

Family & ProLife News Briefs

March 2020

Pro-Family Values, Pro-Life Values

Brains of Women and Men Differ

Neuroscientist Linda Mosconi at Weill Cornell Medical College, NYC, was interviewed about her new book, *The XX Brain*, that addresses hormonal changes. “Women’s brains are not the same as men’s brains They’re wired a little bit differently because the **DNA is different.**” Regarding the capacity to multitask: “Not to say that men are not able to, but women seem to have a little bit of an advantage” Yet, anxiety and depression “are much more common in women than men. Women are four times more likely than men to have headaches and migraines. Women are way more likely to even have a brain tumor. And women are more likely than men to be diagnosed with Alzheimer’s disease.”

“Brain imaging studies done in women before and after pregnancy show that some parts of the brain kind of shrink after the baby is born, but that is actually a good thing. The new mom is like, ‘OK, I no longer have time for everybody’s things. I need to be able to focus on this baby and I want to optimize my brain so that it’s really sharp and really devoted to motherhood.’” [*Wall Street Journal*, 3/10/20]

Court Supports Pro-Life Student Group

California State University agreed to pay more than **\$240,000** in fees after a federal court found that it had discriminated against a student pro-life group and had used mandatory student fees to fund only university-favored views. Students for Life had been denied access to funding paid for by mandatory student fees that should have been available to all student groups.



Students for Life of America is the largest pro-life student group in the U.S., with more than 1,225 student groups on high school and college campuses.

Attorney Caleb Dalton said: “Public universities should encourage all students to participate in the **free exchange of ideas**, not create elaborate and secretive funding schemes to fund their favorite groups while excluding opposing views from equal access.” [*National Catholic Register*, 3/1/20]

So Much to Be Thankful For ...

... above all, the gift of life itself. The work done in the Church for the cause of life has been remarkable. She continues advocating for the unborn and doing so without neglecting the real needs of women and families through thousands of helping centers, financial aid, medical services, legal advice, counseling, places to live, jobs, education, and assistance to keep the child or place the child for adoption. Even after abortion, the Church offers God’s mercy to bring healing and reconciliation to thousands of women. There is still need for advocacy and to support women along the way. And the culture of death expands with physician-assisted suicide, euthanasia, and infanticide among other threats to life. [Fr. Andrew Burns, homily, Respect Life Mass, Cathedral of St. John, Paterson, NJ, *The Beacon*, 11/16/19]

“The goal of the pro-life movement is not simply that Roe would be overturned but that ours would be a society friendly to life. As long as our laws allow for the killing of the unborn, we cannot claim to be such a society. But the erasure of such laws will not, in itself, absolve us of the charge of being a society that is deeply inhumane and hostile to life.” [Jake Meador, *Mere Orthodoxy*, Jan. 2020]

Why Do Christian Girls Obtain Abortions?

Fear often stands behind the decision to abort. Young women are understandably frightened when discovering they’re pregnant. “I’m afraid I’m not ready and I won’t be a good mother.” “I’m fearful my boyfriend won’t stand by me.” “What will mom and dad think of the fact that I’ve been having sex?” “My church friends will look down on me for this if they ever found out.”

Those who should be at their side in a moment of crisis may not be present. Mothers and fathers may not have fostered close relationships with their daughters. They may have never discussed the possibility of an unplanned pregnancy to let them know that, even if they act contrary to their advice & conceive a child, they will still be there for them. According to Wendy Bonano, pregnancy support center director in N. Carolina: “Quite often there’s a piece missing from the ‘talks’ parents have with their daughters and sons. Without knowing it, we are leaving no doors open for our children to come back to us should they stray. We make good strong cases for purity until marriage, yet neglect to communicate the message of grace that we are there for them no matter what, and should they make a mistake, in this case get pregnant, it is safe for them to come to us for help and support.” [Fr. Tad Pacholczyk, *Florida Catholic*, 2/21/20]

“Never Been as Many Slaves in the World as Today”

So said Gabriella Bottani of Talitha Kum, a global network of nuns that assists trafficked persons, as she participated in a nun’s march in Vatican City last month. The International Labor Organization estimates that almost **25 million** people are in forced labor worldwide; about 20% of those are in forced sexual exploitation

