



Life Newsbytes

A federal judge on September 11 partially dismissed a lawsuit challenging the new North Dakota law that prohibits abortions based on a genetic defect (such as Down syndrome) or sex selection. The ruling means North Dakota has now become the first U.S. state to ban abortions because of Down syndrome. (Source: CLR Life News, 9/19/13)

Abortion clinics closing: A review of data from The Guttmacher Institute, by Operation Rescue, has revealed, “So far in 2013, 43 surgical abortion clinics have closed around the country, compared to 24 closures in 2012.” At least 24 of those closures involved Planned Parenthood facilities, three of which had performed surgical abortions. (Source: CLR Life News, 8/28/13)

New research shows as an unborn child grows inside its mother’s womb, it can hear sounds from the outside world and can even identify specific words shortly after birth. Scientists from the University of Helsinki ... used EEG sensors on 33 newborns and discovered the babies can listen to speech in utero during the last trimester of pregnancy when the sound-processing parts of their brain become active ... Eino Partanen ... the study’s lead author, told Science. “This leads us to believe that the fetus can learn much more detailed information than we previously thought.” (Source: CLR Life News, 8/28/13)

Speaking Up For Life

“God created human life. He, therefore, gets to set the rules. And no matter how many times man redefines human life, God’s truth doesn’t change. The Bible should be the foundation for our thinking in every area.”
Dr. Elizabeth Mitchell, Answers in Genesis, www.answersingenesis.org



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Hindrance or Handiwork? by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

When bias toward people with disabilities makes the headlines, it jolts us out from behind our safety shield of indifference. The *Toronto Star* reported in its online edition of August 21, “Hateful letter stirs local support for autistic boy.” The boy, Maxwell, 13, lives with his family in Oshawa, Ontario, Canada.

The writer calls Maxwell a “hindrance to everyone.” “Do the right thing and move or euthanize him!!!! Either way, we are ALL better off!!!!” Not only does the writer suggest euthanasia, but suggests that whatever “non-retarded body parts he possesses” be donated to science.

“Do not be deceived: God is not mocked, for whatever one sows, that will he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). Both in Canada and the United States we have been sowing the seeds that base life’s value on abilities or usefulness. For forty years we have aborted those who do not measure up. If the technology existed to detect autism prior to birth as it does for Down syndrome, I wonder if “local support” would have been stirred if Maxwell had been aborted. Abortion does not merely devalue the life of the unborn, it devalues life.

But sowing such seeds not only produces hateful, bigoted neighbors but subtly affects our thinking too. Perhaps we have wondered about the value of a particular life like grandma lying there unresponsive or our spouse denying who we are and cursing us as a result of Alzheimer’s. Maybe we sometimes doubt the value and purpose of our own lives.

It is good for me, and maybe you too, to be reminded that we are all the work of God’s hands (Job 34:19) and we have no place issuing commands about His handiwork (Isaiah 45:11). He knits us together (Psalm 139:13-14), He redeems us by His grace (Ephesians 2:8), and calls us to be His children in Holy Baptism (Galatians 3:26-27). God gives life value and neither blatant headline-making bigotry nor our own subtle doubts can ever detract from that!

I suppose we could make a big deal out of the *Toronto Star* story and issue an indignant response. But much more will be accomplished if we continue to help fellow Christians see this divinely bestowed value and equip them with the means to share it with others in word and deed.

With your help and God’s might, we will continue to sow the seeds of the value of life that comes from God. God will give that seed growth and we will rejoice as it reaps a renewed respect for life, as it reaps renewed compassion for others, and as it reaps the saving of souls.

Since I quote an August 21st news story, I want to let you know about a couple other things that happened in August. LFL was busy displaying at various conferences and conventions this summer. Of note: A presence at the North American Lutheran Church Convention and, a first, a presence at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America’s Churchwide Assembly. The former was by invitation and we were very well received. We were able to get to the ELCA assembly under the umbrella of CORE, the conservative movement within that body. The convention was on the first floor of the convention center and we were on the fifth floor! Interaction was minimal, but that did give time for more in-depth discussion. We thank God for even this!

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