



DEFEND LIFE

Promoting the Culture of Life and Fighting the Culture of Death since 1987

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Catholic patriotism: putting God first

How should Catholics exercise the virtue of patriotism in difficult times?

Msgr. Stuart Swetland got quick agreement from the folks at his Defend Life-sponsored talk at St. Ignatius Church in Fallston March 19 that our country is going through "difficult times."

To answer the thorny question of what constitutes Christian patriotism during these times, the Mount

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St. Alphonsans learn how to sidewalk counsel

By Daria B. Phair

St. Alphonsus Shrine in downtown Baltimore is two blocks from the Planned Parenthood located in the 300 block of Howard Street.

In early 2008, Monsignor Arthur Bastress, pastor of St. Alphonsus, decided to start a Respect Life ministry because of the church's proximity to Planned Parenthood.

One of the group's main objectives, of course, was to help the pregnant mothers who enter this

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Hagerstown pro-lifers mark 100th 'save'

By Jim Fritz and Gail Hoffman

Sidewalk counselors are in front of Hagerstown Reproductive Health Services three days a week, every day the abortionist is there killing babies.

The Hagerstown abortion mill opened in 1978, soon after *Roe v. Wade* became law. Previous attempts to close it down have been sporadic until the fall of 2006, when Charlie Heise and Jim Fritz decided to be

present on a full-time basis.

They were motivated by the examples of Dick Retta, Jeanne Nolan and Missy Smith, who went about saving babies and providing flyers, and taught them and others effective methods of sidewalk counseling.

Jeanne also worked with St. Mary's Church and Birthright. Through the help of parishioners from St. Mary's Catholic Church,

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100 and counting

Pro-lifers at the Hagerstown abortion mill have saved 100 unborn babies from abortion; (standing, from left) Geri Doyle, Gail Hoffman, Jim Fritz and Sherman Jones; (seated) Charlie Heise.

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only a block away from the abortuary, they recruited three women who became terrific sidewalk counselors: Angela Carroll from Hagerstown, Gail Hoffman from Pennsylvania and Geri Doyle, who had moved to this area from Nebraska and was already a very experienced counselor.

We call them Charlie's Angels because Charlie is always there, parked in front of the abortuary with a large sign mounted on his car. He is the source of all materials and information, and is the unofficial coordinator of all those coming to counsel and to pray.

Prayer warriors include not only parishioners from St. Mary's but seminarians and students from Mount St. Mary's in Emmitsburg and, more recently, members of various local Protestant churches.

We knew we must be doing a good job when shortly after we began our pro-life campaign, the abortuary staff brought in deathscorts.

Tuesdays at the abortuary begin early. The counselors are on the sidewalks before 8 a.m.

Early on Tuesday, February 10, when an abortion-minded woman and her friend approached the abortion mill, Gail and Geri met them on the sidewalk and counseled them all the way to the front door of the mill.

They warned the women about the dangers inside and told them of the help available. Unfortunately, the women went inside, refusing any pro-life literature.

Thanks to God and to the prayers of the many pro-lifers outside the mill, the women both came out of the abortuary. The woman's friend told Jim her friend had decided against the abortion but wouldn't

say anything more.

This was the 98th save since Charlie and Jim began their campaign in October 2006. Charlie has a record of every save.

A short time later Geri saw a Hispanic couple park down the street and went to counsel them.

She began talking even before they were out of their car, kneeling on the sidewalk beside the driver side and showing them our flyers. She must have talked nearly 45 minutes, describing the dangers and giving them information about the help available.

She was weeping, but she was weeping tears of relief and joy.

Geri showed them the baby's developmental age according to the picture charts in one of the flyers. The young man told her he didn't want the abortion, but the woman didn't seem so sure. However, they took all of the pro-life information and then drove away without entering the abortion mill. Another save!

At this point, Geri asked, "Is that 99?" referring to that particular save. Yes, it was number 99! The counselors suggested there should be a dinner or some sort of celebration after the 100th save. They didn't expect it to be so soon.

As they pondered the future 100th save and prayed on the sidewalk a short distance from the front door of the abortion mill, a young black woman came out. Gail offered her the "Healing from Abortion" pamphlet, but the woman said she didn't need it as she had changed her mind.

She did not go through with the abortion.

She was weeping, but she was weeping tears of relief and joy. Gail quickly offered her information about Birthright, where she could get help. Geri came over to give the young woman her card with her phone number in case she needed any further help.

The counselors held a celebration right on the spot. They all approached the young woman, overjoyed at the news. They told her she was special as she was their 100th save. They hugged her and offered help for her and for her family.

Another counselor, Sherman Jones, gave her two receiving blankets – one blue and one pink. Gail gave her two of Sherman's children's books for her children.

Even Sherman's daughter was a part of this happy scene, since she came out of the nearby building where she worked and gave her dad a hug.

A river of tears came down the young woman's face. Charlie kept handing the young woman tissues to wipe away her tears, then finally gave her the whole box. He also gave her gumdrops and a handful of Jim's breakfast granola bars.

If she had stood there long enough, I think he might have given her the entire contents of his car since he was so happy that she changed her mind and had chosen life.

Geri retrieved a pair of baby booties from her car and gave them to the tearful but happy young woman. Everyone present hugged her at least once.

Jim offered the young woman some pro-life literature, but she reminded him he had given her the flyers as she entered the abortuary and

she read them in the waiting room.

Jim had spoken to the young woman as she and her boyfriend, who was carrying their 7-month-old daughter, approached the abortion mill. When they reached the front door, the baby dropped her shoe on the ground, giving Jim more time to talk with the woman while the father retrieved the shoe.

Unfortunately, they entered the abortion mill. A short time later, the young man was sent out with the baby in his arms. Gail told the young man that the abortion mill owner does not want the presence of a beautiful baby to remind women of the children in their wombs, and thus change their minds.

Gail spoke with the young man for a while. He took the literature but drove off with his daughter, leaving his girlfriend in the abortion mill.

Jim, who had originally spoken with the couple and had given pro-life information to the young woman, must have gotten through to her because she came out even before paying any money for the abortion.

Apparently, since her baby was so young, she was afraid of having to take care of another new life so soon after the birth of her daughter. Geri explained to the woman that her own children were close in age and they were happy, loving and inseparable.

She noted this baby is special, and reminded her that their daughter would have a baby brother or sister to love.

Jim gave the young woman an early-stage fetal model to enable her to visualize her baby and also realize this tiny child is very precious. Geri explained the development of the baby in her womb and told the woman she could always find pro-lifers in front of the abortion mill on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, should she need help from them.



Cumberland memorializes unborn

The Cumberland Historic Cemetery Organization and Allegheny County Right to Life held their annual wreath-laying ceremony and prayer service January 18 at the Monument for the Unborn. The monument was erected as a memorial to all aborted children in the U.S. since the *Roe v. Wade* decision in 1973. Defend Life Director Jack Ames attended the monument unveiling ceremony in 2004. The monument is located at Davis Memorial Cemetery, Uhl Highway, south of Cumberland. (From left) Elaine Braver, Allegheny County Right to Life President Mary Miltenberger, Chester Dale Burgess, Linda Burgess, Mary Ann Eckard, Wayne Houdershalt of the Pope John XXIII Knights of Columbus Council; (back row) Leland Taylor and CHCO President Edward Taylor, Jr.

