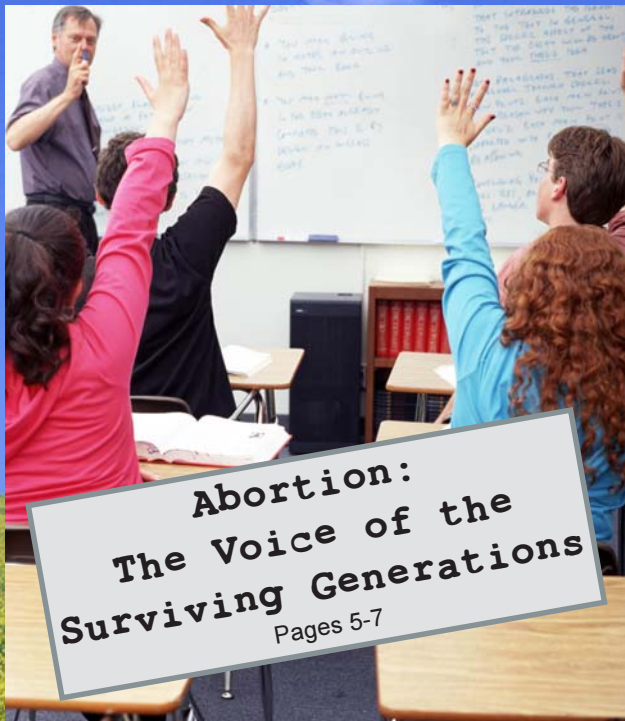


LifeDate

A quarterly journal of
life issue news and commentary
from National Lutherans For Life

Spring 2006

Witnessing to the Sanctity of Human Life through education based on the Word of God.



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The Voice of the
Surviving Generations**
Pages 5-7

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Life Thoughts in the Church Year



Chastity: The Choice of Champions

by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb
Executive Director, Lutherans For Life

The box for the “Breakfast of Champions” always showed a picture of a champion. I firmly believe that many of today’s generation of young people are worthy of such distinction. More and more of them are realizing that **chastity is the choice of champions**.

This is supported by a recent Harris poll which found that a majority of young people see the importance and value of chastity. They are the ones who should know, and they believe chastity works. The poll indicated that 56 percent of those 18 to 24 and 60 percent of people 25 to 29 think abstinence programs reduce the rates of HIV and AIDS. Also, 49 percent of 18 to 24 year-olds and 60 percent of 25 to 29 year-olds say abstinence education programs are effective in reducing the number of unwanted pregnancies.

What is particularly refreshing about these numbers is that chastity is a choice *for* something rather than *against* something. Chastity is a positive and proactive choice rather than a negative and reactive choice. Chastity is a positive way champions choose to live life both inside and outside of marriage. Chastity is not just a positive choice of champions who are single. It is the positive choice of champions who are married as well, as they chose to be faithful to their spouses.

Yet, so often our motivation is negative. We say, “Don’t do this because it’s bad. You might get a disease. You might get pregnant. You might destroy your marriage.” But the choice for chastity flows from a positive message. “You don’t have to do these things because God is good.” The choice for chastity flows from *whose* we are. The choice for chastity flows from the fact that we are champions!

Paul uses championship language when he says, “**In all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us**” (Romans 8:37) *NIV*. We are champions able to choose chastity because God has chosen us. We are champions because God formed us Himself. “**This is what the Lord says—He who made you, who formed you in the womb, and who will help you: Do not be afraid**” (Isaiah 44:2) *NIV*. Our bodies are the work of God’s hands. If you have something handmade, you want to protect it and care for it

out of respect and honor for the one who made it. We honor God when we honor our bodies as the work of His hands.

We are champions because God redeemed us. Again some championship language from Paul: “**Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you received from God? You are not your own; you were bought at a price. Therefore, honor God with your body**” (1 Corinthians 6:19-20) *NIV*. Our bodies were purchased with the blood of Jesus. When you are given an expensive gift, you want to protect it and care for it out of respect and honor for the one who purchased it. We honor God when we honor our bodies as His temples cleansed by His blood.

We are champions, then, not because we are good at something but because God has been good to us. He has created us and redeemed us. His Spirit lives within us. We have the best, most positive motivation in the world for making God-pleasing decisions. Thanks be to God we are champions! Chastity is the choice of champions.

