

Central Illinois Life News

Pastors Speak Out

I

n this column, we provide a forum

for the personal reflections of Pro-Life Pastors in Central Illinois. As another Sanctity Of Human Life Sunday approaches, many Pro Life people will again be saddened by the lack of recognition of this day in their local Church. To address that frustration, we present this reprint of our first Pastors Speak Out article, originally published in 1994. The truths therein are ones that bear repeating.

All of the pastor's articles from past issues are available on our web site at <http://www.cirtl.org> If you are a member of the clergy seeking an additional forum to speak out for Life, this column is open to you. Contact us at CIRTl.

The Churches Response Preaching Against Abortion

Some committed Pro-Life people are puzzled by the paucity of sermons that address the sin of abortion. As a pastor, I would like to share from my perspective why this is the case. Let me outline four reasons for the want of Pro-Life sermons...

1) Pastors Find Them Extremely Difficult To Preach. By this I mean that the spiritual and emotional energy that goes into these sermons, along with the embattlement received from the forces of evil while preparing and proclaiming them, make these messages especially trying.

2) Pastors, Like Everybody Else, Are Basically Cowards. Ministers of God, more than anyone else in the culture, are to be the vanguards of Courage and that Strength. Unfortunately, most are afraid of offending (continued on page

Coming Events

During Sanctity of Human Life week, January 21 - January 29, 2001, the following events are scheduled:

Forty Hour Prayer Vigil, January 22 - January 25, 2001, in front of the abortion center on North University Street in Peoria. Call Dan Smith at 691-3611 to volunteer to stand for an hour of prayer.

Family Resources Center Open House, Monday, January 22, 2001 from 5:30 - 6:30 PM, 321 Main Street, Peoria, before the Walk and Sanctity of Human Life Rally.

Walk for Life, 6:30 PM on Monday, January 22, 2001 at the Peoria County Courthouse. After prayer we will walk together to the Rally carrying signs showing our support for the sanctity of all innocent human life.

Sanctity of Human Life Rally, 7:00 PM on Monday, January 22, 2001 at Sacred Heart Church across from the Peoria Civic Center. The rally will feature special music and prayer along with reports on local Pro Life efforts. Jill Stanek, the courageous nurse who blew the whistle on induced labor abortions being performed at Christ Hospital in Oaklawn, IL, will give the keynote address.

Sanctity Of Human Life Sunday, January 21, 2001 is the Sunday on which many Churches make a special effort to remember unborn children and women in difficult pregnancies. Encourage the leadership of your church to boldly speak the truth this year.

Eleventh Annual Life Chain

Thank you for helping us increase participation in our annual Life Chain. This year God provided us with wonderful fall weather. Over 600 strong, we stood along Glen and University Streets for an hour. This testimony, for the millions of preborn children who have died and for the countless number whose lives may be threatened in the future, we pray will help turn the hearts and minds of our nation from life to death before it is forever, too late.

2)

people and "Losing Friends"--they want to be liked.

3) Some Pastors Have Been Deceived By Satan. Because we want to find excuses for our delinquency, we often seek to soothe our consciences through the shameful habit of imbibing the lies of Satan that seek to make the sin of abortion appear to be less than it is.

4) Many Pastors Do Not Know How To Preach The Bible Very Well. This is not meant as a put-down, but as an observation. If ministers of God really understood their primary role, i.e. to "Preach the Word," (2 Tim. 4:2), they would know they have no other choice but to preach on the subject of the sin of abortion.

In the light of all of this, what is the answer? It seems clear to me that the answer is found in a clergy that is so courageous that they really don't care if they offend people or not. What we need are men filled with the Holy Spirit who reckon themselves like the Apostle Paul, "crucified to the world," (Gal. 6:14). On top of all this, Pro-Life ministers must be winsome, loving, gentle, and kind. We must know that the cause cannot be lost because we serve a Sovereign God and His will cannot fail!

Mark J. Henninger

Pastor of First Presbyterian Church Of Pottstown, IL

08/1994

Here is an email we recently received from a student who used information from our web site to educate others at her school.

To: cirtl@cirtl.org

Subject: Thank you for your much needed site.

Dear C.I.R.T.L,

I am a grade 10 student and I really appreciate this web site. I am doing a debate in my English class and am arguing that abortion should be totally illegal with severe punishments for taking the life of an unborn child. I have used your information on partial birth abortions, post abortion syndrome and how a baby develops, in my project. I was shocked to tears when I read how a partial abortion occurs and it seems too cruel to be true. How could we as a nation do something as heartless as that? I truly hope that your site is found by mothers to be that are considering taking their baby's life and that they think about what they could do and what they should do. You have been so helpful and easily read. I have all the information I need for this debate and I got it all from your site. God Bless you.

Sincerely,
Thankful student.

Remember To Visit Us At <http://www.cirtl.org> - and tell others to visit too!