Charlie asked the woman to bring her baby back after it is born and to visit the pro-lifers occasionally.

The young woman also said that she really never wanted an abortion. She lost her first child, a son, soon after his birth and miscarried her second child. The counselors told her that her two babies are in Heaven and would be waiting for her and praying for them all.

Geri and Gail drove the woman to her home where her boyfriend, the father, gave them a peace sign. He seemed to be gentle and accepting of the woman's decision.

The pro-lifers were overjoyed by the good news of the 100th save; however, they continued to pray so

that others who had gone into the abortion mill might also choose life and come out of the mill.

The pro-lifers were preparing to go home when a father, mother, and their crying daughter exited the abortion mill. Gail, who had talked to them earlier, approached and offered them a "Healing from Abortion" pamphlet but it was refused by the father.

The counselor persisted, asking the father to please take the pamphlet for his daughter because she would need it. He said his daughter did not need the pamphlet because she didn't go through with the abortion! This was the fourth save and capped off a great day for all of us.

PATRIOTISM, from page 1

St. Mary's University priest turned to the Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Bible – specifically, the Fourth Commandment.

“The third section of the Catechism, which teaches morals, says we should honor our parents and those whom God has vested with authority for our common good,” he said.

We are communal beings; even the Greeks knew that, said Swetland. The family, the church and the state are the three natural, God-created communities essential to a healthy society.

“We should honor our father and mother because of their parental role in the family. We should honor our bishop for his role in the Church.

“And we should honor those who have been entrusted with authority by God. *Romans 13* makes that clear: the authority of those placed in political leadership comes from God.”

We should afford to those who have a father-like role over us that devotion, honor and respect that a good, loving, holy child ought to give to his father.

That's why we give our country the title of “Fatherland,” he explained, adding that the term “patriotism” actually comes from the root word, “patria,” father.

Obviously, those entrusted with these leadership positions ought to be Christ-like in their leadership, said Monsignor.

“Christ taught His twelve apostles how to lead as servant-leaders. He told them, look at the pagans, how they lord it over each other: you can't be that way.”

He modeled for them how to do this when He washed their feet on the night He was betrayed.

The virtue of patriotism for the average citizen, however, means

striking a balance between being unpatriotic – someone unwilling to pay his taxes, vote, serve on a jury, and so forth – and the person who goes overboard and is “a nationalistic bigot.”

An appropriate love of country is to want to see our country flourish, and the true common good pursued and obtained.

As citizens, said Swetland, quoting the Catechism, “Those subject



If you disagree with our leaders, do it respectfully, says Msgr. Stuart Swetland.

to authority should regard those in authority as representatives of God, who has made them stewards of His gifts.”

But our rhetoric toward our leaders has often been uncharitable and unchristian, he said.

“The way President Bush was treated during his presidency was abominable. You can agree or disagree with his politics, but you should treat him with respect.”

The same respect should have been shown to President Clinton, of whom Monsignor said, “I was not a fan; I think he had a lot of weaknesses.

“But they should be treated with respect. When the president of the U.S. walks into a room, people should

stand. It's appropriate and it's godly, because God has entrusted them with authority.”

But the Catechism goes on to say that our collaboration includes the right, and at times, the duty to voice our just criticisms of that which seems harmful to the dignity of persons and the good of the community.

“We have to respect them; that doesn't mean we have to agree with them, or keep this disagreement to ourselves.

“Politely – forcefully, if we need to – articulately, persistently making our disagreements known is not wrong. But do it with respect for the person and his office.”

We are good citizens, but God has priority, said Monsignor, recalling St. Thomas More's declaration, “I go to my death the king's good subject, but God's first.”

Jesus, pointing to the Roman coin with Caesar's image stamped on it, told us to “Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and to God the things that are God's.”

“What has *God's* image stamped upon it? The human person,” Monsignor pointed out.

Yet President Obama recently lifted the ban on federal funding using human embryos for research.

“This is what I call the audacity of ignorance! Every nation state is to serve the human person, so that every human person can flourish – but no human person can flourish unless he is able to *live*.”

We Americans, at the founding of our nation, understood the self-evident truths upon which our experiment in ordered liberty was to be based, said Swetland.

“They're not complicated: life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.

“But our government has forgot-

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Law may lead to funding of human embryo farms

By Carol Monaco

Legislation has been introduced in the House and Senate that would allow federal funding for embryonic stem cell research and shield the executive order signed by President Obama on March 9.

Obama's order lifts restrictions on embryonic stem cell research and the legislation, if passed, would protect the research by federal law.

"We have to make sure that the freedom to pursue this research is also protected by federal law, not merely by an executive order that can be reversed during a future administration," said Sen. Thomas Harkin (D-IA) in a statement. Senator Harkin, along with Sen. Arlen Specter (R-PA), introduced the bill in February.

"This legislation is necessary to codify this important policy change

so that it does not ping-pong back and forth with each successive President," said Senator Specter.

"A legislative fix to the current restrictions is a more complete solution to ensure that medical research is pursued with all possible haste to cure the diseases and maladies affecting Americans."

President George W. Bush restricted federal funding for embry-

Researchers are already demanding that human embryos be created specifically for research.

onic stem cell research since 2001. Funding for that research was limited to a small number of stem cell lines that were created before Aug. 9, 2001.

The current legislation is similar to the bill approved by both the House and Senate and vetoed by President Bush in 2007.

According to the Stem Cell Research Enhancement Act of 2009 (S. 487), "human embryonic stem cells shall be eligible for use in any research conducted or supported by the Secretary if the cells meet each of the following:

- The stem cells were derived from human embryos that have been donated from in vitro fertilization clinics, were created for the purposes of fertility treatment, and were in excess of the clinical need of the individuals seeking such treatment.
- Prior to consideration of embryo donation and through consultation with the individuals seek-

ing fertility treatment, it was determined that the embryos would never be implanted in a woman and would otherwise be discarded.

- The individuals seeking fertility treatment donated the embryos with written informed consent and without receiving any financial or other inducements to make the donation."

The research is controversial because days-old embryos must be destroyed to obtain the cells.

Activists in the pro-life cause fear the latest actions may lead to changing or repealing the Dickey-Wicker law.

"This law prohibits federal funding of 'the creation of a human embryo or embryos for research purposes; or research in which a human embryo or embryos are destroyed, discarded, or knowingly subjected to risk of injury or death . . .'

"Any member of Congress who votes for legislation to repeal this law is voting to allow federal funding of human embryo farms, created through the use of human cloning," said Douglas Johnson, a spokesman for the National Right to Life Committee.

President Obama's Executive Order does not alleviate those concerns. "Many researchers will not be satisfied to use only so-called surplus embryos," said Johnson.

"Many researchers are already demanding federal support for research in which human embryos would be created for the specific purpose of research, through human cloning and other methods, and there was nothing in the President's remarks . . . to limit NIH to the use of so-called surplus

DUTY, from page 4

ten. And we, as patriotic citizens, have a right and duty to remind them of these self-evident truths – because if a nation is founded on a lie – and if *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* are what our Constitution really says, then we're founded on some great lies – it will not last. It will go into the trash bin of history, that rubble where communism and fascism and militarism have long gone."

"History cannot run counter to conscience forever," wrote a young Polish poet, Karol Wojtyla, during the German occupation of Poland; the truth always wins in the long run, said Swetland.