I have great confidence in the younger generation. They may not have their pictures on cereal boxes, but they are champions none the less. They are champions because of what God has done. Many are recognizing that and are making good decisions based on that. As I strive to encourage young people, I am in turn encouraged by them. We all should be. They are champions!



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The Abortion Legacy

by Diane E. Schroeder
President, National Lutherans For Life

January 22, 2006 marked the 33rd anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision that effectively legalized abortion in our country for any reason for all nine months of the pregnancy. Abortion in our country is certainly not “rare.” Rather, it is an epidemic. Here are the statistics:

- 46 million babies have died since 1973
- 1.3 million abortions are performed annually (that’s 3500 per day, 145 per hour)
- 25% of all pregnancies are aborted
- 48% of women having abortions have had at least one previous abortion

We oppose abortion because it is wrong and against what God says about life in His Word. This mere “medical procedure” which mocks God has taken its toll—often in ways never anticipated by those advocating the right to “choose” to kill unborn children.

What is the effect on the economy with the loss of 46 million people? You may think that our economy would have a hard time assimilating 46 million people. But don’t forget that they are consumers as well. We have 46 million less workers earning, spending, saving, paying taxes, consuming, buying houses, cars, etc.—people who would put money (and creative energy) into the economy with their purchases and create jobs because of their needs. In its 2000 report, the Social Security Administration predicts in its long term forecast that GNP will slow primarily due to the slower projected growth in the labor force and employment.

What about Social Security where benefits to retirees are being financed by taxes paid by current workers? It is projected that in 2030 the ratio of beneficiaries to workers will grow from 32 per 100 workers to 46 per 100 workers. It is estimated, by the National Right to Life Committee, that in 1998 alone, the victims of abortion would have contributed 1.7 billion to Medicare and 7.4 billion to Social Security. That would have been enough to pay for 785,000 retired workers.



What about our aging population? By 2030, our country will look like Florida where older people (defined as 65 and older) will be 20 percent of the population. The fastest growing segment of the population will be the “oldest old” or those 85 and over which will grow from four million in 2000 to 21 million by 2050. This is the group that is of most concern to policymakers because they are more likely to be “disabled.” And we haven’t even covered the effect of this “birth dearth” on cultural values.

Of course, the acceptance of abortion has led us down the slippery slope where human life has no absolute value. The value of individuals has become completely relative, based on their usefulness to society. This has led to embryonic stem cell research, human cloning, assisted suicide, and the starving of the handicapped. We as a culture no longer tolerate individuals in our human community who are less than perfect. Do you ever wonder what happened to kids affected with Down syndrome? Current studies have indicated an abortion rate of 90 percent for these people.

The effects of abortion go on and on—including a dramatic rise in pre-marital and extra-marital sexual activity. Currently 65 million people in the U.S. have an incurable sexually transmitted disease (STD). At least 1 in 4 Americans will contract an STD in their lifetime and teenagers make up one-fourth of all new STD infections. We must also consider the emotional damage from abortion on the women and men who made those decisions, grandparents, siblings, and spouses. (Whole books have been written on that subject.)

When I go out and speak, sometimes an older individual will come up and say, “I’m so glad I have that behind me,” as if abortion no longer affects them—their children are grown up, they have survived its tragedy. But nothing could be further from the truth. Abortion has left its legacy everywhere; on our culture, demographics, economy, youth, and Church.

Thank God that He is in charge. Even though our country is filled with devastation from the evil of abortion, our future as Christians is certain. Christ has overcome “the evil one.” LFLers, let us go forward speaking truth in love, doing the work God has given us and relying on His promises!

Jesus answered, “We must do what the one who sent me wants us to do while it is day. The night when no one can do anything is coming.” John 9:4 *GOD’S WORD*



How has the Abortion Culture Aaffected Today's Youth?

by Grace Kern,
Director of Word of Hope, 888-217-8679

After 33 years, abortion has had a phenomenal impact on our youth. Are they better off because of the U.S. Supreme Court *Roe v. Wade* decision? Abortion advocates claim that it is all about “pro-choice.” But sadly, many young women come to Word of Hope saying they felt they had no choice. Their parents wanted them to get an abortion, or their boyfriends pressured them to get an abortion. Instead of freeing women from male exploitation, abortion has made them more vulnerable—playing into the hands of men who seek sex without marriage.

