus over to be crucified. I can just hear Pilate saying, "You know, I'm personally opposed to crucifixion but I don't want to impose my belief on others."

Okay, let's ask Mayor Giuliani to think about his position for a minute.

Hey Rudy, you say that you believe abortion is morally wrong. Why do you say that, Rudy; why do you believe that abortion is wrong? Is abortion the killing of an innocent child? Is it an offense against human dignity? Is it a cruel and violent act? Does it harm the woman who has the abortion? And if your answer to any of these questions is yes, Rudy, why would you permit people to... kill an innocent child, offend human dignity, commit a cruel and violent act or do harm to the mother? This is in the name of choice? Huh?

Rudy's preposterous position is compounded by the fact that he professes to be a Catholic. As Catholics, we are called, indeed required, to be pro-life, to cherish and protect human life as a precious gift of God from the moment of conception until the time of natural death. As a leader, as a public official, Rudy Giuliani has a special obligation in that regard.

In The Gospel of Life, Pope John Paul made the obligation to defend human life very explicit: "This task is the particular responsibility of civil leaders... No one can ever renounce this responsibility, especially when he or she has a legislative or decision-making mandate."

And more recently, the Bishops of the United States wrote: "If a Catholic in his or her personal or professional life were knowingly and obstinately to repudiate [the Church's] definitive teaching on moral issues, he or she would seriously diminish his or her communion with the Church." (Happy Are Those Who Are Called to His Supper, p. 11)

Rudy's defection from the Catholic Faith on this moral issue is not unique, of course. Catholic politicians of both parties, nationwide, have followed a similar path in abandoning the Faith for the sake of political expediency: Ted Kennedy, John Kerry, Pat Leahy, Nancy Pelosi, and Joe Biden come quickly to mind. And on a local level, of course, Congressman Patrick Kennedy and Senator Jack Reed. How these intelligent men and women will someday stand before the judgment seat of God and explain why they legitimized the death of countless innocent children in the sin of abortion is beyond me. ("But God, really, I was personally

opposed to it, but just couldn't do anything about it.")

Oh well, as you can see by now, I won't be attending the fundraiser for Rudy Giuliani. If Rudy wants to see me, he'll have to arrange an appointment at my office. We'll talk about his position on abortion. And if he wants a photo, it will cost him \$1,500 as a donation for the pro-life work of the Church.

## **Food and Water for Patients in Vegetative State is Obligatory, Vatican says**

By John L. Allen, Jr.

Published on National Catholic Reporter Conversation Café, Sep. 14, 2007

Submitted by Fr. John Inserra

Responding to an anguished moral debate in the United States and elsewhere, the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith ruled this morning [August 1, 2007] that providing food and water to patients in a "vegetative state" is obligatory, even through artificial means, except when the food and water can't be assimilated by the patient's body or when providing it causes "significant physical discomfort."

Specifically, the CDF held that even in a situation where there's moral certainty that a patient will never recover, it's not permissible to withdraw food and water, in effect allowing the person to die of dehydration or starvation.

The ruling came in a brief response to two questions that had been submitted by the bishops of the United States, where Catholic opinion has long been divided about precisely where to draw the line between "ordinary" means of care, which Catholic tradition regards as obligatory, and "extraordinary," which the Church treats as optional.

Two recent events had exacerbated this debate.

The first came in March 2004, when Pope John Paul II addressed a conference on patients in a persistent vegetative state organized by the Pontifical Academy for Life in Rome. The pope

appeared to suggest that the provision of food and water is always an "ordinary" means and therefore morally obligatory, but there has been a lively back-and-forth about exactly how his comments should be interpreted and what level of authority they held.

The second episode lending urgency to the Vatican clarification was the high-profile national debate surrounding Terry Schiavo in 2005, the Florida woman in a persistent vegetative state who died after life support was removed. Her husband argued that she should be allowed to die with dignity, while Schiavo's family strenuously defended her right to life. Among other things, the parents argued that their daughter was a devout Roman Catholic who would not wish to violate the Church's teachings on end-of-life care.

*The full text of the CDF ruling is as follows:*

CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE  
FAITH RESPONSES TO CERTAIN QUESTIONS OF  
THE UNITED STATES CONFERENCE OF  
CATHOLIC BISHOPS CONCERNING ARTIFICIAL  
NUTRITION AND HYDRATION

First question: Is the administration of food and water (whether by natural or artificial means) to a patient in a "vegetative state" morally obligatory except when they cannot be assimilated by the patient's body or cannot be administered to the patient without causing significant physical discomfort?