"While we want to be good citizens, we are first citizens of heaven, which will last forever and ever."

embryos created in IVF clinics.”

According to the Executive Order, “the authority of the Department of Health and Human Services, including the National Institutes of Health (NIH), to fund and conduct human embryonic stem cell research has been limited by Presidential actions.

“The purpose of this order is to remove these limitations on scientific inquiry, to expand NIH support for the exploration of human stem cell research, and in doing so to enhance the contribution of America’s scientists to important new discoveries and new therapies for the benefit of humankind.”

The Executive Order instructs the Department of Health and Human Services, through the director of NIH, to review existing NIH guidance and other widely recognized guidelines on human stem cell research, including provisions establishing appropriate safeguards, and issue new NIH guidance on such research.

Appearing on Fox News’ Special Report with Brett Baier on March 9, syndicated columnist Charles Krauthammer said he declined a White House invitation to the signing ceremony of the executive order because “the President has left open the cloning of human embryos in order to destroy them in experiments.

“Secondly, he leaves open the creation of human embryos entirely for the purpose of research and experimentation. And thirdly, he had a memorandum which he signed in which he talks about restoring the scientific integrity in government decisions, which was an outrageous attack on Bush.”

In addition, many breakthroughs have been achieved with adult stem cells research derived from non-embryonic sources.

“Human embryo-destroying stem cell research is not only unethical,

COUNSEL, from page 1

abortuary. But how does one engage successfully in sidewalk counseling? We decided to ask an expert, so we invited Missy Smith to speak on March 14.

Missy became a full-time pro-life activist in 1999 when she heard about the gruesome business of selling aborted baby body parts.

She co-founded WAKEUP, Women Against the Killing and Exploitation of Unprotected Persons (www.wakeupnet.net), to educate people about the Culture of Death and bring about the Culture of Life. Her work with the organization spurred her to do sidewalk counseling in front of abortion facilities.

“Why Are We There?” was the title of Missy’s talk. The answer: because it is the most exciting work in the world.

She began by posing three questions to consider about sidewalk counseling. The first was, “Where are we?” You are at a satanic place, engaging in spiritual warfare to stop the slaughter of innocent babies and the wounding of women.

cal, unworkable, and unreliable, it is now demonstrably unnecessary,” said Rep. Chris Smith (R-NJ) in response to Obama’s executive order.

“Assertions that leftover embryos are better off dead so that their stem cells can be derived is dehumanizing and cheapens human life. There is no such thing as leftover human life.”

Rep. Michael Pence (R-IN) also denounced the lifting of restrictions.

“It is categorically wrong to fund unnecessary and immoral research that destroys human embryos,” said Rep. Pence. “Embryonic stem cell research has failed to provide a single treatment to a living patient.”

“Why are we there?” You have the opportunity to walk in the footsteps of Christ because of your love for the baby and her mother and even the deathscorts. As Christ told all of us, we must hate the sin but love the sinner.

The final question was, “What are we doing there?” You are there to counsel women, who are fearful and probably being coerced by others, on the dangers of abortion.

How do you do this?

First of all, educate yourself about abortion and its detrimental effects—both physically and mentally.

Abortion is not some innocuous procedure. The details are graphic and not pleasant to hear, but it is necessary to know how it is done so that you can convey the information to the mother.

Ninety percent of abortions are performed during the first trimester. The abortionist uses a suction device to vacuum out the baby.

The baby is dismembered and then thrown out in the trash or in the disposal. Her parts may be sold for medical research, a multi-million dollar business.

It is astounding to realize, but abortion mills are not regulated. They are not hospitals and have no emergency equipment. Veterinary hospitals are subject to more regulations.

Abortion statistics are horrific. One in fifty mothers is killed or damaged physically, so that she may become sterile or develop infections or blood poisoning

The next step is to arm yourself with materials to present to the mother. Missy suggested wearing an apron in which you can store rosaries and instructions on how to say the rosary, fetal models (at 11-12 weeks of age), and brochures.

Necessary handouts give a) the development of a baby, b) lists or



Missy Smith explains the fine points of sidewalk counseling to pro-lifers at St. Alphonsus Church.

business cards of local crisis pregnancy centers, c) information about adoption, and d) contacts for post-abortion help, such as Rachel's Vineyard and Silent No More.

One particularly powerful pamphlet recommended by Missy is called "Did You Know" (published by Hayes Publishing Company, hayespub@aol.com).

It shows photos of healthy pre-born and born babies and aborted babies. On the back is the famous "bucket of babies" photo.

Missy also suggested the leaflet entitled "I Regret My Abortion." Also carry a cell phone in order to call a crisis pregnancy center for the mother or in case of emergency, such as the police or deathscorts overstepping their bounds.

Now you are ready to counsel at an abortuary. Find out when it is open by looking on the website. For protection's sake, always go with at least one other person.

If the building has a public sidewalk in front, each counselor should position himself at each end of the block. When you see someone who

looks like she is headed for the mill, walk alongside her right up to the door, but never block her.

Possible opening lines are: "Do you know anyone who is pregnant?" "We have help for you." "Let your baby live."

Bond with her and show compassion. Give her some facts about abortion and the procedures, even the graphic facts about how they dispose of the baby or sell the body parts. Remember, she may not know what an actual abortion involves.

Focus also on the harm to her psyche and body. Encourage adop-

tion. Offer her whatever wares from your arsenal you deem appropriate.

It is often helpful to talk with the person accompanying the mother, who may be coercing her into having an abortion.

Here are a few don'ts. Don't refer to the "fetus," but always use the word "baby." Don't be combative, aggressive, judgmental, or overly religious. Don't raise your voice. Don't touch her.

When you are at the abortuary, don't interrupt or chitchat with other counselors. You are there for one reason only. Stay vigilant as to who is approaching.

Don't get discouraged. You probably won't know how you affected the situation, but you will know that you are doing God's work.

After the lecture, several attendees asked questions. 1) Should you bring children to the mill? Yes, they can be a powerful reminder to the pregnant mother. 2) Should you show graphic pictures? Not if you have access to the front door of the abortuary. Yes, if you don't. 3) How long can you stay in front of the mill? There is no time limit, and you don't need a permit, no matter how many pro-lifers are there.

Daria Phair is coordinator of the St. Alphonsus' Respect Life ministry.

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Don't give up on Democrats, Schenck urges

When Paul Schenck was a Protestant minister in Buffalo, New York, a Democratic club asked him to run for the state senate.

"I seriously considered it," the Catholic convert and director of the Harrisburg Diocese's Respect Life Office told his audience at a Defend Life-sponsored talk at St. Joseph's Church in Hanover, Pa., February 19.

Ironically, a few weeks later the Republicans made the same request. Schenck immediately turned it down.

"In Buffalo back then, the Democrats were pro-life and the Republicans were pro-death," he explained.

"My family had a long record of supporting Democratic ideals. Our heroes when I was growing up were Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis, the Rev. Ralph Abernathy, Martin Luther King, Jr., and Hubert Humphrey – all of whom championed human dignity and never once considered being pro-abortion."

But in the course of time, said Schenck, the party of the weak, the vulnerable and the poor began to take on alien causes, the worst of which was the movement to legalize abortion.

"The Democratic Party made a tectonic shift toward a kind of amoral secularism," he noted.

