

# Life Matters

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The Newsletter of the St. Rose of Lima Pro-Life/Pro-Family Committee

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**St. Rose Pro-Life/Pro-Family Committee Officers**

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## THE CATHOLIC VOTE?

By: Fred Dwyer

Is there a Catholic vote? CNN reports that, “about 35 million Catholics voted in 2008. That’s about 27% of all voters.” So certainly in that sense there is a Catholic vote, a significant one. However in the sense that “Catholic vote” suggests a commonality of purpose, a deep regard for Catholic beliefs, it’s much less clear.

Many of our elected officials, who identify themselves as Catholic, support and vote for abortion “rights,” for same-sex marriage, for assisted suicide, and now for legislation which denies the rights of conscience to those who would buy health insurance.

Then does the concept of “Church-and-state separation” mean that religion is something which happens on Sundays, but is disengaged from our worldly pursuits during the week? Of course not, the teachings of Jesus are about right and wrong, good and bad, justice and injustice. It would seem that our civil laws must address those same concepts, if we wish to live in a good, righteous, and just society, a moral society. Simply, what is right on Sunday, is right on Monday, they are not separate.

So how is a Catholic to vote? It seems unlikely that any one candidate will properly represent all of the issues we believe in. While recognizing that some issues are non-negotiable, such as the “inalienable” right to life, with which we are endowed by our creator (*Declaration of Independence*) we have to compromise on others.

We have to prioritize and weigh each political issue, each moral issue, and by so doing select the candidates who will best defend our society, and our faith. We must not bend to those who would separate the two. This “great American experiment” (*Democracy in America: Alexis de Tocqueville*) has, from the Declaration of Independence and the U.S. Constitution in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, through the Pledge of Allegiance in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, always recognized the primacy of our creator, of God.

So is there a Catholic vote? Yes, it’s yours. You are the Catholic voter, you are the Catholic vote.

## MEDICAL SYMPOSIUM: ABORTION IS NEVER MEDICALLY NECESSARY

### Dublin Conference Hears Evidence

As published in EWTN News, 14-September-2012

DUBLIN, Ireland, SEPT. 13, 2012 (Zenit.org).- A medical symposium in Dublin, Ireland, heard evidence that "abortion is not medically necessary to save the life of a mother."

The International Symposium on Excellence in Maternal Healthcare was attended by more than 140 Irish medical professionals from the fields of obstetrics and gynecology, mental health, and molecular epidemiology.

Professor Eamon O'Dwyer, speaking for the committee of the symposium, said that the outcome of the conference "provided clarity and confirmation to doctors and legislators."

A major theme of the symposium was the management of high-risk pregnancies, cancer in pregnancy, fetal anomalies, mental health and maternal mortality.

The Sept. 8 press release by the symposium organizers presented the conclusions contained in the Dublin Declaration on Maternal Healthcare, which states:

- As experienced practitioners and researchers in obstetrics and gynecology, we affirm that direct abortion is not medically necessary to save the life of a woman.
- We uphold that there is a fundamental difference between abortion, and necessary medical treatments that are carried out to save the life of the mother, even if such treatment results in the loss of life of her unborn child.
- We confirm that the prohibition of abortion does not affect, in any way, the availability of optimal care to pregnant women.

O'Dwyer said that attempts were being made to confuse legitimate medical treatment with abortion.

"Irish Obstetricians and Gynecologists have previously pointed out that treatment for conditions such as ectopic pregnancy are not considered abortion by doctors, yet misinformation in regard to this abounds in public debate."

"The symposium clarifies that direct abortion is never medically necessary to save the life of a woman, and that's good news for mothers and their babies," said Professor O'Dwyer.

The professor's comments allude to the difference recognized in Christian morality between a direct abortion, and the unintended though foreseen death of the child as a secondary consequence of certain treatments.

Dr Eoghan de Faoite of the organizing committee for the symposium said that the research presented provided clear evidence that best practice medical care for pregnant women does not involve abortion.

