

Life Concerns Continue to Affect National & Global Issues

Massachusetts Buffer Zones Challenged

Last month, Supreme Court justices pressed attorneys about when it is constitutional to prohibit certain kinds of speech in a case over buffer zones around abortion clinics. In oral arguments in a case over a 35-foot buffer zone around Massachusetts Planned Parenthood clinics, attorney Mark Rienzi, representing those who want to approach clinic patients for "sidewalk counseling" to discourage them from having abortions, argued that the state law "runs into a big First Amendment problem of even eliminating peaceful, consensual conversation that doesn't disrupt anything." The Supreme Court is expected to issue a ruling on the case in June. [SOURCE: *Our Sunday Visitor*, Feb. 2, 2014, p. 3.]

Parish Bus to Washington Was Cancelled

The snowstorm that hit the east coast on Jan. 21st, the night before the planned parish bus trip to participate in the peaceful walk on behalf of all human life, led to cancellations both by the bus company and our participants. This was understandable, given the road conditions on the morning of the planned bus trip. Yet hundreds of thousands did attend!

The generosity of our parishioners towards funding the cost of the bus is greatly appreciated. The funds have been set aside to pay for the planned bus trip next January. We continue to pray for a change of minds and hearts regarding how people view the dignity of human life.

"Gimme Shelter" Debuts on Big Screen

The movie is based on the work of Several Sources, a group of shelters that provides pregnant teens with a home and a structured lifestyle to succeed after their child is born. Released at the end of January, the film is based on true events and was filmed on location at the Ramsey shelter and in several northern NJ towns.

Several Sources founder Kathy DiFiore was joined by St. Philip the Apostle KofC Council 11671 and Girl Scout Cadette Troop 107, both of Clifton, for the premiere of the movie at the AMC Clifton Commons 16 movie theater. Starring in the movie are Brandon Fraser, Rosario Dawson & James Earl Jones. DiFiore said: "I've met Mother Teresa, a US president & now there is a movie about all this work. This could not have been done without God's hand."

UN Committee Attacks Catholic Church

[A message from Austin Ruse, Pres., Catholic Family and Human Rights Institute (Feb. 5, 2014)]

Today a UN committee directed the Catholic Church to let children have sex and also to change Church teaching on contraception. The Committee also directed the Church to change its teaching on abortion and to let kids have abortions. It also told the Church that its comments on homosexuality has caused violence against homosexuals.

This alarming and even disgusting report was issued today by an out of control UN committee after grilling the Church for eight hours last month. This is not the only recent attack on the Church at the UN. The awful baby-killing group "Catholics" for Choice has relaunched their global campaign to kick the Vatican out of the UN General Assembly. They want to reduce the Church to no more than an NGO (non-governmental organization). I am also told that a delegate from Norway regularly complains in UN meetings that the Holy See has a seat at the table.

UN committee directed the Catholic Church to let children have sex ... and to let kids have abortions.

These attacks have to stop. We must act. We have launched a global Campaign in Defense of the Holy See at the UN. I urge you, as soon as you can, to go to www.defendtheholyysee.com and sign the Declaration in Support of the Holy See. You can sign as an individual and if you run an organization, you can sign as an organization. We aim to get hundreds of thousands of names and present them to the UN and also to the Holy See in New York, Geneva and Rome.

If you are Catholic, sign! If you are Evangelical, sign! If you are Jewish, sign. Muslim, sign! The Church represents all people of good will at the UN. If the Church was not there, abortion would now be a human right in UN documents. The family would be redefined. Religious freedom would come under further attack. Now is the time to come to the aid of the Catholic Church. We can do something big if we all work together.

☛ We are asking for every parishioner's help: go to www.defendtheholyysee.com and sign the Declaration in Support of the Holy See. Thanks !!

The Super Bowl & Human Trafficking

At events such as the Super Bowl, the easy flow of cash, liquor and drugs, coupled with a spirit of celebration, hype up the revelry to a modern day Bacchanalia. Sex traffickers seized the moment to engage in their lucrative trade. And this is part of the much wider social scourge of human trafficking.