In the meantime, "the WASPy, blue-blooded, population-control Republicans" went on to embrace the Born-Again Christians and faithful Catholics who had been abandoned by the Democratic Party.

"The party positions exactly flip-flopped in a ten-year period," he said.

But, despite last November's



Paul Schenck advises pro-lifers to make friends within both parties.

election of a Democrat president and Congress, Schenck urged pro-lifers not to be discouraged and to remember that neither party is historically or philosophically aligned with the modern pro-death movement.

Even Hilary Clinton, in a speech at American University during the primaries, said that abortion should be "very, very, *very* rare," said Schenck.

"She evinced even the Democrats' extreme discomfort with the peculiar institution of abortion."

This past election, more pro-life Democrats were elected to the House of Representatives than ever before, he noted.

These are freshmen Congressmen, and they lack power and influence, he conceded.

"But they'll have it in two to six years. This points up a looming division between the Old Guard that is beholden to the abortion lobby money and the New Guard that is ambivalent or even pro-life on abortion."

Something happens when you

do what Jesus said and love your enemies, pray for those who persecute you, and do good to those who despitely use you, said Schenck.

Progress toward securing the right to human life and the dignity of each person from conception to natural death will only be realized if we work within *each* political party, he asserted.

"If the pro-life position remains a partisan issue that belongs to only one party, we will make no progress. We must make friends within *both* parties. This is what happened with segregation and why we saw it disintegrate."

Schenck pointed to his home state of Pennsylvania as an example of what can happen when pro-lifers enlist both parties in the pro-life cause.

Americans United for Life has ranked Pennsylvania as the most pro-life state in the nation. Part of the reason for the ranking is Real Alternatives, a \$6.5 million state-funded pregnancy support program.

The program is the result of collaboration between Democrats and Republicans.

"Real Alternatives has told me that without the pro-life Democrats in Pennsylvania, they couldn't do what they're doing," said Schenck.

"So you see, it really works, right here in Pennsylvania.

"This is not going to be easy, and it will not be fast," he admitted. "It means careful work that is free from prejudice and stereotype.

"But we must put the past behind us.

"We look forward to the day when everyone who is pro-life – and everyone is *born* pro-life – remains pro-life."

A Md. Right-to-Lifer replies**We need ‘incrementalism’ in the real world of politics****By Bob Brown**

The pro-life movement is historically unique, in that not a single person involved is struggling for his or her own rights.

In each of our nation’s storied rights movements, each member of the oppressed group had the opportunity—albeit generally a risky one—to speak up, stand up, or sit in for his or her rights.

In each of these other civil rights movements, a team of oppressed and free worked together for justice.

But in the pro-life movement, the oppressed are absolutely powerless, not even aware of the peril that is before them. Their lives are completely in the hands of others.

The pro-life movement is unique for another reason. The people whom we are trying to protect from legalized terror are being killed at the rate of 4,000 per day. Abortion is a singularly vicious attack. World War III is in the wombs of women.

Because it’s the innocent who are preyed upon, because the struggle is four decades old with no apparent end in sight, because almost all of the powerbrokers in our society are either apathetic toward or dead set against the little children—we can become frustrated.

We don’t have Hollywood, the media, or the evening news portraying the struggle with anything remotely close to fairness and accuracy.

We don’t have the White House, Congress, or state legislatures on our side in any sort of robust way. And we don’t have very many good people from the churches working with us; they are distracted for a variety of reasons—some noble, some not.

All we’ve got is us. And God. Kind of like Gideon who was trying to raise an army to fight against the Midianites (see *Judges, Chapter 7*): he started out with 32,000, but 22,000 were afraid and went home.

Of the 10,000 remaining, 9,700 drank water the wrong way and were sent home as well. Gideon was left with a mere 300 soldiers—less than 1 percent of those who had showed up for Israelite army Spring Training.

**Guilty as charged:
National Right to Life
does take
incremental steps.**

However, it was God who said, “Whoever is afraid, let him depart.” And it was God who designed the (evidently difficult) water lapping test.

I don’t know if there is some sort of parallel justification today for the low turnout of Christian pro-life warriors, but I do know that just about the very last thing that we can afford is in-fighting.

I’m not a pro-life movement historian, so I don’t know how it started. But without a doubt, the rift within our camp is real.

It was simmering below the surface for many years, in the pro-life movement’s usual location, out of the public eye.

Ironically, strangely, tragically, it was the Supreme Court decision upholding the ban on partial birth abortions that led to the in-fighting boiling over, spilling out, and severely widening the rift.

What happened was that a group from Colorado, with the support of some other pro-life groups, took out a full-page ad in a national newspaper condemning organizations that they viewed as enemies of the pro-life movement.

Did they decry Planned Parenthood for their billion-dollar blood business? No. Did they condemn NARAL for its political perversion? No. They assailed the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC), James Dobson and Focus on the Family, and others for their support of the ban on partial birth abortions.

I don’t want to misrepresent their viewpoint, but I think that their reasoning goes something like this: a “partial” victory is no victory at all.

In other words, any sort of legal or political decision that prevents only a few types of abortion is seen as an implicit endorsement of the rest of the types of abortions that were not outlawed by that decision.

Supporting anything less than a 100 percent ban is, some claim, compromise—in the negative sense, like betrayal.

The January-February 2009 issue of *Defend Life* had a front page article about the rift, reporting on a January 9 lecture given in Pasadena, Md., in which harsh words, like charges of “incrementalism,” were directed at National Right to Life.

Defend Life has accorded me, as a member of the board of directors of Maryland Right to Life (and, thus, a member of NRLC) the chance to respond.

Well, guilty as charged: NRLC does take incremental steps. NRLC

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Easter Sunday 2009 Anno Domini

Dear Friend of Defend Life,

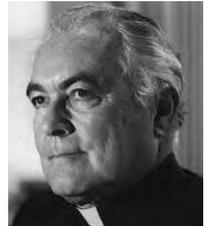


Obama's policy to reverse President Reagan's Mexico City Policy (no foreign aid to groups that foster and pay for abortions), and his decision to use taxpayer funds for embryonic stem cell research (which is nothing more than abortion at the earliest stage of development) and his proposal to eliminate the **CONSCIENCE CLAUSE** clearly make him **America's most Pro-Abortion President ever!** Add to that his catastrophic economic stimulus plan that may well triple our national debt and lead to printing press inflation.

But, if that's still not enough to infuriate you, add to that Notre Dame's invitation to Obama to be their commencement speaker and receive an honorary Doctor of Laws degree on May 17. More about what you can do to try to cancel this abomination shortly, but let me reminisce for a moment.



So much of the moral quagmire that so many Catholic institutions find themselves in goes back to 1967 and the **Land of Lakes Conference**. At that infamous conference, many Catholic university presidents, Notre Dame included, declared that they would *continue to call themselves Catholic but no longer be bound by Catholic moral teaching*. That was the opening of Pandora's box that led to the mess Catholic colleges are in today.



Here are some of the things that logically followed from that Land of Lakes sellout:

- Former Notre Dame President Father Theodore Hesburgh inviting Planned Parenthood to have its annual conference on the ND campus.
- Condoms being dispensed at student health centers at Catholic colleges.
- Catholic college students being referred by these same campus health centers to places like



Planned Parenthood for abortions.

