

Family & ProLife News Briefs

September 2019

Culture Divide on Life Continues

Division Exists on Many Issues

While a federal Commission on Unalienable Rights makes its plans, Hollywood tries to normalize acceptance of abortion and the *NY Times* publishes a piece by a gynecologist who argues that sexually transmitted diseases should no longer have any stigma. While abortion groups issue their 'Blueprint' to promote abortion without limits, the federal government implements a partial end to funding abortion and a doctor has successfully filed an injunction against New Jersey's new physician-assisted suicide law. The U.S. population is seriously divided on issues related to the culture of life. Here are a few details:

- Mary Ann Glendon has been appointed chairwoman of the administration's new **Commission on Unalienable Rights**. She is a former U.S. ambassador to the Holy See and a Harvard Law professor with an extensive background in international human rights. The commission will re-examine the nation's distinctive rights tradition, and study the Universal Declaration on Human Rights issued in 1948 by the UN with involvement of former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt. "The world is confused about human rights," she said. "Many regimes not only ignore basic freedoms but also make deliberate efforts to undermine our common ground of human rights." [*National Catholic Register*, 8/18/19]

- Hollywood agents, celebrities and producers were recently invited to a 'diversity summit' to hear a pitch from an **abortion attorney** on the need to normalize abortion on television. Such tactics are working. There are more TV shows putting a positive spin on women who have had an abortion. [Bill Donohue, Catholic League]

- Dr. Jen Gunter says it is better to called STDs 'sexually transmitted infections' that reduces their stigma. She states that no sort of sexual behavior is "wrong" and yet 50% of sexually active people will have at least one STD by age 25. The viral forms that persist worry people. "The idea of an infection that you can't get rid of is very challenging." Between 2013 and 2017, the number of cases of gonorrhea increased 67% and syphilis by 75%. [J. Gunter, Why sexually transmitted infections can't shake their stigma, *NY Times*, 8/25/19] We wonder if the good doctor ever considered encouraging patients to **change their behavior**.

- A coalition of nearly 80 pro-abortion groups including Planned Parenthood and NARAL released a 'Blueprint for Sexual and Reproductive Health Rights and Justice' that outlines their vision for the **future of abortion: no restrictions, no**

religious exemptions and full funding by the U.S. government. They argue that the government should mandate that Catholic & religious hospitals provide abortion and "gender-affirming" care, and that parental notification for pregnant minors be eliminated.

- Updated federal regulations state that no longer will Title X funds be granted to a clinic that provides abortion on site or refers teenage girls or adult women to an abortion provider. Planned Parenthood is refusing to comply with these requirements and thus will no longer be able to tap into this portion of federal money. On August 19, *Human Life Review* President and Editor, Maria McFadden Maffucci, said "For too many years, the U.S. government has wrongly permitted American taxpayer dollars to abet Planned Parenthood Federation of America and its affiliates in terminating millions of innocent unborn babies. Federal law outright states that **no taxpayer dollars shall be used to abort an unborn child**. The new regulations now make that crystal clear."

- In a letter (8/22/19) to *The Beacon* (Paterson Diocese), Sean Parkot reported that a physician and orthodox Jew, Dr. Yosef Glassman, obtained a restraining order **preventing implementation of New Jersey's physician-assisted suicide law**. The doctor "cannot condone any participation in the process, even the transferring of the patient." The law passed by only one vote in the assembly & the senate, and Catholic governor Murphy said he had reservations although he signed the bill. Parkot urged New Jerseyans to contact their elected officials to determine how they voted.

- Even our laws have created internal conflict. "Because of *Roe v. Wade*, **contradiction permeates through our system of laws**. Our laws mandate accommodation for the disabled at the same time our government funds attempts to prevent the birth of those with disabilities; they say that gender cannot determine whether one is hired or fired, but allow it to determine whether an infant lives or dies." [Tim Busch and Kevin Stidham, Undaunted, Justice Thomas seeks the court's atonement on abortion, *Washington Examiner*, 8/17/19.]

