

## Gearing Up for Bus Trip and Walk in Washington, DC

### Bus Scheduled for January 22<sup>nd</sup>

Join parishioners from Holy Family, St. Patrick's, St. Vincent's, and the Vocationists on a one-day bus trip to Washington to participate in a peaceful walk on behalf of the dignity of all human life

Mass: 7 am at Holy Family

After Mass: we board the bus

One stop: for breakfast

In DC: we participate in the March for Life

Dinner: in DC

Bus returns to Holy Family: approx. 10 pm

Many of us are taking the day off from work in order to participate. Some may want to bring their middle- or high-schoolers, which is a wonderful witness to their faith. To reserve a seat on the bus, please call Barbara Tinari at 973-822-0084, or email her at [btinari@optonline.net](mailto:btinari@optonline.net).

### Non-Catholic's View of Pope Francis

In light of a decidedly anti-Catholic perspective shared by many non-Catholics who cannot abide the Church's long-standing and unwavering values regarding marriage, family, abortion and other life-related issues, Pope Francis seems to give such folks hope for change in the Church.

**Pope Francis: our opposition to abortion "is not something subject to alleged reforms or 'modernizations.'"**

Here is one view expressed by Christian Caryl in the *Star Ledger*, a paper not often friendly to the Catholic Church.

"I'm not a Catholic, and I don't agree with all of the church's positions. But I'm glad that it exists. We live today in a world that's often degraded by greed, waste and reckless consumption. We all too often demonstrate our contempt for outsiders, the weak, the poor."

"So I'm glad there's someone out there who's prepared to offer a fundamental spiritual critique of our mores – so that we don't have to leave it to the bankers, reality TV stars or posturing politicians. A reinvigorated Catholic Church, confident in its own sublime mission but tolerant and inclusive, could serve as a powerful force for good in the world. So I wish Francis well. Let's hope he can pull it off." [Source: "Is the Pope Trying to Give the Catholic Church a Makeover?" *Sunday Star-Ledger*, 12/11/13]

### Pope Francis Speaks

"A human being is always sacred and inviolable, in any situation and at every stage of development," he wrote. "Once this conviction disappears, so do solid and lasting foundations for the defense of human rights, which would always be subject to the passing whims of the powers that be." The "defense of unborn life is closely linked to the defense of each and every other human right," he said. [Source: *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel), 11/26/13.]

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Plan your work and/or vacation schedule now for  
\* January 22<sup>nd</sup> for our **annual bus trip to DC.** \*

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### Science Writer Grateful for "Cosmic Miracle" of a New Life

*Wall St. Journal: 11/30/13*

Alison Gopnik said she observed three miracles: "The first was the miracle of life. Amino acids combined to make just the right proteins, ... the right neurons .... that brought a new, utterly unique, unprecedented consciousness – a new human soul – into the world."

"The second was the miracle of learning." Her granddaughter soon began to listen to and watch the adults, the toys, and the sounds around her. "And that leads to the most important miracle of all: the miracle of love."

If scientists can talk like this, perhaps not all is lost in our modern culture of throwaway values and throwaway people, including the elderly and the unborn.

### Any Room for God?

The more control we exert over our daily choices – especially where questions of life and death are concerned – the less God thrives in our lives. A company that analyzes DNA has just been given a patent for technology that would help prospective parents choose traits in a baby from donated sperm and eggs. Hair color, eye color, talents would all be up for grabs for parents to decide, just as if they were ordering on Amazon.com.

Janet Smith of Sacred Heart Major Seminary said: "What if the child doesn't live up to expectations? We've already seen with parents who have unrealistic expectations for their children, how damaging it is."

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## Any Room for God? (continued)

Unfortunately, this desire for control pervades not only beginning of life issues, but those at the end of life as well. For example, in Belgium, euthanasia in 2012 increased 25% over 2011. That country is now considering allowing children and those with dementia the power to end their own lives should they choose, effectively placing such a life-and-death decision in the hands of the weakest and most vulnerable among us.