- Pro-abortion speakers routinely speaking at Catholic colleges and other Catholic institutions. **Barbara Mikulsi, Kathleen Kennedy Townsend, Robert Drinan, S.J., former Congressman Tom McMillan, and former Governor William Donald Shafer** are just a few names that come to mind.



- Former Jesuit Maryland Provincial Edward Glynn defending this sort of immoral nonsense when I personally confronted him with this information over lunch.
- **Shacking up at Catholic** colleges like Baltimore's Loyola College which was documented by Loyola ethics professor Vigen Gurorian. Do a Google search using the key words *dorm brothel Loyola College* and you will see what I am talking about.
- Firing a superb religion teacher at a Baltimore Catholic boys' high school whose only mistake was inviting a chastity speaker to address soon-to-be-graduating seniors.

- And the list goes on and on.

But the immediate case at hand is Notre Dame's complete sellout of Catholic moral teaching by inviting Obama to speak at their May 17 commencement.

- **Father George Rutler**, a convert to Roman Catholicism, likens this to the citizens of Bethlehem honoring King Herod after he completed the wholesale slaughter of all boys ages two and under, better known as the **Slaughter of the Holy Innocents**.



- **Doctor Ralph McInerny**, who has taught philosophy at Notre Dame for 54 years, calls Notre Dame's action the *deliberate thumbing of its collective nose* at the Roman Catholic Church. He also said, *It is the universal abandonment of any pretense at being a Catholic university.*



- Soon to retire **Bishop John D'Arcy** of Fort Wayne-South Bend, where Notre Dame is located, who sadly refused to participate in this mockery, said *A bishop must teach the Catholic faith in season and out of season and he teaches not by his words but by his actions*

Please do the following to attempt to cancel Obama's appearance at Notre Dame:

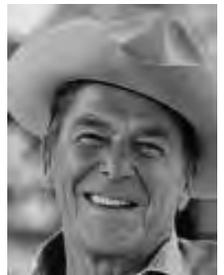
- Visit www.notredamescandal.com to sign the on-line petition protesting Notre Dame's actions. Hundreds of thousands have already signed.
- Invite your friends to do likewise.
- Call **Fr. John Jenkins, President of Notre Dame** at **574-631-5000**, and urge him to rescind this invitation to Obama. Fax him at **574-631-2770**. Email him at president@nd.edu.
- Call all Notre Dame alumni you know and suggest that they can no longer financially support their alma mater in good conscience.
- Contact persons who are considering sending a son or daughter to Notre Dame. Suggest that their son or daughter might be much better off at a truly Catholic college, such as **Christendom, Franciscan, Ave Maria, Benedictine, Thomas Aquinas, Magdalen, Thomas More, Belmont Abbey, or Dallas**. Even a state university with a good Catholic student center such as **College Park** or **George Mason** might be better. It certainly would be less expensive!
- **Pray the Rosary daily asking for Our Lady's intervention in the sordid matter.**



Paul Weyrich, R.I.P.

America lost a patriot of *Patrick Henry's* proportions when **Paul Weyrich**, a conservative icon went on to his eternal reward on December 18. Here are some of the remarkable things Paul did in the 66-year walk Our Lord gave him here on earth:

- Co-founded *Heritage Foundation* along with *Ed Fulner*. Who doesn't thrill when they hear Heritage radio ads with the timeless words of *Ronald Reagan*.
 - Founded *Free Congress*, which mobilized conservative activists, recruited conservative candidates, and raised funds for conservative causes.
 - Convinced brewing giant *Joseph Coors* to fund both of these great organizations.
 - Came up with the name *Moral Majority* and encouraged *Jerry Falwell* and other evangelical leaders to energize the conservative movement with their preaching.
 - Established the *Kriebel Institute* which supported democratic movements and promoted small businesses in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union.



Paul Weyrich was a Melkite Rite Catholic. He is survived by his wife Joyce and their five children, and several grandchildren. In the later years of his life, Paul suffered immensely from a spinal injury, diabetes, and amputation of both legs below the knees. He was confined to a wheelchair for many years but continued to work for the America he so much loved until the day he died. **He truly died with his boots on! May all manly men be so fortunate!**

Here is what he said about homosexuality in a **National Public Radio** interview:

Weyrich: *It has been known for many years that Congressman Foley was a homosexual. Homosexuals tend to be preoccupied with sex—the idea that he should be continued, or should have been*

continued as chairman on the Committee for Missing and Exploited Children, given their knowledge of that is just outrageous (Interview at 1:08).

Norris: **Now, before we go on, I think I can say, Mr. Weyrich, that there quite a few people who would take exception to the statement that homosexuals are preoccupied with sex.**

Weyrich: *Well, I don't care whether they take exception to it—it happens to be true.*

Norris: **That is your opinion.**

Weyrich: *Well, it's not only my opinion, it's the opinion of many psychologists and psychiatrists who have to deal with them.* (Interview at 1:40).

OTHER PRICELESS QUOTES FROM PAUL WEYRICH

- *We are different from previous generations of conservatives We are no longer working to preserve the status quo. We are radicals, working to overturn the present power structure of this country.*
- *The real enemy is the secular humanist mindset which seeks to destroy everything that is good in this society.*
- *If we want to stop or at least reduce outsourcing of jobs to foreign countries, we should tax outsourcing. In my view, that would be a good new tax.*
- *I asked (Yegor) Gaidar (prominent Russian economist and author) why it was that he thought free-market efforts in the (old) Soviet Union were being trashed by American media when the reality was far different from what I was seeing (in the media). He replied with a stinging answer, one I never will forget. He said, Well, the Soviets spent millions of dollars infiltrating your media. Just because the Soviet Union went away doesn't mean these people have gone away. They are still there. Of course, I new this.*



I owe much to Paul Weyrich. Way back in 1986, I organized and attended a conservative training seminar sponsored by Free Congress. Paul Weyrich and the great Mike Schwartz were two of the outstanding instructors. Much of what I learned then has contributed mightily to what **Defend Life** has accomplished since it was established in 1987. Barry Sullivan, whom I had met in 1985, also attended. What he learned that Friday and Saturday was a tremendous help in his run for Congress in 1990.

At the get together dinner Friday night, I had the privilege of sitting next to Paul Weyrich. We all had pressure sensitive name tags and mine had become detached and was now clinging to my sleeve. Paul said, *By the way, your name tag is on your sleeve.* I replied, *That's where I normally wear my heart.* And I pray that I always will! Thanks, Paul, for all that you taught us!

And thanks for all YOU do to save innocent pre-born babies from death by abortion!

Long Live Jesus Christ Our King!

Jack Ames
Jack Ames
Director

ENCLOSURE

Thanks to all who gave generously to our Christmas Matching Grant Campaign!

We know of several donors who mailed checks that we never received.

If you donated, please be sure that your check cleared.

If not, please reissue and send us another check. Thank You!

INCREMENTS, from page 9

and its state affiliates began to chip away at the giant *Roe v. Wade* boulder long before the ban on partial birth abortions became a reality—and our work continues, trying to get one state to pass a parental notification act, another state to require that an ultrasound be offered before abortion, etc.

Each victory that is achieved may not save the lives of a million pre-born babies, but each victory does save some lives.

But I guess what is not obvious to some people is that it is not NRLC who is dictating the slow pace of change; it's the politicians (and our nation's moral climate, which the politicians reflect, more or less.)