"It was fascinating to learn about new therapies involving the safe delivery of chemotherapy during pregnancy and the exciting field of in-utero fetal surgery" he said. "When discussing matters of pregnancy and medicine it is vital that the voices of the real experts, those that actually care for pregnant women, be heard."

"This Symposium puts an end to the false argument that Ireland needs abortion to treat

women, and it was encouraging to hear the international speakers commend Ireland's high standards of maternal healthcare and low rates of maternal mortality," he added.

"The Dublin Declaration stating that abortion is not medically necessary was a statement of fact agreed by medical experts and reflecting best medical practice in maternal healthcare," stated the medical advisor to the Life Institute, Dr Seán Ó Domhnaill.

"This is a globally significant outcome, which shows abortion has no place in treating women and their unborn children," he affirmed.

## **TENNESSEE CATHOLIC GROUPS SUE OVER CONTRACEPTION MANDATE**

14-September-2012 -- Catholic News Agency  
As Published in EWTN News

NASHVILLE, TENN., September 13. - The Diocese of Nashville and seven other Catholic entities in Tennessee filed suit Sept. 12 to block a government mandate requiring that they provide contraceptive coverage through employee insurance.

"It is particularly important for us to file this action at this time," said Rick Musacchio, director of communications for the Nashville diocese, in a statement Wednesday.

The diocese was joined in the suit, filed in the Middle Tennessee district court, by Catholic Charities of Tennessee, Father Ryan High School, Pope John Paul II High School, Mary Queen of Angels, Villa Maria Manor, St. Mary Villa, and Aquinas College - all of which are independent institutions under Tennessee state law.

The Catholic groups are opposing the Department of Health and Human Services mandate, which is part of the the 2010 Affordable Health Care Act, and was finalized in February 2012. It requires that group insurance plans cover FDA-approved contraceptives and sterilization.

Mary Queen of Angels, St. Mary Villa, and Villa Maria Manor found last November that their insurance plan had included coverage for oral contraceptives.

When they immediately tried to remove this coverage from their plan, their carrier, Blue

Cross/Blue Shield of Tennessee, told them the coverage could not be removed because of the health care act.

Because they were not able to have the coverage removed, their plan was not eligible for what the department has called "temporary enforcement of safe harbor" from the mandate.

The five other institutions are due to face the same problem when their insurance plans come up for renewal within the next year.

The mandate went into effect Aug. 1, 2012, but for those eligible for the enforcement of safe harbor, it will not go into effect until Aug. 1, 2013.

Dozens of other suits by dioceses and businesses have been filed to block the mandate forcing employers to provide health insurance for services which violate their conscience. Hobby Lobby, which is owned by a Christian, also sued on Sept. 12.

"It is not about whether people have a right to abortion-inducing drugs, sterilization, and contraception. Those services are and will continue to be freely available in the United States, and nothing prevents the Government itself from making them more widely available," the Nashville groups' lawsuit reads.

"But the right to such services does not authorize the Government to force the Plaintiffs to violate their own consciences by making them provide, pay for, and/or facilitate those services to others, contrary to their sincerely held religious beliefs."

## **WASHINGTON'S BISHOPS: SAME-SEX MARRIAGE WILL HAVE 'CHILLING EFFECT' ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM**

5-September-2012 – Catholic World News Brief  
As published in EWTN News

The bishops of the State of Washington have issued a statement urging Catholics to uphold the definition of marriage as the union of a man and a woman during the upcoming marriage referendum.

At the November referendum, the state's voters will have the opportunity to ratify or reject a new state law allowing same-sex marriage.

"If the state successfully disconnects marriage from the potential inherent to sexual union between a man and woman, the civil meaning of marriage will be lost, and the institution that

results will be a genderless contract without reference to children," the bishops said. "The foundational nature of marriage for the good and the strength of human society will be harmed beyond repair. Faithful, monogamous marriages between one man and one woman will cease to be the legally-established social standard for uniting children with their parents, even though social science has established that children do best when raised in homes with married mothers and fathers."

