

## Motherhood, Mary & Memorials

**Memorial Day** As Americans, we remember in a special way all those who died while serving in the country's armed forces. Remembrances and commemorations are ways of helping us appreciate what people had sacrificed for our country.

But for the American Church, will Catholics in future years look back to memorialize values we hold true, values that are under fire at present? We believe that aborting human lives is wrong, that assisting in someone else's suicide is wrong, that marriage is between a man and woman, committing themselves to each other for life, that **children are a blessing**, not a burden, and that government policy should not override our religious principles.

Yet we are heartened by forces for good in our nation. A few weeks ago, **over 100,000** went through RCIA to become full participants in the Catholic Church, last year more than 6,000 men were ordained as priests, and more and more states are permitting tax monies to fund private (and Catholic) school education, relieving parents of double costs in order to educate their children with Christian values.

We celebrate Mother's Day this month, giving us an opportunity to not only express appreciation to mothers, but to commit ourselves again to recognition of the special vocation of motherhood for the benefit of all society.

Also heartening in May is our rededication to Mother Mary's help and guidance. Catholics are increasingly aware of Mary's continuing concern for mankind, and her apparitions have provided ample encouragement to **continue our prayers in the face of hostile forces**.

So let us face the month of May with hope and resolve, and especially prayers, to live out our Catholic values with humility & steadfastness.

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*Every human person has inevitable limits. Even in the most successful of marriages there is always a certain amount of disappointment. So then, dear friends, does not this confirm what we heard the apostle Peter say? "To whom shall we go? You have the words of everlasting life." The truth is that only Jesus of Nazareth is capable of satisfying the deepest aspirations of the human heart. St. John Paul II*

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**Remembering Aborted Babies** LIFENET strongly supported the Lenten 40 Days for Life picketing and praying, despite the bitter cold. In Montclair, NJ, there were 9 women who changed their minds about aborting their babies, and there were 670 unborn children destroyed during the 40 Days. LIFENET continues to work to build a culture of life. More info at: [www.lifeneteducation.org](http://www.lifeneteducation.org)

## Pope to Visit Philly, NY & DC

Pope Francis will participate in the World Meeting of Families, planned for Sept. 22-27, 2015, in the City of Brotherly Love, having the theme "**Love is our Mission: The Family Fully Alive.**" Topics that will be addressed include Created for Joy; The Mission of Love; The Meaning of Human Sexuality; Two Become One; Creating the Future; and All Love Bears Fruit.

*Our Sunday Visitor* publishes a monthly In Focus series that provides relevant commentary by notable Church figures such as Cardinal Timothy M. Dolan, and the late Cardinal Francis E. George. More information is at: <https://osv.com/OSVNewsweekly/WorldMeetingOfFamilies>

## Keeping Policy in Mind

Planned Parenthood, the leading abortion provider in the U.S., gets substantial funds from taxpayers. A new study shows PP received \$1.5 billion for 2010 through 2012. The funds do not mostly go for abortions, but give PP funds that frees them to budget other resources to promote and provide abortions. According to PP's budget for 2013-14, the nonprofit banked \$127 million in excess revenue and held \$1.4 billion in net assets. **It does not report the monies received to do abortions, but it is estimated to be close to \$150 million yearly.**

NJ House member Chris Smith said that the revenue of PP is "the equivalent of a small nation-state" in Africa or South America. Chuck Donovan, president of the Charlotte Lozier Institute, research arm of the Susan B. Anthony List, said the multimillion-dollar profit margin of PP should generate questions as to why the federal government needs to finance services that PP could finance on its own.

In contrast, a pro-life coalition in NY achieved a major victory in its 2-year-long battle with Gov. Cuomo's push to expand legal abortion. "**We were able to hold off unrestricted, late-term abortion, a pretty major victory in a state like NY,**" said Kathleen Gallagher, pro-life director for the NY State Catholic Conference.

