

# Central Illinois Life News

## Pastors Speak Out

**I**n this column, we usually share reflections of Pro-Life Pastors from Central Illinois and beyond. This newsletter we feature a portion of an article by CIRTL board member Dan Smith with more to come in future issues.

### BEATITUDES, BABIES AND BASEBALL

Jesus began the Sermon on the Mount with words that we all must take to heart: Matt. 5:3-12.

- <sup>1</sup> Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
- <sup>2</sup> Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
- <sup>3</sup> Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.

The beatitudes should be more central to a God-based resolution for those considering or opposing abortion. Please consider whether abortion is consistent with these values or opposed to them. The following essays look at each beatitude three ways: in relationships to God, to His laws, and to others, especially the least favored of humanity. The nine beatitudes also work together, much like the nine players on a baseball team. Accordingly, the introduction to each discussion relates a beatitude to a quality of a famous baseball player. See how many you recognize before you hear the player's name.

1. **The Poor Pitcher.** He was born the seventh of eleven children in a poor black Alabama family around the turn of last century. He picked up his lifelong nickname from his boyhood job carrying suitcases for tips at a train station. After he was caught shoplifting, however, he spent five years at the state reform school for Negro children. Still, this poor pitcher is known as perhaps the greatest pitcher of all time, pitching professionally over five decades, concluding at the age of 59 with the Athletics, then playing in Kansas City. Joe DiMaggio called him, "the best I've ever faced and the fastest." By the time the big leagues allowed his race to (continued on page 2)



## Coming Events

During coming months, the following pro life events are scheduled in the Peoria area:

**Central Illinois Right To Life Fundraising Garage Sale** Begins Thursday, June 27, 2002 and goes through Saturday, June 29, 2002.

Collection dates are June 24 and 25. The sale will be at the Holy Family School in Peoria. See the enclosed flyers for more information.

**July Fourth Parade:** Members and friends of Central Illinois Right To Life will walk together in the July 4th Parade in West Peoria. Meet at 9:30 AM on the 4th at the West Peoria fire station. Call Sondra McEnroe at 673-4833 for more information.

**Annual 5K Run/Walk:** This year the race will be on August 24th. It will be at Bradley Park in Peoria and will start at 8:00 AM. Trophies are awarded to male and female winners in several age divisions. Contributions are needed to help purchase the trophies for the run. Call Dan at 691-3611 or CIRTL at 685-3034 for additional information.

**Annual Peoria Area Life Chain:** Central Illinois Right to Life will sponsor the annual Life Chain on Sunday, October 6, 2002. Participants will stand in witness to their commitment to the Sanctity of Human Life along University Street and Glen Avenue in Peoria. Don't miss this chance to show your support for the unborn. Call Dan at 691-3611 for more details. Organizational help and church coordinators are also needed.

### Pro Life Events Remembered - Forty Hour Prayer Vigil

In January 2002, members and friends of Central Illinois Right To Life held a Prayer Vigil for forty hours over four days on the sidewalk in front of Peoria's abortion clinic. People from many area churches stood in prayer at this vigil. This was the fifth consecutive year that a Prayer Vigil has been held in conjunction with the Sanctity of Human Life Rally. Our silent prayerful presence focused on divine intervention to prevent the death of more children and for the mothers who will suffer from the loss of those children.

play ball, though, his best years were behind him and he earned less in his whole career than most Major League ball players today make in a single season. His name is Leroy "Satchel" Paige.

Strictly speaking, the poor are those who must depend on the generosity of others to live. Since that spirit of generosity comes from God, the poor most directly depend on God for everything. Regardless of social status, we are still called to place our trust in God for everything, to be poor in spirit. Considering the three relationships, the poor in spirit **realize** their total dependence upon God; they **realize** that He, rather than they, make the rules which govern their conduct; and they **realize** that they have no more fundamental rights than the least of their brothers and sisters. This is reality. Everything else is just an illusion.