There is not a single person at NRLC—or in the pro-life movement on either side of the rift—who wouldn't love to see a Constitutional amendment passed today that protects the life of every human being from conception to natural death.

The difficulty in our behind-the-scenes legislative work is that very few politicians are fully with us, pro-life in heart and practice.

A whole bunch are in the middle—"moderates" in political speak—they will vote pro-life when it suits them politically and pro-abortion when it suits them politically.

And there are many other politicians who obtained their seats of power and who remain there with the support of organizations that get rich selling the deaths of preborn babies.

As one big collective gelatinous legislative mass, they are very difficult to budge, especially in our direction. We are like a small number of worker ants trying to push and coax and cajole a giant mound of Jell-O across a rough and hilly terrain. It seems impossible at times.

Let me end with a hypothetical example, which typifies the complexity of what we face behind political doors.

Imagine a certain very pro-abortion state in which some pro-life groups are pushing for a personhood amendment to that state's constitution.

They want the help of NRLC and its state affiliate to put pressure on the moderate politicians who could

We are like worker ants trying to push a giant mound of Jell-O across a rough terrain.

swing the vote in the right way.

Of course, when NRLC gets the opportunity to talk with these moderates, who have a history of voting with us on some bills and against us on others, we'll recommend strongly that a personhood amendment is the right thing to do for the citizens of the state. However, we'll also agree not to rake them over the coals in public if they go against us on this.

Are we compromising our principles? Some pro-life groups say we are, when NRLC is perceived to be not taking sides. Yet, a lot more is going on behind the scenes than most people are aware of.

In this hypothetical example in the very pro-abortion state, with pro-abortion voters, pro-abortion judges, and a large majority of pro-abortion legislators, there is no chance that a personhood amendment will be added to the state's constitution.

However, several moderates think that it is simply a matter of common sense to support another piece of pending legislation, which would require women to see an ul-

trasound before making an abortion decision.

If NRLC publicly chastises these moderates for not supporting the personhood amendment (which has just about zero chance of succeeding no matter who lobbies for it), then they'll turn around and "punish" us by dropping support for the ultrasound legislation—which will save lives and open the door to broader pro-life legislation.

It's not a perfect science, to say the least. NRLC has made its share of miscalculations, most of which are realized only in hindsight.

But when one pro-life group slanders another pro-life group in the public arena, that is a serious error in judgment as well.

No babies were saved by the unkind newspaper ad, and the tens of thousands of donated dollars which paid for it could have been better spent.

When the members of the family of God, of the pro-life community, have conflicts among each other, we must follow the Biblical model of conflict resolution.

We should assume the best motives of our brothers and sisters in Christ, forgive each other time and time again for any perceived wrongs done, and work as one body to further God's kingdom, save souls, and protect the innocent.

TOWSON PRO-LIFE

Fighting the Culture of Death at Towson University!

JOHN EUBANK
443-717-2100

TowsonProLife@gmail.com



In My Humble Opinion

Burke lays down law to waffling bishops

By Janet Baker

As many people already know, Randall Terry, founder of Operation Rescue, recently led a delegation of nine pro-life people to the Vatican. There they held a series of meetings March 2-6 with Archbishop Raymond Burke and other Vatican officials.

They presented to him a document called *Oves Sine Pastore* (Sheep without a Shepherd). It can be read at www.humbleplea.com.

It draws the connections between the furtherance of abortion in this country (including the election of Barack Hussein Obama to the presidency) and the lack of diligence shown by the majority of the U.S. bishops.

On March 2, Terry and Archbishop Burke engaged in an interview regarding the enforcement of Canon 915.

The text of it is simple and brief: *“Those upon whom the penalty of excommunication or interdict has been imposed or declared, and others who obstinately persist in manifest grave sin, are not to be admitted to Holy Communion.”*

Although this Canon directly binds on them, most bishops in this country waffle when asked if they will enforce it.

A few conscientious bishops have gone on record as saying they intend to do so. Bishop Martino of Scranton has instructed his churches to enforce it (with particular reference to U.S. Sen. Bob Casey, Jr.).

When Burke was archbishop of St. Louis, he made it clear that he would enforce it. A few others have likewise assented. But most dissent, including the current archbishop of

Washington, Donald Wuerl (as did his immediate predecessor, Cardinal McCarrick). To the south, Bishop Paul Loverde of Arlington also declines to enforce the Canon.

In the interview, the archbishop, in plain English, states that Canon 915 “puts the burden upon the minister of Holy Communion, whether it’s the ordinary minister . . . or an



Canon 915 must be enforced in regard to pro-abortion politicians, says Archbishop Burke.

extraordinary minister – it doesn’t make any difference.”

Moreover, he stated that “now where bishops have not applied the canon, often times it’s said that this will cause some kind of disorder at the time of distribution of Holy Communion. That’s not verified.

“It’s not using Holy Communion to make a statement at all, it’s simply respecting this most sacred gift we have – namely, the Body and Blood of Christ,” and “Catholics—who are consistently promoting pro-abortion legislation and policies—use reception of Holy Communion to try to

justify what they are doing.”

To illustrate the contrast between Burke’s clear teachings and the obfuscation of so many American bishops, please listen to this statement given by Cardinal McCarrick on National Public Radio. His remarks provide a stark example of the doubletalk employed to justify disobedience to the Canon.

Note how many times he misrepresents the current Holy Father’s intentions (at the time of the interview, he was Cardinal Ratzinger). Here’s the link; you’ll need Windows Media Player or Quicktime to listen to it. <http://www.npr.org/templates/story/story.php?storyId=4208922>

You have it in his own words.

Earlier in the Vatican interview, Burke told Terry, “When someone is publicly and obstinately in grave sin, we may not administer Holy Communion to the person.”

Note that the archbishop is speaking in the first-person-plural. That is, he is speaking of himself and his fellow ministers of Holy Communion.

He also says “*may not* administer.” Note the imperative voice of that statement. It allows for no option to give Communion to a dissident politician.

That salient point seems to be lost on Archbishop Wuerl. He was questioned about Nancy Pelosi’s reception of Holy Communion two years ago by *California Catholic Daily* reporter Allyson Smith. Here’s how it went:

Smith: “Will you make a statement to your priests and deacons to warn her not to allow her to receive if she presents herself for Communion?”

See BURKE, page 16

Book Review**Debunking what ‘Everyone knows’ about capitalism’s roots****By Diane Levero**

Pope Benedict XVI has been trying for some time to tell the world that faith and reason are not incompatible.

Now here comes a brilliant writer who proposes – and makes a compelling case – that not only is faith compatible with reason; faith – specifically the Christian faith – is the root cause for the triumph of reason and the resultant flourishing of scientific progress, capitalism and prosperity in Western civilization.

A tall order, indeed. Especially in light of what Everyone Knows.

Everyone Knows, for example, that the Catholic Church has always been inimically opposed to science, and has tried to squelch it at every turn.