Central Illinois Right To Life, Inc
Presents
The Annual Sanctity of Human Life
Walk and Rally

Monday, January 22, 2001
with the following events included

Open House at the Family Resources Center
321 Main Street in Peoria, IL
5:30 pm to 6:30 pm

Walk for Life
Peoria County Courthouse
6:30 pm

Prayer, singing, and walk to the Church for the Rally to follow

Sanctity of Human Life Rally
Sacred Heart Church (by Peoria Civic Center)
7:00 pm

Key Note Speaker : *Jill Stanek*

The Courageous Nurse Who Reported Induced Labor Abortions Which
Resulted In Live Babies Who Were Then Allowed To Die
At Christ Hospital in Oaklawn, IL

"History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period was not the violent words and deeds of the abortionists, but the appalling silence and indifference of good people. Our generation will have to repent not only for the words and actions of the children of darkness, but also, for the fear and apathy of the children of light. (C. Roy McMillan)

An Open Letter From The Chairman Of The CIRTL Outreach Committee

Dear supporter of Central Illinois Right To Life,

Our nation has endured a great test. With the hope that our next president, George W. Bush, will return our leadership to a prolife course, we rejoice. Still our prayers and efforts must continue. We must remember that three of the five justices appointed by Presidents Reagan and Bush still affirm abortion on demand. Justices Souter, O'Conner, and Kennedy, often the swing votes on divisive issues, join Justices Stewart, Breyer and Ginsberg in that position. Chief Justice Rehnquist is joined by Justice Thomas and Scalia in their consistent opposition to that abortion power. The spin is already starting in the media that a divided Senate will make it difficult to confirm a controversial candidate. How then did Clinton get nominations of prochoice Justices Ginsberg and Breyer past the U.S. Senate? We must pray both for wisdom in selection of prolife justices and for conviction of senators to confirm them.

In this moment, we can take stock of where our nation stands and who voted for whom. According to the voter news service exit polls used by five broadcast news outlets and the Associated Press, Vice President Gore, the prochoice candidate, netted 50% of the Catholic vote nationwide, while president-elect Bush, the prolife candidate, pulled in only 47%. These polls have a margin of error of at least 4%. Some may see this comparison as the glass more than half empty. I think further study is needed. As far back as the depression, the Democratic party has held the lion's share of the Catholic vote, until the Democratic party became the political arm of the proabortion movement. Slowly, the traditional allegiances have slipped so that the Democratic party no longer has the Catholic vote in a lock box as Vice President Gore might put it. Of particular significance is the Florida Catholic vote, 26 percent of the voters, who voted 52 % for Bush and only 44 % for Gore. Protestant voters in Florida voted by an even higher margin for Bush, 55-43.

More interesting, are the less publicized exit polls findings of the comparison between voting patterns of the churchd and the unchurched. The exit polling showed that the more voters of all faiths went to religious services, the more they voted for president-elect Bush. Those going more frequently than once a week gave Bush a 63-30 edge, and those going weekly went 57-40 for Bush. But those who went to church only monthly were 51-46 for Gore. Those who said they seldom went to church were in Gore's camp by a 54-42 margin, and those who said they never went to church were 61-32 for Gore.

Come join us at our first Outreach Committee meeting of 2001. We will meet on Monday, January 15, 2001, at the Christian Center upstairs conference room beginning at 7:30. We will be discussing and planning for the upcoming Pro Life events of January 21 through January 29, 2001.

Sincerely,

Dan Smith (691-3611)
Central Illinois Right To Life

*Central Illinois Right To Life, Inc
is planning again this year*

A 40 Hour Prayer Vigil

**to be held in front of the abortion center
at 7405 North University Street
In Peoria, Illinois**

**The Prayer Vigil will be held over 4 days
during the annual Sanctity of Human Life week
from January 22, 2001 to January 25, 2001**

**Call CIRTL board member, Dan Smith
at (309) 691-3611
to volunteer to join this effort**

**If every Church could be represented there - for
just one hour, the testimony for life to our
community would be overwhelming!**

... could you not watch with me one hour?

Matt. 26:40b

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 on page 3 and

(More Truth That Bears Repeating)

(Excerpts of a) Pastoral Statement on the Obligations of Catholics and the Rights of Unborn Children

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.

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. 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.

Most Reverend John J. Myers,

Catholic Bishop of Peoria, June 1, 1990

Central Illinois Life News

The Central Illinois Right To Life Web Site Is Helping!

Here is an email we received last month from a young mother who found help on our web site.
(Read another email from a courageous student helped by our site - on page 2)

To: cirtl@cirtl.org

I HAD AN ABORTION ABOUT A YEAR AGO. I SAW YOUR SITE, AND READ EVERYTHING. IF I KNEW THEN WHAT I KNOW NOW, I WOULD NEVER OF DONE THAT. LUCKILY, GOD HAS GIVEN ME ANOTHER CHANCE; I AM NOW 28 WKS WITH MY DAUGHTER. I AM JUST HAPPY, AND SO IS MY BOYFRIEND, THAT I DID NOT MAKE THAT MISTAKE AGAIN. THANK YOU FOR TELLING THE TRUTH.

ALLISON
MY DAUGHTER THANKS YOU TOO.

Remember To Visit Us At <http://www.cirtl.org> - and tell others to visit too!

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.

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