The prochoice position starts from opposite premises concerning all three relationships. First, rather than encouraging dependence on God, it asserts independence for persons facing unwanted pregnancies. Dependence upon God is a threat to their autonomy. Second, His rules are not acknowledged as legitimate for their conduct. They make the rules as they see fit for their present situation. Third, the prochoice position claims superiority for women facing unwanted pregnancies: superiority over their unborn children and superiority over the rights of every other person affected, including the fathers of their children.

The prochoice position does, however, profess to support pregnant women, whom they view as among humanity's least favored and who they claim must be allowed to terminate their pregnancies for myriad reasons, but most often, when a child would threaten their financial status or their relationship with the child's father or their husband, who may not be the child's father. This position, the world's position, is not really aligned with the poor in spirit because dependence upon the violent destruction of the unborn replaces dependence upon God; independence from external standards of conduct (power or right to choose) replaces realization of God's rules; and superiority over the unborn replaces a closer relationship to them.

This is not to say that all who claim to be prolife are thus poor in spirit. We have egocentric, fallen people who claim superiority over others in our midst too. The media loves to portray prolife persons as being "antiabortion" as if that term connotes a claim of superiority over those more tolerant of abortion, those who are "prochoice." Funny, isn't it, how media elites scold us for telling others what to do -- isn't that just exactly what they do?

Our task is not to get control over the media, or in fact, to control anyone. Our task is to realize our dependence upon God who makes the rules for all of us to follow. If we are truly to be poor in spirit in our prolife convictions, we must help others to see that dependence upon God is our strength -- although we offer no quick fixes, our God cares deeply for us and will not abandon us, even at difficult times. Following His law is our hope because departures from His law lead to the despair of those agonizing over an abortion decision, past, present or future. Finally, acknowledging that we have no more right to destroy the unborn than they have to destroy us provides us with an ability to resist the temptation to use deadly force against them. In solidarity with the unborn, we build strong relationships person to person and generation to generation.

**2. The Consoled Catcher.** Born the youngest of six children of an Italian-American father and African-American mother, he played in the Negro Leagues before becoming the first black Major League catcher. Despite discrimination and repeated injuries, in ten Major League seasons he won three Most Valuable Player awards and led his Brooklyn Dodgers to five National League pennants and a World Series Championship. A car accident that left him a quadriplegic ended his playing career. For his remaining 35 years, though, he became an inspiration to all people with disabilities. His autobiography, "It's Good to Be Alive," sums up the consolation found by Roy Campanella.

Concerning the second beatitude, a large part of the mourning and consolation, which Christ describes, must be due to **repentance**. "Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret." 2 Corinthians 7:10. Applying the three relationships, to God, His laws, and others, those who mourn **repent** to God for breaking his laws and hurting others, especially the weakest. The second beatitude puts into action the first beatitude. Because we realize our dependence upon God who loves each of us, even the least of us, we must repent when we break His laws, especially when we do harm to the most defenseless.

Prochoice persons cannot repent of sins they do not acknowledge and harms to persons they do not agree have rights even to exist. They mourn the difficulties of women in crisis pregnancies but only at the expense of their offspring. Their position drives a wedge between themselves and their relationship to other humankind. More importantly, their position drives a wedge between themselves and their creator. (continued on page 3)

# Central Illinois Life News

We take no joy and claim no superiority over our prochoice brothers and sisters because we recognize that none of us is free from sin. To be truly repentant we must first mourn our own failures to speak effectively for the unborn and our lack of commitment to them in the face of certain death.

We must acknowledge, moreover, that our lack of commitment harms the living as well as the dead. We also mourn those hurt physically, psychologically or spiritually by abortion, including the mothers, the fathers and even the abortionists. We mourn the brothers and sisters who will never know their siblings killed by abortion, but who will always know that only the grace of God spared their lives from the same fate. We mourn for our whole society, including the growing number of the aged who will never know the protection and security that the unborn could have provided financially and physically to them in later years. Our lack of commitment to the unborn leads inevitably to injury throughout society.

Repentance is a powerful force. The spirit of repentance has converted so many from their abortion pasts to the prolife position. Some, like Dr. Bernard Nathanson, were leaders in the prochoice movement who later became, like St. Paul, outspoken advocates for a position that they once opposed. When the history of our time is written, such persons will be proclaimed as champions of the future generations they strove to protect.

