

Pro-Life Month Marked by Hope Amid Concerns

Divided Focus on Health Care Law at U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops?

According to a report by the *Wall Street Journal*, there may be potential internal conflicts among U.S. Catholic bishops regarding the new health care law.

At the Pro-Life office, Richard Doerflinger is leading the Bishops' efforts to assist Catholic organizations suing to overturn a government mandate that requires nearly all employers to cover sterilization procedures as well as contraception and abortifacient drugs and devices in their health plans at no cost to the employee – the so-called HHS mandate.

At the same time, Kathy Saile's office is working for the Bishops to persuade states to expand Medicaid, the health program for low-income Americans. When asked if there is contradiction in these efforts, she said: "You come at it from different perspectives, but we all have the same priority, which is the sacredness of the human person."

These perspectives reflect the Church's position that society must find ways of assisting the poor and the most vulnerable, all within a framework of respect for the dignity of human life, beginning at conception.

Scores of Pro-Life Leaders Pledge to Fight HHS Mandate

For several months now, prominent pro-life leaders have been meeting to discuss what action to take when, on October 1, 2013, a large majority of health insurance policies are found to contain direct or indirect funding for abortion. The coalition has developed a unified response to the Affordable Care Act's relentless endeavors to guarantee funding for abortion through everything from individual citizens to private businesses and non-profit organizations – with absolutely no regard to any religious liberty or conscientious objections.

One pro-life leader notes, "This healthcare reform strikes at the very heart of the pro-life movement. **Our religious liberty, our constitutional freedoms** – those are things that allow us to be a voice for the pre-born. The ACA intentionally strips that away from us, then goes even a step
(continued on page 2)

This Month's Parish Activities

- October is Respect Life Month throughout the Diocese. This year's theme is **Open Your Hearts to Life**.
- Respect Life Sunday is October 6th. Can you spare about an hour as a Christian witness to the dignity of human life? All parishioners are invited to participate in our local part in the **National Life Chain**. Arrive before 2:30 pm & park at 65 Madison Ave across from Morristown Hospital. This is a silent, prayerful vigil. Signs will be provided upon arrival.
- October 20th is the **Holy Family "Baby Shower"**. You could help by donating a new item. All items will then be delivered to Good Counsel Homes.
- October 26th - 27th are the dates for the annual New Jersey **Right to Life raffle**. Buy your tickets before or after Mass. First prize is a **2014 Volvo XC60 AWD SUV**. There are three other runner-up prizes.
- Our annual parish pro-life **Poster Contest** is being offered to all 7th and 8th graders in Florham Park.

"What does it mean to serve the poor and how do you see it happening, or not, in our world?"

Maryknoll has a Student Essay Contest for grades 6-8 (Division I) and grades 9-12 (Division II). In 500-750 words, submit your entry. Winning entries will be published in Maryknoll magazine, and will receive cash prizes. Details are available at www.maryknollsociety.org/essay, or call 1-888-627-9566, ext. 2368. Postmark by Nov. 15, 2013.

Choose Life License Plates Available

It's something all of us can do – giving witness to life by putting Choose Life plates on our cars. (Leased vehicles may not qualify.) Your car's plates are "travelling billboards" with their two smiling children, gently moving hearts on our roads and highways. Every Choose Life plate raises funding for New Jersey's pregnancy care centers and maternity homes.

To get these plates, an application must be submitted to the sponsoring organization, the Children First Foundation. Applications may be requested online at **www.NJChooseLife.org**, or by calling 1-888-652-4667.

Fight HHS Mandate (continued from page 1)

further, saying, 'Either you play ball and fund abortion, or we hit you with heavy fines until you wish you did pay.' We, as leaders, are not going to stand down and let that happen in silence. We will not, and cannot, participate in any program that tramples our freedoms and directly earmarks money for abortion – and that is exactly what the ACA is doing."

Beginning immediately, pro-life citizens are invited to join national leaders like Troy Newman, Joe Scheidler, Fr. Frank Pavone, and many others in **signing "A Pledge for the Preservation of Life and Liberty"**, carefully crafted to stand as a 'line in the sand' regarding any scenario in which the ACA forces individuals to participate – whether directly or indirectly – in the destruction of human life.

Send your personal email to Congress at www.usccb.org/conscience. It only takes a few minutes.

In its conclusion, the Pledge states very clearly: "We declare that we will not comply with any regulation of the ACA wherein we are forced to pay for abortion or forced to willfully participate in the killing of innocent children. In practicality, this means we will not choose an insurance policy that contains abortion funding, whether directly or indirectly, even to the point of choosing no insurance, at all. Furthermore, we support any citizen who chooses to act in peaceful protest, including non-violent civil disobedience, as the government has no authority to force us, as free citizens, to violate our conscience or forfeit our religious freedoms." [Source: Cheryl Sullenger, LifeNews.com, 9/27/13.]

College Students for Life

The mission of Students for Life of America (SFLA) is to end abortion by educating students about the issues of abortion, euthanasia, and infanticide; identifying pro-life student leaders; equipping student pro-lifers with the training, skills and resources to be effective and successful; and promoting student activity to other local, college and national organization.

College students interested in finding out more can visit www.studentsforlife.org. Kristan Hawkins is its President, at PO Box 96788, Washington, DC 20090. You may want to inquire about her book, *Courageous: Students Abolishing Abortion in Their Lifetimes*.

Open Your Hearts to Life!

This has been a favorite theme of **Pope Francis** and one that has particular urgency today, as the "culture of death" gains an ever wider foothold. Is that an exaggeration? Most Americans live comfortably, enjoying a wide array of food and drink, and entertaining themselves in various ways. Among many young singles, casual sexual encounters are the norm. In short, we live in a culture dedicated to maximizing pleasure and minimizing pain or inconvenience.

The Supreme Court seems to agree. In upholding legal abortion for any reason or none, the Court declared in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*: "At the heart of liberty is the right to define one's own concept of existence, of meaning, of the universe, and of the mystery of human life."

But when such "liberty" leads to the doorstep of convicted killer-abortionist Kermit Gosnell, who feels no remorse, and other abortion practitioners who have been in the news, we are forced to confront our culture's real views about human life.

Opening our hearts to life means that we reject the killing of human beings from the moment of conception to natural death, be it by abortifacient "contraceptives", destructive embryo research and IVF procedures, or denying life-saving treatment to those with disabilities, or by hastening death of the elderly and dying by means of assisted suicide and euthanasia. Opening our hearts to life means opposing the death penalty, slavery, human trafficking, terrorism and unjust war, and working to eradicate the conditions that prevent our fellow humans from realizing their full potential.

The culture of death flourishes in a culture of rejection. Always putting ourselves ahead of the interests of others causes us to reject others. A dramatic but all too common example is the single man who fathers a child, but wants nothing to do with the mother or his baby. Today, unmarried women account for 85% of abortions. Today, **41% of all children are born to single women**.

When we act with only ourselves in mind, in front of our children, the family is damaged as a source of love and support. **Through prayer and Mass**, we can know and love God better, making us more aware of the needs of others.

First Daily News TV Program for Catholics

Colleen Carroll Campbell is the host of this new program premiering this fall, from Washington, DC. **EWTN News Nightly** (6 pm) will report the day's events from a U.S. Catholic perspective while covering the stories others won't.
