

Central Illinois Life News

Pastors Speak Out

The Obligations of Catholics and the Rights of the Unborn

In this column, we share reflections of Pro-Life Pastors from Central Illinois. The following are excerpts of a "Pastoral Statement on the Obligations of Catholics and the Rights of Unborn Children," by the Most Reverend John J. Myers, Catholic Bishop of Peoria, June 1, 1990.

Seventeen years ago, before the Supreme Court legalized abortion throughout the United States, few Catholic politicians favored legal abortion, and few Catholic voters were willing to support office seekers who did not uphold the fundamental right to life of unborn children. Today the situation has changed. Under the strains and tensions of contemporary politics, some politicians who consider themselves good Catholics endorse the view that abortion ought to be legal and even funded by the government. Some appear to adopt this position out of political expediency. Others seem to lose sight of the basic dignity of human life at every stage and in all conditions.

Some Catholic voters also appear to falter in their duties in justice and charity to the unborn. Some who maintain a pro-life view neglect to act on their commitment in the exercise of their responsibilities as citizens.

Life : The Right Choice

In these circumstances, the Church's constant and certain teaching on the dignity of human life must be clearly restated and steadfastly reaffirmed. *Let there be no doubt that striving for legal abortion is radically inconsistent with the Catholic Faith.* Any citizen or public official who helps to make abortion more widely available. .. commits a grave injustice against the most vulnerable members of the human family.

In our day, the lives of unborn children are subject to unprecedented threats. Catholics are called to do more than merely avoid complicity in killing. We are called by Christ Himself to come to the aid of the vulnerable, the weak, the oppressed. We must, by word and deed, bear witness to the sanctity of all human life.

It is a cause for great joy that so many Catholics have joined with Christians, Jews, members of other religions, and those professing no religion, in valiant efforts to defend the human rights of the unborn. Some have made heroic sacrifices in this cause.

Coming Events

1995 Walk for Life

The Walk for Life will be January 23, 1995, at 6:30 pm. Participants will meet at the Peoria County courthouse for prayer. The walk will proceed to the Civic Center for a Sanctity of Human Life rally at 7:00 pm. It features music, a report on the Women's Pregnancy Center, and a message by Tom Glessner, President General Counsel of National Institute of Family and Life Advocates. For info, call Dan Smith at 263-2086 or the Peoria Rescue Ministries at 676-6416.

"Maximilian, Saint of Auschwitz", a drama, will be presented by the Family Resources Center, Saturday, November 12, 1994 at the Peoria Civic Center Theater. Call 637-1713 for tickets and Information.

While heroism cannot be demanded of all ... all should find positive ways to promote respect for human life.

Ultimately, God will not judge our nation on its economic prosperity, military strength, or international influence and prestige, but on how well it promotes and protects the dignity of every human being. May the Judge of Nations not find us wanting.

1994 Election Day is Tuesday, November 8. Babies' Lives Depend on You !

"Sanctity of Life, The Inescapable Issue"

-Chuck Swindoll

Election Challenge

The elections are upon us once more, presenting another opportunity to exercise our Pro Life, as well as our civic responsibilities. Many national, state, and local candidates are very candid about their position in regards to abortion. Others may not have declared themselves openly, but will vote their beliefs if elected none the less. All too often, we fail to research the candidates stands before entering the voting booth; suddenly remembering to think of these issues when it is too late.

Consider : Do you know what the candidates for Governor, Dawn Clark-Nietch and Jim Edgar, believe about abortion? How about Jim Ryan and Al Holfield, candidates for Attorney General; or Pat Quinn and George Ryan, candidates for Secretary of State? How do Ray LaHood and Doug Stevens stand on the Pro Life issue in the 18th congressional district race, or Lane Evans and Jim Anderson in the 17th? Do Donald Saltsman or take positions on abortion in their 92th IL House race, or what about Grace Bunn Levins and Jay Ackerman in the 89th House contest. What about your sheriff, or your county board?

If you do not know the stand of the candidates in races in which you will cast a vote, please contact those candidates and ask their position on this fundamental issue; **then, vote your informed conscience.**

Need a Pro-Life Speaker ?