The Talitha Kum group is based in Rome and operates in 92 nations to coordinate the actions of Catholic nuns who fight human trafficking. It supports women who had been sold into prostitution as well as the thousands of adults and children who are sold into forced labor or slavery. Pope Francis again spoke out on behalf of the millions of men, women and children who are trafficked and enslaved, calling human trafficking a “scourge” and an “open wound.” [E. Povoledo, “Nuns March,” *NYTimes*, 2/10/20]

A Lenten Prayer Opportunity

During Lent, would you be willing to spend an hour or two a week in a prayer vigil? 40 Days for Life is an internationally coordinated campaign that aims to end abortion locally through prayer and fasting, community outreach, and a vigil in front of abortion businesses. Peaceful and educational, the campaign is a focused, 40-day, non-stop, round-the-clock prayer vigil outside a single Planned Parenthood center or other abortion facility in your community. Those who are called to stand witness during this daily 24-hour presence send a powerful message about the tragic reality of abortion. It also serves as a call to repentance for those who work at the abortion center & those who patronize the facility.

To get involved, go to the website <https://www.40daysforlife.com/>, click on “Find Vigil Location” and enter your zip code to view your local coordinator’s name and contact information.

Doctors Save Premature Babies

The field of neonatology took off in the second half of the 20th century when a few pediatricians, often against the advice of colleagues, dared to save newborns. Yet every advance brings with it new dilemmas. Innovations may save a child’s life but can leave them with significant disabilities. **A doctor cannot predict how a particular premature baby will fare.** All doctors wrestle with these issues that are particularly poignant when dealing with tiny babies. That’s because the field of neonatology has changed the way we understand what it means to be alive, what it means to be human, and what constitutes a life worth living. [Review of Sarah DiGregorio’s book, *Early*, *NY Times*, 2/9/20]

Life is in Our Hands

On Jan. 20 our country celebrated the birthday of Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., father of the civil-rights movement. On Jan. 22, we commemorated that infamous 1973 day when the Supreme Court robbed unborn children, disproportionately black, of their most basic, Creator-endowed, unalienable right to life by legalizing abortion on demand, all of which has resulted in what has been called **black genocide**.

Coincidentally, on Jan. 22, 1951, Alveda King, the reverend’s niece, was born. Today, this “director of civil rights of the unborn” calls the abortion battle the civil-rights struggle of this century. We can help halt the holocaust of the most helpless members of our human family by urging our elected officials to vote against anti-life legislation. [Richard Carey, letter, *Nat. Catholic Register*, 3/1/20]

“It is indisputable that abortion ends a life, and the decision to end a life is permanent.” Rep. Erin Grall, a sponsor of the Florida measure that requires parental consent for minors seeking to procure an abortion. The bill passed both houses in February. The governor is expected to sign it. [*Our Sunday Visitor*, 3/8/20]

Genetic Engineering Blind to True

Human Nature

We experience a natural drive to improve ourselves and our world. Its highest expression lies in charitable love of our neighbors & faithful preparation for union with the Divine. Our human nature thrives when we develop a shared moral sensibility in our interaction with others and in our experience of joy in the beauty of God-given creation. Disabled persons are then properly valued as miraculous, unique treasures of our human community. Removing some perceived disease, abnormality or deficit in an embryo would not guarantee that the altered person would be spared unpredictable suffering in his or her life. Suffering is not limited to persons who are ‘abnormal’ or less capable of achievement. Relationships with parents could become distorted for those children aware of having been ‘manufactured’; the edited persons might lose the reassurance that comes from miraculously receiving & freely developing one’s unique, given identity. **Medical ideology of control generates a mirage** through which we can barely perceive the wondrous, irreplaceable, and divinely intended nature of an individual human. Genetic engineering of unborn humans says much about parents and scientists who put their preferences for normality, abilities and competitive achievement above respect for the awesome miracle of human nature. [Christopher M. Reilly, *Madness of Human Genetic Engineering*, *Human Life Review*, Aug. 2019.]

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