Response: Yes. The administration of food and water even by artificial means is, in principle, an ordinary and proportionate means of preserving life. It is therefore obligatory to the extent to which, and for as long as, it is shown to accomplish its proper finality, which is the hydration and nourishment of the patient. In this way suffering and death by starvation and dehydration are prevented.

Second question: When nutrition and hydration are being supplied by artificial means to a patient in a "permanent vegetative state", may they be discontinued when competent physicians judge with moral certainty that the patient will never recover consciousness?

Response: No. A patient in a "permanent vegetative state" is a person with fundamental human dignity and must, therefore, receive ordinary and proportionate care which includes, in principle, the administration of water and food even by artificial means.

*The Supreme Pontiff Benedict XVI, at the Audience granted to the undersigned Cardinal Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, approved these Responses, adopted in the Ordinary Session of the Congregation, and ordered their publication.*

*Rome, from the Offices of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, August 1, 2007. William Cardinal Levada, Prefect*

*Angelo Amato, S.D.B. Titular Archbishop of Sila, Secretary*

## **Why Not Homosexual Marriage?**

by Fred Dwyer

First and foremost we understand that Catholic marriage is a Sacrament instituted by God, to join one man and one woman. So why should we have concerns about civil laws governing marriage in our State and Nation? Of what value are such laws?

Marriage was constituted to provide a safe and enduring environment for the procreation and rearing of children. Through the years certain legal benefits such as rights of inheritance and special tax considerations have been bestowed upon the marriage state to maintain and enhance its viability in an ever more financially complex world. This has been done because marriage has been broadly recognized as valuable to society. It is socially and financially beneficial to have our next generation raised within sound enduring families. In this time when so many marriages fail, most of us have had the unfortunate opportunity to witness how badly children are hurt when a marriage collapses.

At this time we see the gay rights lobby seeking to claim those same benefits for partnerships which have nothing to do with procreation. In fact the drive to legitimize gay marriage seeks far more than just such financial perks. It primarily seeks broad public acceptance of the "gay lifestyle" as a desirable state, just an

alternative form of “family,” a choice no more disturbing to society than the choice of a lifetime career. We should be equally pleased when a son tells us he is “gay,” as we are if he expresses the desire to become a fireman. In either case he is planning ahead, setting a life direction. Good boy.

Homosexuality is an unfortunate condition thrust heavily upon some, and a choice for a further number whose same-sex attraction is marginal. Certainly people with this condition should be allowed the same freedoms we all enjoy. They should be loved by their families and friends, and respected for their accomplishments. However, special rights to favor and promote their condition provide no benefit to society, anymore than granting pedophiles the right to marry children would. Legalized homosexual marriage dilutes the already tenuous meaning and importance of marriage, which is in fact the fundamental building block of our society.

## **Freedom of Speech? Some Speech!**

Submitted by Helga & Bernhard Rogele

*This statement was read over the Public Address system at a high school football game in Kingston, Tennessee, on September 1, 2000, by Roane County High School Principal “Jody” McLoud. It was read into the Congressional Record by Congressman Zach Wamp (R-Tennessee) on September 20, 2000.*

"It has always been the custom at Roane County High School football games, to say prayer and play the National Anthem, to honor God and Country.

Due to a recent ruling by the Supreme Court, I am told that saying a prayer is a violation of federal case law. As I understand the law at this time, I can use this public facility to approve of sexual per-version and call it an "alternate lifestyle," and if someone is offended, that's OK.

I can use it to condone sexual promiscuity by dispensing condoms and calling it “safe sex.” If someone is offended, that’s OK.

I can even use this public facility to present the merits of killing an unborn baby as a “viable”

means of birth control. If someone is offended, no problem.

I can designate a school day as "Earth Day" and involve students in activities to worship religiously and praise the goddess "Mother Earth" and call it ecology.

However, if anyone uses this facility to honor God and to ask Him to bless this event with safety and good sportsmanship, then federal case law is violated.

This appears to be inconsistent at best, and at worst, diabolical. Apparently we are to be tolerant of everything and everyone except God and His Commandments.

Nevertheless, as a school principal, I frequently ask staff and students to abide by rules with which they do not necessarily agree. For me to do otherwise would be inconsistent at best, and at worst, hypocritical. I suffer from that affliction enough unintentionally. I certainly do not need to add an intentional transgression.