**3. The Meek First Baseman.** Born to German immigrant parents in 1903, he was the only one of four children to survive. Though a Yankee, he played in the shadow of Babe Ruth and said: "Lets face it. I'm not a headline guy. I always knew that as long as I was following Babe to the plate I could have gone up there and stood on my head. No one would have noticed the difference. When the Babe was through swinging, whether he hit one or fanned, nobody paid any attention to the next hitter. They all were talking about what the Babe had done." This meek first baseman, however, amassed 493 home runs and a .340 lifetime batting average while playing in 2130 consecutive games over 13 years, despite unmentioned suffering of numerous fractures. When a terminal illness finally felled him, he still told people, "Today I consider myself the luckiest man on the face of this earth." He died in 1941 at age 37 of the illness which now bears his name, Lou Gehrig's Disease.

One word sums up the relationships of a meek person to God, His laws and others: **respect**. Meek persons **respect** God, His laws and all of humankind. Persons who best put the first two beatitudes into play actually become the meekest among us. Their very lives echo St. Paul's words, "I am the least of all God's people." Ephesians 3:8.

In contrast, prochoice persons boast of their "rights to choose" to ignore God's rules; they give God less respect and claim to be more important than mere "products of conception" or "tissues" which threaten their lifestyles. They fail to acknowledge that all of us are just products of conception. Although some are older by a few years or perhaps a few decades, all of us are young compared with the eternity God means us to share with Him and our fellow human beings, many of whom are yet unborn. Abortion does not end the reality of those killed. It merely amputates the body from the spirit, as all death does. We lose a profound respect for God and the dignity of all humankind when we send so many young lives into eternity where we soon must follow. What kind of a welcome are we expecting when we get there?

Prochoice persons, however, assert meekness because they do not "want to judge" anyone; rather they tolerate the "lifestyle choices" of others, even if they are personally opposed to them. How tolerant they would be of lifestyles which robbed them of their own lives? Should not true meekness protect the defenseless as much as oneself? In truth, such "tolerance" is refusal to submit to the authority of God to set standards for all persons to follow. It masks rebelliousness rather than becomes meekness. We do not judge people by asking them not to kill us or those more defenseless than us. To respect God, even the meek must resist evil that is opposed to Him. Only God can judge, but by aligning our speech and conduct with His commandments, we help others do so likewise.

Prolife persons become meek by respecting God in all that we do in the prolife cause. He will bring an end to abortion through our actions, or more likely, in spite of our small actions and large inactions. God is sovereign and necessary. We are just his creatures. We respect His law best when we follow it. We obey. We show respect for others most when we share their burdens. We serve. Our service is not just to those in crisis pregnancy, though that service is most worthy of our efforts. Our service is also to their children, especially when they are most vulnerable. We are meekest when we are not too busy or too proud or too important to give of our time, our talents and our treasures for mothers and children in crisis and afterwards.

To be continued.....

It is with deep sadness that we at Central Illinois Right to Life note the passing of our good friend Jim Powell. Jim died shortly after Easter this spring. Jim is the father of long time members Patty Craig and her sister Tina. Jim was a faithful Pro Life servant and pivotal in the operation of our fund raising garage sale each year. His efforts will not be forgotten and he will be missed by all of us at CIRTL. Thank you Jim. May God keep all of your loved ones in His care and reunite them with you someday in His house... CIRTL staff

### Vacation Bible School

Its almost summer. Soon many Churches will have Vacation Bible School for children. At my Church there will be hundreds of adults and teenagers who will devote several hours a day for five days to teaching the children who attend. Dozens of people will spend many hours planning and preparing for the week of Bible School. At the request of the Church, many scores of people will be devoting time to praying for the children who will come. Thousands of dollars will be spent on supplies and on special speakers to be brought in for the week from out of town.

Someone has said that we Americans love children, but I think we love our own children much more than those of others. Of the several hundred children who attend Bible School at my church, some will be unchurched kids. However a large part will be from my church or from other churches in the area. Many will be children just like mine - children who have been raised in Christianity; children who have attended Church practically from birth and gone to Vacation Bible School and summer camp and youth retreats every year. Some have even attended private religious schools.