*The bishops added:*

In addition, the legal separation of marriage from procreation would have a chilling effect on religious liberty and the right of conscience. Once marriage is redefined as a genderless contract, it will become legally discriminatory for public and private institutions such as schools to promote the unique value of children being raised by their biological mothers and fathers.

No institution or individual could propose that married mothers and fathers provide a singular benefit to children without being accused of discrimination. Recent attacks on churches, businesses and nonprofit organizations that express their conscientious objection to the redefinition of marriage underscore the danger. Those who uphold families based on the permanent, faithful relationship between a married man and woman as the best environment for raising children already have been accused of hate speech, and the right of religious institutions to freely practice their faith has been abridged.

## **PLANNED PARENTHOOD TEXT PROGRAM TARGETS KIDS WITH SEX, ABORTION**

by Steven Ertelt | Washington, DC | LifeNews.com | 9/13/12  
11:56 AM

The Planned Parenthood abortion business has launched a new text and chat program that targets kids with information about sex and abortion. A new video posted yesterday by the nation's largest abortion company targets young people with instructions on how to text questions about abortion and sex to its staff.

In the video, a child is shown, without parental knowledge or permission, how he or she can send a text asking a question about sex to Planned Parenthood. The ad also shows how easy it will be for the abortion company to sell abortions to young teenagers who contact it.

The video shows a teenage girl asking, “The condom broke and I don’t want to be pregnant.” The response from the abortion business promotes the morning after pill as something she can take to avoid pregnancy — though it would act as an abortion agent destroying the life of a new human being that far after sexual intercourse.

“Planned Parenthood’s text program helps young people get answers to their sexual health questions simply by texting,” the abortion business advertises. “Had unprotected sex? Have STD symptoms? Am I pregnant? Just Worried? Text “PPGO” to 7744636

The new program should be worrisome to parents as nearly 40 percent of teens aged 14 to 17 are using digital technologies to seek out health related information, according to a Pew research poll.

Seeking to take advantage of that, Vanessa Cullins, Planned Parenthood Federation of America vice president, admits the abortion company is seeking to target them.

“Today’s technology makes it possible for young people looking for information to access it in multiple ways, and Planned Parenthood is determined to provide information to as many young people as possible,” she admitted.

Leslie Kantor, PPFA’s vice president of education, added: “Through our online and mobile tools, Planned Parenthood is working to reach as many young people as possible.”

To view the Planned Parenthood text and chat program, visit [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYj4TF4c42Y&feature=player\\_embedded](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qYj4TF4c42Y&feature=player_embedded)

## **AMY’S STORY: FROM THE PILL TO THE NATURAL.**

As published on 1Flesh.org, Sept.17, 2012

Submitted by Lil Gustilo

My husband and I will be married 22 years this August. When we first married, I was on the Pill. I’d been on it — in an on-and-off fashion — since I was 14 years old. My mom had taken me to my first gynecologist appointment then, and the doctor found an ovarian cyst and said I should be on the Pill to get rid of it. (*1Flesh would like to note the findings of a major study: “Although widely used*

*for treating functional ovarian cysts, combined oral contraceptives appear to be of no benefit.”*) After a couple years, I just stopped taking it.

Then, when I was 17, I was in a serious relationship, serious enough that my mom asked me if I needed to be on the Pill. I said yes, because my boyfriend and I had already been sexually active. My mom said she would take me to see a doctor, but that if I did somehow get pregnant, she told me she would raise the baby and everything would be fine. I remember taking away from this conversation the idea that “Here, I’ll put you on the Pill, but if you get pregnant that’s OK” didn’t make sense. If she really was OK if I got pregnant, why would she agree to put me on the Pill? To me, her willingness to take care of a baby was a lie, because putting me on the Pill meant “Don’t get pregnant”, so obviously pregnancy was not really OK.