God is being removed when it comes to issues of life and death. We persist in thinking that we are more capable and more knowledgeable than the one who created us. [Source: No Room for God, editorial, *Our Sunday Visitor* 11/17/13.]

Pope Francis said something similar: The world is swept by “consumerism,” by the worship of things, which leaves our hearts “complacent yet covetous.” The desire to acquire blunts the conscience, **crowds out God’s voice**, and keeps us from hearing the only invitation that will make us happy. [Source: *Evangelii Gaudium* (The Joy of the Gospel), 11/26/13.]

## What Makes a Marriage Last?

John and Ann Betar celebrated their 81<sup>st</sup> wedding anniversary on Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>! When asked for their secret, they said it’s not chocolate, roses, jewelry or romantic dinners. It comes down to old-fashioned compromise. Ann says marriage “isn’t a lovey-dovey thing.... You learn to accept one another’s ways of life. Agreements. Disagreements.”

The Betars learned early on that you can’t “fix” someone. You have to accept your spouse – warts and all. Maybe more couples should consider what those vows mean. Isn’t that what “for better, for worse” means? [Source: *Our Sunday Visitor*, 12/8/13.]

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For couples planning to have children:

Natural Family Planning Classes are offered in our Paterson Diocese. Call 973-777-8818, ext. 264, for info.

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## The Death Penalty

Unlike abortion, capital punishment is not an intrinsic moral evil. In certain **very limited** settings, use of the death penalty has served the common good, ensuring that dangerous criminals are no longer able to cause harm. Also, Scripture does not forbid the practice. But it is not always wise or prudent to promote such punishment.

Recent popes and bishops have taught that recourse to the **death penalty should be rare**, if ever. This is fully consistent with the “culture of life” that opposes the destruction of human lives under any circumstances. The Church stands squarely against abortion, euthanasia, quick

recourse warfare, along with the anti-life mentality of contraception. At present, the Church stands consistently against yet another way wherein death is proposed as a solution to human problems. [Source: Msgr. Charles Pope, Pastoral Answers, *Our Sunday Visitor*, 12/8/13.]

## Signs of Greater Respect for Life?

The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia placed an ad in the *Wall Street Journal* (4/2/13) stating “We saved a baby from a lifetime of disability in an unusual operating room. His mother’s belly.” The ad included a photo of a pregnant woman. The ad did not call the baby a fetus, but a baby! Other companies have done ads published in major newspapers and magazines that allude to the same thing – that the preborn being is a baby. Bravo for them all!

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**Watch Me Grow!** At the doors of the church is a new brochure with clear pictures & clear, brief text explanations on the growth of a preborn child. Bring home a free copy.

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## Difficulty Having Children

Catholics unable to conceive a child face challenges. Because some options for conceiving – such as in vitro fertilization and surrogacy – are clearly taught by the Church to be immoral, couples who are faithful should be supported and encouraged by the whole Catholic community.

Second, adoption is not a second-place option but rather is a unique call. The need is there for both adults and children, and the pro-life community is one of the strongest advocates for adoption. But these efforts are being hampered by the shuttering of Catholic Charities adoption agencies around the nation because state laws are requiring them to violate their consciences by placing children with same-sex couples.

Third, children who are born as a result of non-traditional conception methods must be treated with the same dignity as any other child. The Church’s message of children as a blessing and responsibility is needed now more than ever. [Source: *Our Sunday Visitor* editorial, 12/1/13.]

## France Experiencing Baby Boom (*Wall St. Journal*)

France has achieved a mini baby boom in recent years, due to some of Europe’s most generous subsidies for families, tax breaks for parents, and state-funded housing assistance. Europe’s overall population is projected to decline in coming decades, except for France, with its average 2.01 children born to every woman, just barely attaining a break-even replacement rate. [11/26/13]