Vacation Bible School is a good thing. Children, churched or unchurched are benefited by hearing the Word of God and by the attention of interested and compassionate teachers. As I sit in the audience at the commencement service that culminates the week of Bible School each year, I am impressed by the results as hundreds of children sing and recite Bible verses. Yet there is always a nagging thought in my mind.

Sadly, there are many children missing from this and other Bible Schools. They are missing because they are dead. Some died at a abortion mill within four miles of the Church where I am sitting. Thirty to sixty children die there during the five days of Bible School each year. Since Bible School was held the previous year, as many as three thousand have been killed at that same place. This is four to five times as many children as are enrolled in the Bible School each year at my Church.

And I can't help but wonder if the effort that our Churches devote to the planning, operation and funding of Vacation Bible School were duplicated in the planning, operation, and funding of efforts to end the killing of children by abortion would soon rid our city of its abortion mill, and someday rid our country of the scourge of abortion, once and for all.

What would be the result if the call for volunteers to work and to pray to save children from abortion went out from our pulpits with anywhere near the same intensity as appeals for help with Bible School? For sure, there would be a lot more children to sing about God and recite His Word at Vacation Bible School commencement as the years go by!

...thoughts of a CIRTL member

# *Tenth Annual Right To Life* **Benefit Garage Sale**



**Thursday, June 27, 9 am to 5 pm**

**Friday, June 28, 9 am to 5 pm**

**Saturday, June 29, 8 am to 10 am - Half Price Sale**

**Saturday, June 29, 10 am to 12 pm - \$2 Bag Sale**



## **Holy Family School Gym** **Corner of Sterling & Gale, In Peoria**

- \*Nice, usable, clean clothing for all sizes
- \*Clean household items
- \*Nice, clean linens
- \*Kitchen items
- \*Appliances in working condition
- \*Lawn & garden items
- \*Craft items
- \*Exercise equipment
- \*Nice books
- \*CDs, tapes and music
- \*Antiques

### *Donation Drop Off Dates*

*Monday, June 24, 8 am to 8 pm*

*Tuesday, June 25, 8 am to 8 pm*



*Sorry, we cannot accept baked goods . Large appliances, (refrigerators, washers, etc.), must be in working order and of good appearance.*



**Also needed, workers for each of the above days, especially someone with a pickup truck to pick up donations. Call Sondra at 673-4833 or 309-645-8000. Please post this notice.**

**January 2002 Sanctity of Human Life Walk Rally**

This year's Walk for Life in Peoria was held on Tuesday, January 22, 2002, at 6:30 P.M. Participants met at the Peoria County courthouse at that time and after prayer and singing walked to the 7:00 P.M. Sanctity of Human Life Rally at Sacred Heart Church (next to the Peoria Civic Center). The rally featured special music and prayer along with reports on local Pro Life efforts. Ed Szymaoiwak, Director of STOPP International gave the keynote address. The 40 hour Prayer Vigil sponsored by Central Illinois Right To Life was conducted from January 21 - 24 at the abortion center in Peoria.

HELP!!! Single? Children Grown? Semi-retired?  
 WE NEED YOU!!! Do you have an hour or two now  
 & then to help Central Illinois Right to Life's board  
 members with a project? Can we put you on a list of  
 prospective volunteers to contact in the future.  
 Remember, the "Pro-Choice" i.e. the pro-abortion crowd

has countless workers and millions of dollars. We  
 operate on a bare-bones budget and are dependent on  
 willing volunteers. If you could help a little in any way,  
 it would be greatly appreciated and immensely  
 gratifying. Please fill out the coupon below and mark

**Outreach Committee News: *Each Child ... Deserves Protection!***

On the third Monday of each month, the Outreach Committee of persons interested in bringing the Pro Life message into their churches meets at the upstairs conference room of the Christian Center at 4100 War Memorial Drive at 7:30 p.m. We come together to share ideas, pray, and to renew our efforts to reach people with the Pro-Life message.