I stayed on the Pill for another year until we broke up. Then I got to college and met my future husband the very first week of school. He was a senior. We were sexually active fairly immediately, but relied on condoms or withdrawal. We were a steady couple. He graduated and started looking for a job in town. I got pregnant halfway through my sophomore year. At the time, to me, abortion was a no-brainer. I was in college, my boyfriend had a low-paying job and was interviewing for better things, so we could eventually get married. I remembered my mom said she would take care of any baby, but again, if she wasn’t just giving me lip service, why put me on the Pill in the first place? That act told me that pregnancy was NOT OK, and so I didn’t want to be embarrassed that it had happened to me. I remember one night, after I had already made my appointment for the abortion, I sobbed in bed. It was so long ago, I can’t even be sure what my emotions were about. There were a lot of emotions at play at once. But part of it was sadness that I was in this ‘situation’ and a deep sadness that I ‘had to do what I had to do’. I knew ending the life of the baby was a horrible, terrible thing, and I hated ‘having’ to do it (my feeling at the time). I cried myself out and was on automatic after that. The abortion was horrible.

I got on the Pill immediately after the abortion and stayed there. (Pardon me for sounding so clinical about this here. It’s a part of my life that will burn

in me until the day I die. I have to be a little detached when I discuss it, because the tears are really just right behind my eyes all the time.)

Eventually, my future husband found a good corporate entry-level job and moved out of state during my junior year. We planned our wedding and got married. And stayed on the Pill for the next 14 years. And didn't have any kids.

Then my husband started getting more interested in his faith. He went to church regularly and started picking up apologetic materials. I read one, and was pretty much bowled over. We signed up for an NFP class (Sympto-thermal method) soon after.

The amount of info we learned staggered us. We were college grads and we realized we didn't know jack about how reproduction even worked (beyond egg-meets-sperm basics – and that's about the level of understanding you get at the 8th grade health level). It all seemed really complicated, but we trusted and started charting. Working it out together was a real journey to closeness for us. We were discovering my body together! And it was so amazing to us to see the changes going on hormonally in me played out right on the paper. It was exciting that we were learning this stuff, and we worked on my chart every night together, as we were taught.

After 15 years of marriage, NFP added a level of excitement to our relationship. We were discovering something new together as a couple. We were sharing a part of our lives together (my fertility) that we never shared before, because it was just put on a shelf and forgotten about when I was on the Pill. We sort of felt like we had just been taught to read, or were blind and got our sight. My fertility was new knowledge we had, and knowledge we shared and could talk about and explore together.

The times of abstinence were a hardship (a muscle we had never had to use before) but it made the times when we could be intimate again that much more special. Something to really look forward to. And after a year of using NFP, we finally asked ourselves, why are we still avoiding pregnancy? I think it was just out of habit! We were open to life for the first time in our marriage. The very first time we were intimate during my fertile time, when we knew that for the VERY FIRST TIME we were completely giving ourselves to each other and holding nothing back, was the most emotional moment of my entire life up until then. I cried. I still get teary-eyed when I discuss it. Especially

since God blessed that very first openness with the conception of a child. He is now almost 7 and named John Paul.

And he was followed 2 1/2 years later by his brother Leo, who was followed 2 1/2 years later by their sister Marah. And we are currently trying for another. So our children are another benefit of NFP. We started late in life, but thanks to charting and knowing my most-fertile times, we have been able to conceive without problem. We also enjoy knowing what is going on with my body, when things are a little crazy post-partum. I am now 43, and have started seeing some changes in my cycles, which I believe are due to my age and the approach of peri-menopause. But I still feel confident that I can conceive again because we have the information we need to optimize our chances. I think the benefits of NFP may even grow as I enter peri-menopause. It won't be such a scary time for me, because I'll know what is happening in my body, what hormones are starting to wane and when.