Columnist Jeff Jacoby discusses abortion’s impact on relationships:

“It has corrupted romance and sexuality . . . before *Roe*, the price of an unwanted pregnancy could be terrifyingly high. That gave unmarried women a powerful incentive to reserve themselves for men whom they planned to marry; they knew to wait for marriage. But after *Roe*, an unwanted pregnancy became little more than a nuisance. To undo it, you had only to see an abortionist. So why be careful? Why hold back? There was no longer a need to wait for that walk down the aisle—or even for commitment . . . For men who wanted sex without strings, without having to make promises, without having to go through the rituals of romance, *Roe* was great. And if she has a baby? Hey, that’s her problem. She could have gotten an abortion.”

Before *Roe v. Wade*, fear and respect motivated people to make responsible sexual choices. But the abortion culture has divided sex from procreation, and people stopped being responsible for the consequences of their actions. Our youth have grown up hearing phrases like “abortion on demand” and “the right to abortion.” They have heard nice adults talk about supporting politicians who will “protect” these “rights.” Such talk has left many of these children confused, so deeply that they do not even know they are confused, and morally dulled.

Everyday, more and more children are poisoned by the media and our sex-crazed culture. Many of our young people have lost their respect for God, family, and human life. They’ve lost their own self-respect, and do not even know

the meaning of true love. The culture has filled their heads with the idea that human life is not special, is not a life formed by God, but is just a fertilized ovum that can be removed when it suits them. The abortion culture forces young men to reject their role as provider and protector, and encourages both men and women to act against their instincts, destroying what they should most vehemently defend—their own children.

The abortion culture is forcing sex education programs in our schools whether parents want it or not. These so-called “sex education” programs are brainwashing our youth. They don’t talk to kids about chastity or marriage. Rather, they tell them that they cannot control themselves and so they must “protect” themselves from pregnancy. They are being taught to use contraception for a false sense of “protection” and ultimately to use abortion as a backup to all this selfish behavior.

How can we protect our youth? How can we help pro-life youth share and defend the life message?

College students and teens are on the forefront of the abortion debate. More than 50 percent of the over 1.3 million annual abortions are performed on women college-age or younger. Through organized groups and informal discussions in classrooms, dorms, and libraries, pro-life students can bring the message of life to their peers. When pro-life students talk to their peers, it may represent the first time they have been exposed to our “pro-life” perspective, or at least it may be the first time they have heard our position without the filter of pro-abortion bias.

We need to equip pro-life students with the knowledge, tools, and skills to effectively educate their peers and to reach out to their friends who may be considering abortion.

This generation must be determined to voice the truth of Life—to protect all human life from conception until natural death, with no exceptions, no compromise, and no apologies. We must stand on the truth that Jesus is our strength. We cannot sit silently as another generation is killed.

“Through Him all things were made; without Him nothing was made that has been made. In Him was life, and that life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has not understood it (John 1:3-5).” NIV

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**WORD of
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Abortion: The Voice of the Surviving Generations

January 22, 1973—another date that lives on in “infamy.” On that date, the Supreme Court of the United States, in two decisions (*Roe vs. Wade* and *Doe vs. Bolton*) effectively legalized abortion throughout the entire nine months of pregnancy for any reason (or no reason). Three authors, ranging in age from 17 to 33, reflect on how the abortion culture has affected today’s youth, on the importance of listening to what youth are saying—and the importance of helping pro-life youth share and defend the For Life message.

Rev. Ryan Matthias is Associate Pastor at Trinity Lutheran Church in Davenport, Iowa, husband of Sarah, and father of Sam:

I’m not sure that I survived abortion—I just outlived many of my friends who did not.

My generation has many holes punched into its fabric, over forty million; the missing pieces being all those who never saw the light of day. And now our fabric is so much more easily torn. I watch as the cords of our generation become tattered and frayed as they support the prior generation who said it was acceptable to cut into ours.

I scream out with the prophet Jeremiah (31:15), **“A voice is heard in Ramah, mourning and great weeping, Rachel weeping for her children and refusing to be comforted, because her children are no more”** *NIV*. And I mourn for the irretrievable strains of those who will never cry out at all. Theirs are the voices which would never utter, “I love you, Daddy.” Theirs are the lives that were changed from “pregnancy” to “pre-existing condition.” Theirs are the eyes that never saw the Grand Canyon, or had the overwhelming wedding kiss.