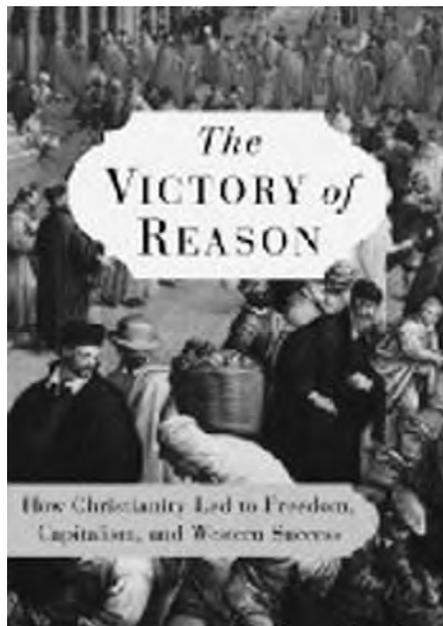
Nonsense, says author Rodney Stark.

In *The Victory of Reason: How Christianity Led to Freedom, Capitalism and Western Success*, Stark points out that the basic Christian concept of God is one of an all-powerful creator and governor of an orderly universe.

This concept contrasts sharply with the core beliefs of the world’s other major religions.

Buddhism, Confucianism and Taoism, for example, all hold that the universe is eternal, and thus has no creator. For them, the universe is a supreme mystery, inconsistent, unpredictable and arbitrary.

But Christian theologians, from the earliest times, have held that man, created in the image of God as a rational being, can use his God-given reason to deduce truths about the Creator and the workings of His creation.



Leading Christian theologians such as Augustine and Aquinas celebrated reason as the means to gain insight into divine intentions.

St. Augustine praised not only theological progress, but earthly material progress: “Has not the genius of man invented and applied countless astonishing arts, partly the result of necessity, partly the result of exuberant invention?” he declared.

But Everyone Knows, of course, that during the so-called Dark Ages – the period from the fall of Rome until about the fifteenth century, Europe was mired in economic and intellectual squalor caused by the repressive Catholic Church.

Far from it, Stark asserts. During this period, European technology and science overtook and surpassed the rest of the world.

Once released from the oppression of Rome, and buoyed by Christian concepts of individualism, “human effort and ingenuity turned to better ways to farm, to sail, to

transport goods, to build churches, to make war, to educate, and even to play music,” says Stark.

Again, Everyone Knows that the “Protestant work ethic” of hard work and frugal living was responsible for the eventual development and success of capitalism, right?

Not so, says Stark. Many centuries before the Reformation or the existence of any Protestants, Catholic monks modeled these virtues, supporting themselves by their own manual labor.

Through their development of improved farming techniques and careful management and reinvestment, they soon moved from subsistence agriculture to surplus production of specialty produce such as wine and cheese, and to economic prosperity.

Stark also presents strong evidence that the so-called Scientific Revolution of the sixteenth century was not “a sudden eruption of secular thinking, but the culmination of centuries of systematic progress by medieval Scholastics, sustained by the uniquely Christian twelfth-century invention, the university.”

Probably the most fascinating section of *The Victory of Reason* is Stark’s description of capitalism “in full flower” in the Italian city-states of Venice, Genoa, Florence and Milan centuries before the Reformation.

Here, the fortunate confluence of Christian ideals, small political units, secure property rights, and a relatively free (unregulated) market allowed a strong merchant-trader class to pursue complex, systematic commercial activities, investing and reinvesting wealth in productive, long-term ventures – the very

definition of capitalism.

Most essential to capitalism is a banking system. The Italian city-states developed an international banking system, with branches all over continental Europe and England.

In time, the banking system – and capitalism – spread to the rest of Europe, and the Italian city-states lost their monopoly.

England eventually became the world's first truly industrial nation. Why did this happen in a Protestant nation, and not in Catholic Spain or France?

Unfortunately, in the latter two countries, greedy despotism reared its ugly head, crushing freedom and the development of capitalism, two necessary foundations for an industrial economy, Stark explains.

England, on the other hand, had enjoyed centuries of freedom from despotism, ensured by the Magna Charta, imposed on King John in 1215 by a coalition of British nobles and Church officials, including all the Catholic bishops.

“English capitalism could develop as it did only because the English enjoyed unparalleled levels of freedom.

“It was not coincidence that the nation with the longest tradition of individual liberty was the nation where invention and industry thrived,” Stark notes.

Historians and intellectual elites have long denied credit to Christianity for its vital role in the development of freedom, scientific progress, industrialization, and economic prosperity.

The Victory of Reason does much to set the record straight.

makes plain his intention to diverge from the Magisterium in this most crucial matter.

Terry and his delegation, during their visit, asked for the replacements of both Archbishop Wuerl of Washington and Bishop Loverde of Arlington, owing to their refusal to obey Canon 915.

We hope and pray that such will happen. Even if it doesn't, now the Vatican has to acknowledge that it has come face to face with the problem of lackluster bishops that we have in these United States. They will find it just a bit more difficult to deny the severity of the situation.

For our part, we now have another case in which a Vatican official makes plain that Canon 915 binds upon the ministers of Holy Communion to ensure that manifest sinners such as pro-abortion politicians don't commit a sin of sacrilege against the Eucharist, and to protect the dignity of the Blessed Sacrament.

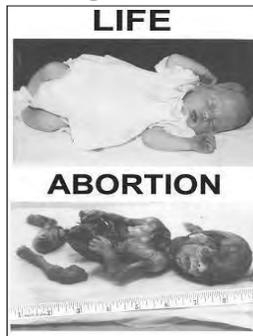
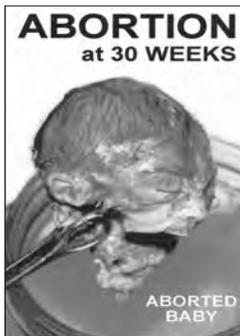
BURKE, from page 14

Wuerl: “You're talking about a whole different style of pastoral ministry. No.”

What Archbishop Wuerl dismissively calls a “style of pastoral ministry” is in fact a Canon law that solemnly binds upon him and his brother clergymen. In doing so, he

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Hobnobbing with the Hopkins pro-choicers

By Tony Levero

Recently I attended a Students for Choice movie night at Johns Hopkins. The film was *Never Go Back: The Legal Threat to Abortion*.

I feel pretty grounded in my beliefs, but as a former debater, I like to know all sides of an issue. I talked one of my pro-life classmates at Loyola College into coming along on my misadventure, and on the night of February 24, we hopped in a very cold cab and made the trip over.

If anyone asked, our cover was that we were receiving extra credit for a women's psych class (believable and altogether safe, since no one expected us to be capable of explaining women).

We arrived and introduced ourselves to the pro-choicers. It was a small turnout, maybe six girls. They were more or less friendly and altogether surprised to have boys attending, especially all the way from Loyola.

I quickly dropped our cover and stated that I was not quite pro-choice but "pro-being-informed." This clearly did not throw them for a loop, but had the added benefit of not having them call on us for discussion.

Carrie Fisher narrated the documentary. You may remember her as Princess Leia in *Star Wars* and well, not much else.

The movie was a mainly a historical overview covering from around *Roe v. Wade* to present day, nothing new to anyone in the room.

Funding came from the Feminist Majority Foundation during the early George W. Bush administra-

tion. The film's aim was mainly to stir up already-pro-choice supporters not to allow Bush to make strict-interpretationalist Supreme Court appointments (I smugly thought of John Roberts and Sam Alito and took some comfort).

While the film showed a few "victims" of "unfair" state laws or corporations limiting or not selling morning after pills, etc., much of it was devoted to scaring the beejees out of its target audience.

The film artfully trotted forth a procession of Southern-twanged, Bible Belt, pro-life bogeymen.