Past topics discussed have included presentations of The Hard Truth video to church groups, other Pro Life videos, how to stop Planned Parenthood, how to be an effective Pro Life advocate, and other Pro Life activities. At recent meetings we have also worked on organizing the annual fund raising garage sale and have put together mailings and newsletters like this one. Members have also helped organize and contribute to our new internet site. Anyone interested in joining this effort should come to our meetings or call Dan Smith at 691-3611.

***Central Illinois Right to Life: Membership and Volunteer Drive***

If you would like to help defend life in Central Illinois, become a member of Central Illinois Right to Life and continue receiving our quarterly newsletter by returning this form and enclosing the annual dues of \$10.00.

Name : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address : \_\_\_\_\_  
 City : \_\_\_\_\_  
 State : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zip Code : \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone : \_\_\_\_\_

- MEMBER DUES : \$10\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_
- DONATION : \$5\_\_ \$10\_\_ \$15\_\_ \$25\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_ Thank You!
- VOLUNTEER HELP : Please put my name on your list of volunteers.

# 2002 BENEFIT GARAGE SALE

## CENTRAL ILLINOIS RIGHT TO LIFE 10TH ANNUAL BENEFIT GARAGE SALE



Thursday, June 27, 9 am - 5 pm, Full Price Sale  
Friday, June 28, 9 am - 5 pm, Full Price Sale  
Saturday, June 29, 8 am - 10 am, Half Price Sale  
Saturday, June 29, 10 am - 12 pm, \$2 A Bag Sale  
Holy Family School Gym; Sterling @ Gale Ave, Peoria, IL

### We need donations of :

**\*Nice, usable, clean clothing for all sizes \*Clean household items in working condition \*Nice, clean linens \*Kitchen items \*Appliances in working condition \*Lawn & garden items \*Craft items \*Exercise equipment \*Nice books \*CDs, tapes and music \*Antiques.**

**\*Please, No Torn, Broken, Or Soiled Items. We Cannot Accept Baked Goods. Large Appliances, (Refrigerators, Washers, Etc.), must be in working order and of good appearance.**

**DONATION DROP OFF DATES:**  
**Monday, June 24 8 am - 8 pm**  
**Tuesday, June 25, 8 am - 8 pm**



*Volunteer Help Is Desperately Needed Monday, Tuesday, And Wednesday Before The Sale, As Well As Thursday, Friday, And Saturday During The Sale, And Immediately After For Clean-Up And Agency Pick-Up. Perhaps Your Church Group Could Sponsor A Time Slot At Your Convenience. Remember, We Are A Volunteer Organization. Senior Citizens & Teens Are Welcomed & Encouraged. Also If You Are An Experienced Garage Saler Or Have Organizational Skills Or A Talent For Arranging Displays, We need You!!! If you have a pickup truck and would be willing to pick up donations for us, please call Sondra at 673-4833 or 309-645-8000.*

Please Fill Out And Return To CIRTL At 4100 N War Memorial Drive, Peoria, IL 61614,  
Or Call Sondra @ 673-4833 or Dennis @ 565-7133  
[Please Circle Preferred Day(s) And Indicate Time(s) You Can Help.] Thank You !!!

I Can Help Monday, Tuesday, And/Or Wednesday, June 24,25,26.  
Time(s) From When To When \_\_\_\_\_

I Can Help Thursday, Friday, And/Or Saturday, June 27, 28, 29.  
Time(s) From When To When \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

# Central Illinois Life News

“The best gift we can give to any child is to make that child  
 feel wanted, loved, and cared for because that  
 child is the greatest gift of God.”  
 Mother Teresa

*Unity on the essentials of the Sanctity of Human Life is our objective. We are not seeking uniformity of opinion on all matters.. Therefore, some ideas advocated by the authors of articles in Central Illinois Life News or on the Central Illinois Right To Life website may not necessarily reflect the the personal views of all the members and officers of Central Illinois Right To Life, Inc.*

**Central Illinois Right to Life, Inc.**  
 4100 N. War Memorial Drive

Presorted  
 Standard  
 U.S.  
 Postage  
**PAID**  
 Permit 1095

ADDRESS SERVICE  
 REQUESTED



Visit Our Growing Web Site At <http://www.cirtl.org>