The governor's proposal for sweeping expansion of abortion law was tied to his "women's equality agenda." If enacted, it could have put Catholic hospitals and many state-funded outreach programs out of business. Kirsten Smith, speaker for New Yorkers for Life, said: "The issue is not going to go away. It might spring up in another area." The next battle, said Gallagher, is the looming threat of legalizing assisted suicide. [*Nat. Cath. Register* 4/5,4/19/15]

## Thousands Suffer Anti-Religious Hatred

"We are past the point where one can avoid being called a bigot and hater by simply remaining silent," said attorney Chuck LiMandri, president & chief counsel of the Freedom of Conscience Defense Fund.

Across the U.S., civil-rights attorneys say some are quietly punished in workplaces for declining to express sufficient enthusiasm for same-sex 'marriage' or to participate in parades and other celebrations of homosexual rights. "Those of us who support traditional marriage need to stop thinking we are part of a moral majority. We are increasingly part of a minority; this is our new reality," said Maggie Gallagher, president of the Institute for Marriage and Public Policy.

From teachers to nurses to cops, LiMandri explains, **Americans are admonished, fired and harassed for traditional views.** High profile cases of bakers and photographers are the tip of the iceberg. Robert Oscar Lopez, English professor at Cal-State-Northridge, experienced horrendous harassment and was almost fired for favoring traditional marriage. He said: "There are many circumstances that are so much more severe. Most who go through this are isolated and don't have anyone to support them. We suffer behind the scenes."

LiMandri no longer keeps a registry of people punished for religious views about marriage because since 2012 the episodes have become too common to track and document. **"Many people want to stand their ground, but cannot afford to.** This is the new America. Don't be shocked; don't be angry. Get up, be not afraid, and find a way to survive as a traditional-values subculture." [Wayne Laugesen, *National Catholic Register*, 4/19/15]

## Catholic College Declines Federal Grants

Wyoming Catholic College recently joined Christendom College which did the same in the 1980s. Why turn down federal aid? According to the Becket Fund for Religious Liberty and Alliance Defending Freedom attorneys, accepting student loan and grant programs could invite federal challenge to the school's admission or employment policies such as the **requirement to adhere to the Church's teaching on sexual behavior.**

Thomas Aquinas College in Calif. is one of many small Catholic liberal arts colleges well known for their Catholic faithfulness. It decided to continue receiving federal aid, but it monitors it continually because TAC does not want to do anything to jeopardize its Catholic mission. [NY Times, 4/12/15; Peter J. Smith, *National Catholic Register*, 4/5/15.]

## What Happens in Vegas Doesn't Stay There

How you conduct your romantic lives before you tie the knot is linked to your odds of having a happy marriage, according to the National Marriage Project at the Univ. of Virginia. "Those who have had more romantic experiences are more likely to have lower-quality marriages than those with a less complicated romantic history," according to the authors, published in the *Journal of Sex Research*.

Though this is a secular study, it confirms the principles espoused by the Catholic Church. The research actually suggests that if an individual is intimate only with his or her eventual spouse and no others, the odds of marital happiness are substantially better than if the individual had sex with multiple partners. [*Nat. Catholic Register*, 4/5/15]

"The family is in crisis, and it's not the age-old crisis of infidelity, but the future of marriage itself. I think the Lord wants us to face this through marriage preparation, accompanying cohabitating couples, accompanying those who do marry and are raising a family; supporting those whose marriages have failed and are in a new union, and preparing individuals for the sacrament of marriage." Pope Francis in an interview published in *Legatus Magazine*, April 2015.

## Gospel of Life 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

*Evangelium Vitae* (The Gospel of Life) by Saint Pope John Paul II, while realistically countering unprecedented threats to life and the spread of a "culture of death," proclaims the good news of the value and dignity of each human life, of its grandeur and worth. This teaching is "a pressing appeal addressed to each and every person in the name of God: Respect, protect, love and serve life, every human life! Only in this direction will you find justice, development, true freedom, peace and happiness." The commandment "you shall not kill" establishes the point of departure of a journey to true freedom, a journey which must lead to the active promotion of life, the development of attitudes and modes of behavior which serve life, "a new culture of human life."

This important magisterial document of Saint JP II closes with a trusting appeal to Mary, the "mother of life." In the mutual relationship between the motherhood of Mary and her own motherhood toward all men and women, the church finds a source of great hope. Mary is the "living word of consolation" on history's difficult journey: To her, the pope entrusts the cause of life.

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