For this reason, I shall "Render unto Caesar that which is Caesar's" and refrain from praying at this time.

However, if you feel inspired to honor, praise and thank God and ask Him, in the name of Jesus to bless this event, please feel free to do so. As far as I know, that's not against the law — yet."

## **Hollywood: Truth or Scam**

As published by the Human Life Alliance

In Just for Girls, 2006 Edition

Submitted by Helga & Bernhard Rogele

So you sit down to relax and watch another rerun of Friends. What’s the first joke most likely to be about? Sex. Hollywood is continually sending messages to its audience that everyone is having pre-marital sex and that there must be something wrong with you if you’re still a virgin. Needless to say these are lies. Hollywood is not honest with you when it shows you the consequences of sex before marriage. They don’t show you the people who are infected with a viral STD and must deal with

the painful and annoying consequences their entire lives. They don't show the long lasting emotional difficulties that having multiple boyfriends, multiple sexual encounters, and multiple break-ups can have on someone's life. They don't show the teenagers infected with HIV. Why don't they? Because the painful consequences of pre-marital sex will not sell. What sells is sex for pleasure: sex free from any emotional, physical, or mental consequences. Have a one-night stand and laugh it off the next day, right? Wrong. Your favorite character on Friends can have over ten partners in one season with no emotional side effects and no STD's. That's not how it works in the real world. Eventually you have to face reality. Sex outside of marriage has real and lasting painful effects.

So what can you do? The dishonest messages about sex are everywhere in the media today. But what are they really telling you? "Let yourself be used for someone else's pleasure and then be thrown away the next day." That message is not treating you with the respect you deserve. You are a human being who deserves to be treated with dignity and respect, not used and abused. Submitting to the messages about sex that our culture is propagating only serves to degrade and devalue you as a person. Don't let this happen to you; you deserve better! Realize that you are of great worth, and resolve to treat your body with dignity and respect by saving yourself for your future spouse.

For more great information visit <http://www.humanlife.org/index.php>

## Unlocking the Language Trap

As published by the Human Life Alliance

In Trapped

Submitted by Helga & Bernhard Rogele

**My Body, My Choice!** The term "pro-choice" avoids talking about what you are choosing. Most people agree that we can be "pro-choice" about many things without offending anyone (i.e. chocolate or vanilla, paper or plastic). The term "choice" is value-neutral and meaningless unless we have some idea of what we are choosing. Society generally limits people's choices when it comes to

behaviors that are harmful or potentially harmful to other people. We, as a society, are "anti-choice" when it comes to theft, arson, murder, and a whole host of other actions.

**A Woman's "Right"/Freedom to Choose** It sounds almost patriotic. Our great American freedoms: freedom of speech, freedom of assembly, freedom of religion, etc. Individual rights are important, but you will not find "a right to abortion" anywhere in the Constitution. We have come too far to reduce a woman's "right" to mean the "right to kill her own children."

**It's Just Tissue** Consider the following facts: Simple tissue does not have a beating heart, brain waves, fingerprints, and unique DNA. A woman can carry a baby with a different gender or blood type from her own. After the moment of fertilization, nothing new is added to the baby except oxygen, nutrition, and time. The only differences between a newborn and a preborn baby are size, level of development, environment, and degree of dependency. All of these facts confirm the reality that you are a person worthy of protection from the moment of fertilization.

**A "Wanted" Child** Does your value depend on the degree that someone wants you? Let's be honest—a child is a child. How could any baby be called unwanted when there are over one million couples waiting, hoping, and praying for a chance to adopt a child?

**"Safe" Abortion** Many young women believed this lie until it was too late. The book, *Lime 5*, documents over 200 cases of women injured or killed by legal, so-called "safe" abortions.<sup>1</sup> The end result of an abortion is a dead baby, and the potential for cervical cancer, breast cancer, infertility, and psychological pain. Where's the "safe" part?

**"Back Alley" Abortions** According to the Centers for Disease Control, 39 maternal deaths occurred due to illegal abortions in 1972 (the year prior to the Roe v. Wade decision that legalized abortion nationally).<sup>2</sup> Any loss of life is tragic, but this is nowhere near the alleged "thousands of deaths by back-alley abortions."

**“I’m Personally Opposed, But I Can’t Tell Others What To Do”** What if U.S. citizens had been willing to accept this justification for tolerating slavery? Our forefathers took away the "rights" of slave owners in order to give freedom and respect to African American people. Our youngest and most vulnerable are still slaves to the life and death decisions of others.