A Look at Catholic Families

76% of married Catholic parents have a Catholic spouse
22% of Catholic parents attend Mass weekly
53% of Catholic parents attend Mass at least monthly
66% of Catholic parents with three or more children attend Mass at least once a month.
71% of parents agree "somewhat" or "strongly" that prayer is essential to their faith.
36% of parents pray at least once a day.
[U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, www.usccb.org]

Conquering Pornography Addiction

Pornography addiction is a growing epidemic in America today. It is an addiction that can have the **same effect on the brain as cocaine**, is widely available, and has a devastating effect on relationships, families, and marriages.

On July 27, Father Cassidy Stinson began the #BreakTheChains prayer campaign on Twitter, writing that he was tired of seeing “so many souls caught in shame and isolation and despair.” (Follow Fr. Stinson on Twitter @TheHappyPriest) The Knights of Columbus’ official account re-tweeted his original thread with a call to action: “Knights, time to #BreakTheChains.”

Fr. Stinson says that if you’re struggling with pornography in your life, then look very concretely and realistically at the times and places where you’re struggling with it. What does the habit look like? Once you’ve identified that, you can start to **make concrete changes** & put up boundaries for yourself to help avoid it. That may be as simple as during certain times of the day & in certain circumstances, you put the source somewhere else.

Alongside that human dimension, make sure there is some kind of prayer in your life as well. Very often we’re turning to any kind of quick pleasure, like pornography, because there is some kind of wound or loneliness there. One of the important things that needs to happen is to let God into that wound. [Brian Fraga, Priest starts a Twitter group to break the chains to pornography, *Our Sunday Visitor*, 8/16/19]

STRIVE: A “**21-Day Detox from Porn**” is an online video series for men who wish to break free from an addiction to pornography. The series, which launched March 27, is written and hosted by Matt Fradd, an anti-pornography crusader and Catholic apologist, and directed by Chris Cope of Cardinal Studios. Participants sign up at www.strive21.com to receive access to daily videos, where Fradd takes viewers on a step-by-step process of ridding their lives of pornography.

Missouri Bans Certain Abortions

Missouri may protect unborn babies with Down syndrome from discriminatory abortion deaths after a judge declined to block the new law Tuesday. U.S. District Judge Howard Sachs’ order stops the state from enforcing most parts of the law, but he did not include the non-discrimination parts in his preliminary injunction.

Planned Parenthood and the American Civil Liberties Union challenged the state law, which includes multiple pro-life provisions including a ban on abortions after 8 weeks when an unborn baby’s heartbeat is detectable.

This means that Missouri is one of just a few states that legally can protect unborn babies with Down syndrome from discriminatory abortion deaths. The law also **ends abortions based on the unborn baby’s sex and race**. “As the father of a child with special needs, Attorney General Schmitt is particularly sensitive to suggestions that an unborn child who will have special needs is any lesser of a human being, and we’re glad that provisions relating to that issue were left in place in the judge’s ruling today,” a spokesman said.

However, Dr. Colleen McNicholas, an abortionist and chief medical officer for Planned Parenthood of the St. Louis Region, said: “Although we are grateful today’s ruling allows us to provide care to some Missourians, we will continue to defend the truth: every reason to have an abortion is a valid reason.”

This eugenic targeting has prompted a number of states to pass laws protecting the unborn. Missouri is not the first, but it is one of the few that has been allowed to enforce its law. Eight states also prohibit sex-selection abortions, which often target unborn baby girls. [M. Bilger, Judge Rules Missouri Can Ban Abortions on Babies With Down Syndrome, *LifeNews.com*, 8/27/19]

ATTENTION Each year, October is declared **Respect Life Month** by the U.S. bishops. More information will be provided in the October issue of this newsletter. Your parish likely will have a homily, guest speaker, pamphlets or other means to help you support the dignity of every human life.

For New Jersey residents, the 20/20 Campaign continues and everyone is urged to obtain a “baby feet” car magnet - visit <http://babiesinthewombfeelpain.com/> for more information. In addition, the US Catholic Bishops’ Respect Life Office publishes new material each year to help parishes promote the respect for life in various ways. For example, information is available regarding Project Rachel that serves to help women heal from the effects of an abortion. [www.usccb.org]

This free monthly newsletter is used by dozens of churches as a bulletin insert, and has over 30,000 readers. To receive a copy in your inbox, email editor Frank Tinari, Ph.D. at tinarifr@shu.edu