Law enforcement authorities have uncovered victims of human trafficking in factories, construction work, lawn care, restaurants, hotels, nail salons, hospitality services, farming and even in private homes.

Human trafficking is one of the largest criminal industries, generating \$32 billion worldwide. Unscrupulous folk entice vulnerable men, women & children with the false promise of a better life. They offer economic security, a job & education. But, once they have these needy individuals in their employ, they rob them of their dignity, their wages & freedom. The fees the victims paid are turned into loans that they are forced to pay off. Their employers abuse them emotionally, physically and sexually. They literally enslave them.

For more than a decade, the Catholic Church in the U.S. has been a leader in efforts to eliminate trafficking. The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops directed a \$15 million anti-trafficking campaign, generating much success and praise. The bishops' agencies worked with Jewish Family Services, the Salvation Army & other secular and religious groups.

This much needed work of Catholics came to a sudden end in 2011 when the U.S. Dept. Of Health & Human Services stopped giving grants to Catholics, in preference to groups who support abortion, contraception & sterilization. Now the bishops have launched a new educational program, The Amistad Movement, to train individuals to spot human traffickers in their community, and how to respond effectively.

On Feb. 8th the Church celebrates the Feast of St. Josephine Bakhita who was kidnapped and sold in the mideast. Later, taken to Italy and freed, she dedicated herself to spreading the word about human slavery and comforting the poor and suffering. Her feast day is designated as a day of prayer to end human trafficking. [Source: Bishop Arthur Serratelli, *The Beacon*, Jan. 30, 2014]

A Win for the Little Sisters of the Poor

Two weeks ago, the US Supreme Court said that if the order tells the government that it is a "nonprofit group that holds itself out as religious and has religious objections to providing insurance coverage for contraceptive services", the new health law's mandate objected to by the Church can't be enforced on them. The full case will be heard by the Court.

NJ Right to Life Statement on the Decline of Abortions in New Jersey (February 4, 2014)

According to the most recent abortion statistics from 2011 released from the Alan Guttmacher Institute, abortions in NJ have declined 12% since 2008. In 2011, 46,990 women obtained abortions in NJ, producing a rate of 27.1 abortions per 1,000 women of childbearing age. In 2008, the rate was 31.2 abortions per 1,000 women of childbearing age, or 54,730 abortions.

While we believe that women deserve better than abortion and that every abortion is a tragedy because it betrays the closest bond in human nature, we are encouraged by the decrease in the number of abortions in the U.S. and in our state.

These findings belie the dire predictions of Planned Parenthood and its supporters who claim that abortion rates will increase if taxpayer funding is eliminated for Planned Parenthood, and, in fact, prove otherwise. It should come as no surprise that abortion rates go down when taxpayer funds are no longer provided to Planned Parenthood, the nation's leading abortion provider and promoter. We applaud Governor Christie for protecting the integrity of NJ Taxpayers by eliminating taxpayer funds to Planned Parenthood, while ensuring that the legitimate health care needs of men, women and children are met in our state.

The Sinner's Guide to Natural Family Planning

Described as an easy and lively read – funny, frank, and thoroughly grounded in Catholic theology, the new book by Simcha Fisher has been published by *Our Sunday Visitor Press* (800-348-2440). A publisher's statement says: "If you've tried NFP and have discovered that your life is now awful -- or if you feel judged or judgey, or if you trust NFP but your doctor doesn't, or if you're just trying to figure out how to have intimacy that is holy but still human -- you'll find comfort, encouragement, honesty, wit and, most important, practical advice in *The Sinner's Guide*."

Mayor Sparks Abortion Debate in Norway

A local mayor posted a picture on Facebook showing him holding a plastic doll that is a likeness of an unborn baby at 12 weeks of pregnancy to make a point about how abortion takes the life of a tiny baby. Norway's government is currently discussing plans for abortion referrals for doctors who ethically don't participate in abortions. To support the legislation Jørgen Kristiansen, deputy mayor of Kristiansen, posted the image. He has been condemned for posting 'anti-abortion propaganda'. [LifeNews.com, Feb. 4, 2014.]