**Rape and Incest** As traumatic as rape is, abortion does not un-rape the mother. The baby doesn't deserve to die for the crime of his or her father. Pat, a victim of rape, said, "In choosing to abort, to kill the innocent child growing within me, I lowered myself to the level of the rapist... [T]he effects of abortion are much more far-reaching than the effects of the rape in my life."<sup>3</sup>

**Fetal Deformities** No one's perfect. Abortion for fetal deformities is a form of discrimination against disabled people. Eighty percent or more of Down syndrome babies are now aborted.<sup>4</sup> There are waiting lists of people who would be willing to adopt a special needs child.<sup>5</sup> Who's to say their lives aren't worth living? When we make life and death judgments based on "quality of life," we start down the slippery slope of eugenics.

<sup>1</sup>Crutcher, Mark. *Lime* 5, 1996. <sup>2</sup>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report—Nov 2006. "Abortion Surveillance --- United States, 2003" -- Table 19. [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5511a1.htm?s\\_cid=ss5511a1\\_e](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5511a1.htm?s_cid=ss5511a1_e). <sup>3</sup>Family Research Council. The 'Hard Cases' of Abortion. 2000. <sup>4</sup>Neumayr, George. "The New Eugenics." *The American Spectator*. July 13, 2005. [http://theamericanproowler.com/util/print.asp?art\\_id=8418](http://theamericanproowler.com/util/print.asp?art_id=8418). <sup>5</sup>Johnson, Chuck. "The Adoption Option for Children with Special Needs." National Council for Adoption. Accessed 7/18/07. [www.adoptioncouncil.org/news](http://www.adoptioncouncil.org/news)

## I Had Four Abortions

By Mary from California

As published on the Priests for Life web site

<http://www.priestsforlife.org/liturgy/29sundayc.htm>

I had 4 abortions. The first when I was 18 after the first time I had sex. My parents didn't know. The boy offered to pay for the abortion. Basically, my friend took me by the hand and led me to the clinic where there was no discussion about alternatives, just an

appointment made. The second one, I took myself. The third one – my same boyfriend was involved. The fourth one I did alone. When I gave birth to my first baby, the reality of what I had done hit me like a ton of bricks. My husband and I have been profoundly affected. Our sex life is nil – we have unresolved guilt and anger. There's no telling what the impact has been on me, I am just opening the door to it all. But I know one thing – if it hadn't been legal, I would not have been so promiscuous. No way! –*Mary, CA*

## Pro-Life/Pro-Family Committee Calendar Sept. 2007 – Aug. 2008

Here's your committee's calendar. Come join us for any or all of these activities. Details will be published in the weekly bulletin before events. For further information call our chairperson, Celeste Vodola at 426-4638

- Sep. 4 -- Tuesday Meeting - planning the calendar for the New Year.
- Sep. 29 -- Last Saturday of the Month, Rosary for Life after 8 O'clock Mass (last Saturday of every month)
- Oct. ----- Pro-life month: Homilies about life
- Oct. 2 -- Tuesday Meeting -
- Oct. 7 -- Sun. Life Chain Danbury 2:30 - 3:30
- Nov. 6 -- Tuesday Meeting.
- Nov. 17/18 Sat/Sun. Baby Shower for Birthright of Greater Danbury
- Dec. 4 -- Tuesday Meeting
- Dec. 7/8 - Fri/Sat. Adoration 8:00 pm - 6:30 am.
- Dec. 8 -- Saturday, Immaculate Conception
- Jan. 8 -- Tuesday Meeting
- Jan. 21 -- Monday - Annual March for Life - Washington, D.C.
- Feb. 5 -- Tuesday Meeting.
- Mar. 4 -- Tuesday Meeting - Prepare Stations of the Cross
- Mar. 28 -- Good Friday, Lead Stations of the Cross.
- Mar.29/30 Sat/Sun. Baby Bottle fund raiser for crisis pregnancy centers.
- Apr. 1 -- Tuesday Meeting - Retreat, possibly with Sisters of Life
- May 6 -- Tuesday Meeting
- May 10/11 Sat/Sun. Mother's Day Flower Sale.
- May 30 -- Friday - Feast of the Sacred Heart - Solemn Mass at 7 p.m.
- Jun. 3 -- Tuesday Meeting - Rosary & Pot Luck
- Jul. 1 -- Saturday - 8:00 a.m. Mass, then Rosary at Danbury abortion clinic with families and parishioners.