Was it worth it? YES!!!! We learned to teach NFP because we were so stoked about how great it is. How could anyone NOT want to have knowledge about this? Knowledge is power, right? Everyone talks about a woman's control over her fertility...**but being on the Pill or using condoms or whatever is not control.** A woman has to rely on the manufacturers of the products, that they did their job well and the stuff will actually work as promised. But a woman using NFP has real control, she has information. I would ever ever switch back to anything artificial, because going back would literally be turning my back on knowledge. As if I decided I didn't want to be able to read anymore! Or do math! That's crazy.

## **A PRO-LIFE PRAYER FOR OUR PRESIDENT AND PUBLIC OFFICIALS**

Imprimatur: January 22, 2009  
Most Reverend Robert J. Baker  
Bishop of Birmingham in Alabama

Lord God, Author of Life and Source of Eternal Life,

Move the hearts of all our public officials and especially our President, to fulfill their responsibilities worthily and well to all those entrusted to their care.

Help them in their special leadership roles, to extend the mantle of protection to the most vulnerable, especially the defenseless unborn,

whose lives are threatened with extermination by an indifferent society.

Guide all public officials by your wisdom and grace to cease supporting any law that fails to protect the fundamental good that is human life itself, which is a gift from God and parents.

You are the Protector and Defender of the lives of the innocent unborn. Change the hearts of those who compromise the call to protect and defend life. Bring our nation to the values that have made us a great nation, a society that upholds the values of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all.

Mary, the Mother of the living, help us to bear witness to the Gospel of Life with our lives and our laws, through Christ, Our Lord. Amen.

## **PARTICIPATE IN THE 40 DAYS FOR LIFE CAMPAIGN &: PRAY WITHOUT CEASING**

(1 thessalonians 5:17)

Submitted by: Celeste Vodola

YOU can help save lives! Participate in the 40 Days for Life Campaign. 40 Days for Life is a focused pro-life effort that consists of 40 days of prayer and fasting, 40 days of peaceful vigil, and 40 days of community outreach.

We are praying that, with God's help, this groundbreaking effort will mark the beginning of the end of abortion throughout America. While all aspects of 40 Days for Life are crucial in the effort to end abortion, the most visible component is the peaceful prayer vigil outside a local abortion facility.

There have now been ten coordinated 40 Days for Life campaigns since 2007, mobilizing people of faith and conscience in 440 cities across the United States and Canada, plus cities in Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Belize, Denmark, England, Georgia, Germany, Ireland, Northern Ireland, Poland, Puerto Rico and Spain.

- During these unified efforts, participants witnessed countless blessings from God:
- 1,894 individual campaigns have taken place in 440 cities
- More than 525,000 have joined together in an historic display of unity to pray and fast for an end to abortion
- More than 15,000 church congregations have participated in the 40 Days for Life campaigns

- Reports, document 5,928 lives that have been spared from abortion — and those are just the ones we know about
- 69 abortion workers have quit their jobs and walked away from the abortion industry
- 24 abortion facilities completely shut down following local 40 Days for Life campaigns
- Hundreds of women and men have been spared from the tragic effects of abortion, including a lifetime of regrets
- Many people with past abortion experiences have stepped forward to begin post-abortion healing and recovery

40 Days for Life Campaigns take place in Connecticut in the dioceses of Hartford and Norwich September 26 - November 4, 2012 and in the Diocese of Bridgeport during the Lenten season. To learn more, sign up for specific vigil hours, or let us know how you feel called to serve God in this effort. Please contact the local 40 Days for Life leadership team:

Mary Lou Peters 203.745.7300

[mlpeters@prolifeministry.org](mailto:mlpeters@prolifeministry.org)

Tom Dwyer: [tom40days@yahoo.com](mailto:tom40days@yahoo.com)

Steve Krok: [stevekrok8@yahoo.com](mailto:stevekrok8@yahoo.com)

<http://www.40daysforlife.com/norwich/>

<http://www.40daysforlife.com/hartford/>

**Take a stand for life!**