We have trained speakers who can present the message of life to your church or organization through video and the spoken word.

The Second Saturday Series

Members and friends of CIRTL meet on the 2nd Saturday of each month at 10:00 a.m. at the Christian Center for a Pro-Life video

Join our Church Responsibility Committee

We meet together on the 3rd Monday each month at 7:00 p.m. at the Christian Center to discuss how to reach churches with the

Can You Volunteer ?

We need people to spread the Pro-Life message by helping with events throughout the year. To be a Special Activities Member

Report on Recent Events

1994 5K Run/Walk

The annual 5K Run/Walk for Life was held on September 3, 1994, at Bradley Park in Peoria. Total registration for the event was approximately 150 walkers and runners. WPEO radio personality Linda Butler broadcasted live from the event announcing the winners and interviewing several of the participants. Trophies were awarded in all categories. Thanks to all who helped to make the event a great success.

1994 Life Chain

This year's Life Chain event took place on Sunday, October 2, 1994, at 2:30 pm, along University and Glen in Peoria. The number of participants was estimated at between 1200 and 1500. Many Churches were represented. We would especially like to thank those Pastors who spoke out for the unborn in their sermons that morning. Please begin planning for next year's event. For more information or to become a church coordinator, please call Dan Smith at 263-2086.

Respect Life Dinner

The Family Resources Center held its annual *Respect Life Dinner* on Sunday evening, October 2, 1994, following the Life Chain. The speaker was Dave Andrusko, editor of The National Right to Life News.

Who is Central Illinois Right to Life ? What do we do ?

Central Illinois Right to Life is a not-for-profit group seeking to reach individuals, churches, and organizations with the Pro-Life message. It is governed by a board of directors; the directors are drawn from the general membership.

The board presently consists of the following whom you may contact if you have needs or questions, or if you are interested in membership or service.

Diane Conner 692-6340
Patti Craig 446-3057
Dennis Dillard 446-9214
Mark Lang 674-2746
Sondra McEnroe 673-4833
Maria Prentiss 681-1370
Lori Ramirez 686-2456
Dan Smith 263-2086

Each year, CIRTL sponsors several events including the following :

The Walk for Life

The Life Chain

The Run for Life

In the past year, CIRTL has supported efforts by the Family Resources Center and the Women's Pregnancy Center. We helped place a Pro-Life insert in the Bradley student newspaper, placed Pro-Life posters on Peoria buses, and participated in the W. Peoria 4th of July parade. We provide speakers to interested groups and from time to time bring in nationally known Pro-Life leaders for seminars. Our Church Responsibility Committee members are working in their individual assemblies to encourage others to stand for the Sanctity of Human Life.

In order to offset the cost of this newsletter and the many other outreaches of CIRTL, **donations are needed and appreciated.** For those who can make a gift of \$15.00 or more, we are pleased to offer with our thanks, a copy of the book, *PRO-LIFE ANSWERS TO PRO-CHOICE ARGUMENTS.*

This is an excellent resource for those who are actively involved.

Name : _____

Address : _____

City : _____

State : _____

Zip Code : _____

Telephone : _____

Donation : \$5__ \$10__ \$15__ \$25__ Other_____

If you choose to make a donation, please detach and mail to the address below.

Central Illinois Life News

Life : Where do you stand ?

"We are facing an immense threat to life; not only to the life of individuals but also to that of civilization itself. The statement that civilization has become in some areas a 'civilization of death' is being confirmed in disturbing ways." *-Pope John Paul II*

"If I profess with the loudest voice and clearest exposition every portion of the truth of God except precisely that point which the world and the devil are at that moment attacking, I am not professing Christ. Where the battle rages, there the loyalty of the soldier is proven, and to be steady on all the battle fronts besides is mere flight and disgrace if he flinches at that point." *-Martin Luther*

We at Central Illinois Right to Life offer sincere thanks to all those who are steadfast in defense of the Sanctity of Human Life. Many do so in spite of great risk to their own social, economic, and political survival. We especially appreciate the increasing number of Clergy now calling the Church to repentance and action. May God grant that more will take up the standard of this righteous and just cause !

Central Illinois Right
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