

Life News

April 2013



Life Newsbytes

Arkansas now has the country's most restrictive abortion law, banning most abortions in the 12th week of pregnancy. The law, which goes into effect this summer, is certain to end up in court. Sen. Jason Rapert, the measure's sponsor, told the *Arkansas Democrat*, "If there's a heartbeat, there's life and we're going to stand up for this law, regardless of who opposes it." The ACLU of Arkansas and the Center for Reproductive Rights plan a challenge of the law in federal court before it takes effect. The vote came less than a week after Arkansas lawmakers overrode a veto of another bill banning most abortions starting in the 20th week of pregnancy. (Sources: *LifeNews.com*, *Arkansas Democrat*, 3/6/13; *CLR Life News*, 3/7/13)

The health ministry in China released figures in March showing 336 million abortions have been carried out in the Asian nation since it first implemented the one-child population control policy. Started in 1980, the policy, which prohibits most Chinese couples from having more than one baby and limits rural residents to two, has resulted in severe human rights abuses. Family planning officials frequently jail couples who refuse to comply, sentence them to house arrest or labor camps, revoke jobs or governmental support, use physical harassment or violence and often target other family members. (Source: *LifeNews.com*, 3/15/13)

Speaking Up For Life

"You are valuable to God because He made you and He loved what He made so much that He was conceived in a womb, born in a stable, suffered on a cross, buried in a tomb. Then He rose again to say 'Yes' to it all, to say 'Yes' to you, to give you His victory over death and the grave. That's love!" *Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, executive director of Lutherans For Life*

"Maybe too often we hold forth the word about life—"I had a heart beat at 21 days"—and not enough of the Word of Life, the Word which declares, 'I am the resurrection and the Life.'" *Dr. David Veum, President and Professor of Practical Theology for the Seminary of the Church of the Lutheran Brethren, Fergus Falls, Minnesota*

2013 LFL National Conference

Mark your calendar for the LFL National Conference, November 8-9 in Urbandale (Des Moines), Iowa. The theme is **L.I.F.E. – Living In Faith Everyday.**

Ways to Help Others

Consider helping out foster families and kids by driving, babysitting, cooking, and praying for them. Foster care can be wonderful--and challenging. (Adapted from *5 Ways to Support Families and Kids During the Holiday*, www.buckner.org, 10/23/12)

Why Is the World So Dumb? by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb



The youth group joined the adult Bible class I spoke to recently in South Dakota. They sat in the front row which impressed me as there was no indication their leader "forced" this upon them! After the study on the God-given value of human life, I handed these young people the fetal models I had used as illustrations. They seemed to enjoy touching them and passing them amongst themselves.

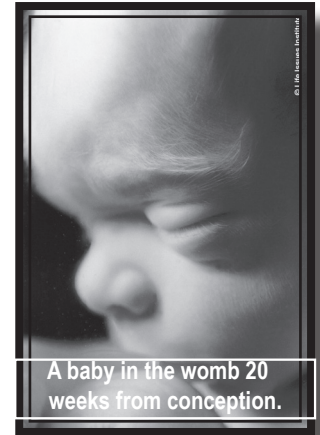
After awhile nearly everyone left, except one girl. She's the one who asked the question. She remained in her seat holding the twenty-week baby in her lap. Tears flowed down her cheeks. I sat down beside her to inquire what was wrong, but before I could speak she asked, "Why is the world so dumb?" Her sobs replenished the stream of tears.

Here was a teenage girl angry at the world for its horrid treatment of the unborn. Here was a teenage girl, her tear drops falling on the baby she held, grieving for the unborn who would never be touched or held. I affirmed her right to be angry. I lauded her compassion. I tried to encourage her by the fact that God can use both her anger and compassion to instill in her a real passion for His gift of life and for upholding and defending it. Looking back I'm guessing He already had!

I'm not sure how much my encouragement helped her. I am sure how much her encouragement helped me! How encouraging to see passion in this teen and so many others like her. I told this youth group, as I try to tell all the youth with whom I speak, that I am counting on them to translate their passion and energy for life into words and deeds that will influence our culture in a way my generation did not. I am convinced they will!

After something like this you think of those things you wish you would have said! Psalm 37 comes to mind. "**Fret not yourself because of evildoers; be not envious of wrongdoers!**" (1) And then in verses 12-13, "**The wicked plots against the righteous and gnashes his teeth at him, but the Lord laughs at the wicked, for he sees that his day is coming.**" We should be angry as the wicked of our age plot against the most vulnerable of lives. But we get nowhere if we just rage against the wicked and become preoccupied with attacking them. They are nothing but a "laugh" to God. He will handle them.

The Holy Spirit, through David, offers a more positive approach in the intervening verses. For example, "**Commit your way to the LORD; trust in him, and he will act. He will bring forth your righteousness as the light, and your justice as the noonday**" (5-6). We at LFL will continue to equip Lutherans to be "Gospel-motivated voices For Life." We will continue to help Lutherans apply the Gospel to the life issues and "trust in him, and he will act." After all, the Gospel is the most powerful and positive life-affirming message in the universe! It changes hearts. It changes lives. It's just what a dumb world needs!



A baby in the womb 20 weeks from conception.