It artfully trotted forth a procession of Southern-twanged, Bible Belt, pro-life bogeymen. By the time Jerry Falwell made an appearance on screen, the audience cringed and hissed in a reception usually reserved for movie villains like Darth Vader.

The film proceeded to bring in "actual people" to help things hit home. It covered the more specific issues like the alleged need for the availability of RU 486 at large retailers and the obligations hospitals should be under to perform sterilizations.

While I knew ahead of time that I would not agree with either the film or the Students for Choice on the issue of abortion, the biggest eye-opener of the night for me was the reasoning behind their ideology on these sub-issues.

In the discussion that ensued following the film, the girls com-

plained that pharmacists at chains like Wal Mart have a duty to fill a prescription, regardless of personal qualms. They also found it unreasonable that a hospital should not perform a procedure despite clients' demands for it.

As a political conservative, I see this as more of a market issue. A private retailer or medical establishment is under no obligation to them, legally or professionally. By definition, the word *private* entitles these institutions to sell/perform only what they choose.

If anything, forcing an individual to act against their own morals is an imposition of another's morality, the same forced morality that pro-choicers get positively giddy knocking *us* for.

As the discussion progressed, I realized that I had little to no common ground with the girls, aside from mentally agreeing that "women dying" is a bad thing.

Any that identified their religion professed atheism. Fiscally, they were clearly liberal. I was glad that I had not come to argue; I would have been lost for a place to start.

While they were cordial, they did not hesitate to disparage their opponents (and I am sure they were aware of our leanings) both on a political and personal basis.

I took little new from the experience, but at least learned a little about the ideology that motivates those on the other side of the aisle.



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Ethicist grades human value on awareness, autonomy

By Bob Brown

“A chimp has more value than a severely disabled human being.”

These are not the words of Tarzan before he met Jane, left the jungle, and joined civilization. It is a statement made by Princeton University philosophy professor and world renowned ethicist Peter Singer at a recent public speaking engagement.

On March 12, Dr. Singer’s lecture, “The Ethics of What We Eat,” was the culminating event of Ethics Week 2009 at the Community College of Baltimore County. The J Building lecture hall on the Essex campus was packed with about 200 members of the community and faculty and students from CCBC and other Baltimore-area academic institutions.

Following his lecture, Singer drove to New York where he appeared that evening on Comedy Central’s “Colbert Nation.”

Peter Singer was born in Australia in 1946. He specializes in applied ethics and has held lecturing and faculty positions in philosophy departments at a number of institutions, including Melbourne University, Oxford University, and Princeton University.

He is best known for his 1975 book, *Animal Liberation*, which is often credited with kicking off the modern animal rights movement. He argues that all animals, including humans, should have rights based not on intelligence but on their capacity to feel and be aware of pain.

In 1979 he published his most comprehensive philosophical work, *Practical Ethics*. In it he writes that society should measure the wrongness of the taking of a life—human or animal—by the degree to which doing so frustrates the life-goals of that human or animal.

In 2005, Dr. Singer published *Re-thinking Life and Death*, in which he claims that “fetuses” and newborns lack the fundamental qualities of personhood: “rationality, autonomy, and self-consciousness.”

He reasons that killing a fetus or even a one-month-old infant is therefore not morally equivalent to killing a more developed human being “who wants to go on living.”



Peter Singer was questioned on his controversial views on the value of human life at a recent lecture.

During the March 12 lecture, Singer steered clear of his more controversial views, which have often been met with protests and condemnations.

Instead, he focused on ethical choices in our decisions about food, stating that people don’t often think of what we eat as an ethical issue.

He said that the decision whether or not to eat a particular food item ought to be based on three things: how obtaining it has affected the non-human animal from which it came, the impact on the environment of producing that food, and the impact on the people who produce that food—especially poor laborers in dismal food production facilities around the world.

Dr. Singer’s position is that if animals, like beef cattle, must be killed as a food source for humans, then those animals should be killed in a painless and stress-free way, and only after having lived a “good life,” like roaming free on large parcels of pasture rather than being cooped up in cages.

Singer argued further that, for instance, eating beef is inefficient and a waste of resources that could otherwise be shared with the world’s poor.

He said that 90 percent of the food value of the grain fed to beef cattle is lost—only 10 percent of the grain goes to the meat we get from the cattle, while the other 90 percent goes to growing other mostly unusable parts of the cow (bones, hooves, etc.).

Ten times more food value would be obtained by eating the grain directly, and doing so would impact the environment less: decidedly less fertilizer and pesticides would be needed to produce the grain.

There would also be enough grain to be shared with countries that have large populations of undernourished people.

After the lecture, one audience member, noting Dr. Singer’s compassion for cows, asked if he was equally concerned for the rights of ants.

He responded that cows and ants have different nervous systems, and as far as he could tell, ants were merely “little robots.”

However, he admitted that he really didn’t know, so his advice was to “give ants the benefit of the doubt.” He did confess that if there were a lot of ants in his kitchen, he would have to do something about them.

Another in the audience asked that if Dr. Singer’s standard for having rights is the ability to sense pain, then

See ETHICS, page 19

Letter to the Editor**One More Soul responds to Baker's column**

Dear Editor:

I write in response to Janet Baker's article, "Reflections on the election: let's stop mincing words," in the January-February issue of *Defend Life*.

Janet criticizes our "Dandelion and Rose" poster for not declaring that a consequence of unchaste behavior is Hell, and a consequence of chaste behavior is Heaven.

We omit these consequences because we (and the Church) do not know who is going to be condemned to Hell or be glorified in Heaven.

Janet probably knows that certain conditions beyond an action itself are required for the action to be mortally sinful – and complete knowledge and complete acceptance. Only God and the individual can determine those.

The Church has never said that someone is in Hell. She has said that there are many saints in Heaven, but she has never blanket-canonized all the chaste.

Janet also says that she has twice contacted One More Soul to offer her suggestions for improving our

poster.

I do not recall either communication. If we missed these communications, I apologize.

Our contact information is on all of our in-house created resources (including the poster): www.OMSoul.com, 800-307-7685, omsoul@om-soul.com, 1846 North Main Street, Dayton, OH 45405.

Thanks and blessings to you and all you love and serve.

Steve Koob, Director
One More Soul

ETHICS, from page 18

shouldn't he be opposed to abortion?

He responded, evidently citing incomplete medical information, that fetuses don't feel pain until 20 weeks.

The same questioner continued, "So, you're opposed to second- and third-trimester abortions?"

Dr. Singer replied, "You must have a good reason [for one]," but he did not explain what he thought a good reason for a second- or third-trimester abortion would be.

The final question was about the value of the life of a healthy chimpanzee compared to that of a human who was severely disabled or in a permanent vegetative state.

Singer contended that the chimpanzee has more plans and hopes for the future than does the severely disabled person.

In Dr. Singer's continuum of ethical values, the more that a being is aware of its life-journey and is frustrated from fulfilling it, the greater the moral wrong done to that being.

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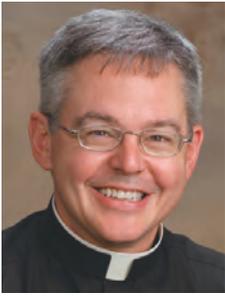
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115 S. Frederick Ave., Gaithersburg, MD 20877

301-963-6833 • tkcrodrig@yahoo.com

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