I was born in 1973, the third in a set of triplets, thirty-six days after abortion became legal. During my one-third century, I’ve had the opportunity to witness the fabric of our generation become weaker and weaker. I’ve watched friends and acquaintances sail on a ship christened “instant self-gratification” and then soon they are tossed into the “Sea of Inconvenience.” “I’ll do what makes me feel good!” their breaths explode from their mouths. But in the end, the sea roils around them, and the waters are roughed up by their own designs. They cling to a buoy called “abortion” and assume that this will rescue them from the Sea.



But it is the voices of my friends, whom I will never know, who are the ones “drowned” out.

Never, in all of scripture, did God say, “Sacrifice someone else for the sake of your own happiness.” Quite the contrary, God did say, **“Greater love has no one than this, that he lay down his life for his friends”** (John 15:13) *NIV*. God never said that life would be “convenient.” He just promised that in Him it would be abundant.

Recently, I watched as my two-year-old son, Sam, decided that being around me wasn’t interesting enough. We were in a book store, I with my coffee; he with his running shoes on. He tore off away from me and I got up to go after him. With mischievous eyes, he looked back over his shoulder and dared me to get him.

Unfortunately, he should have been looking forward because his toe caught in a raised mat. He went down—hard. His arms weren’t quick enough to hold him up and he landed face first into the concrete floor. I ran over to him and slid on the floor to pick him up. Before getting there I was thinking, “Why did you have to run away from me? Why couldn’t I have fallen instead of you?”

It was the first time I had ever seen him bleed. It was horrible and tore my heart apart. No father should ever have to see his son bleed. Yet . . .

That’s what God did.

We’ve lost sight of that self-sacrifice for the sake of others. Our kids are growing up in a time when they sacrifice themselves for the sake of their own happiness. They’re killing themselves and feeling good doing it.

The youth of today (from which I am not far removed) have taken permissiveness and promiscuity and relabeled it freedom. They wear fewer clothes on the outside and cover up more hurts on the inside. They seek companionship but are undoubtedly missing the ones who have been taken from them. They desire another Martin Luther King Jr., but instead they only get silence from one who might have been.

It was expected that when abortion was legalized, not everybody would choose that way, although theoretically that could happen. Have we ever imagined that? What would happen to our country if every single child was aborted in one year—that no one had a birthday in 2007? Imagine a whole year, 2025 when no one graduated from high school. Who would be the voice of that generation?

And so now I am given the label: a voice of the surviving generation. Everyone thirty-three and younger, including the child I baptized last weekend, is bestowed the privilege of being delivered through the age of “choice”—an Exodus of sorts. We are a generation now walking in the wilderness because of the sins of our parents. And the sad part is that there are some who are walking in the wilderness who are repeating those sins.

I believe, though, there are many youth today who are recognizing their losses and counting them. They will not stand for being pro-choice saying, “I don’t believe in abortion, but it’s up to someone else what they think.” Quite the contrary, I think this generation will be as chameleons who will “choose” not to change their color any more. They will not be swayed by rhetoric but will stand for the right to live. And if they don’t, I suppose in thirty-three more years we’ll ask their kids to be the voices of another surviving generation who will look at their parents and wonder why some didn’t survive.

Jessica Neary Bordeleau has a B.A. in Education and a M.A. in Systematic Theology. She has five years of youth ministry experience in the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod and is currently a Program Director at Camp Luther in Three Lakes, Wisconsin. She also assisted at the Lutherans For Life display at the LCMS Youth Gathering in 2001. Jessica was also featured in the 1998 edition of LFL’s *For Life* video:

What message does legal and accepted abortion as birth control send today’s youth?

Top news stories of euthanasia, federally funded abortion clinics, and state funded sex education curriculums can give the impression that humans are expendable, sex has no consequences, and that the value of life is cheap.

The young people we come into contact with (or avoid) in our communities, congregations, and families have grown up in a world where their lives could have been snuffed out before they were born without any legal consequences. How will this impact their treatment of the elderly in years to come? Will they view their own children differently? Do they see themselves as expendable and unprotected? Will they learn to protect life more fully than their elders have? We have no way of knowing how the abortion culture has affected the psyche of today’s youth—unless we engage them in dialogue and listen to what they have to say.

I have been amazed by the responses of seventh and eighth graders in my confirmation class to the topic of abortion. When we studied the fifth commandment we talked about life and the various ways that life is devalued. When I guardedly explained the different methods of abortion they were irate:

“I can’t believe that happens to babies!”

“Why is that legal if murder is illegal?”

“I don’t understand how that can happen!”

My class was never so somber and serious as on the days we discussed Commandments 5 and 6 (“You shall not murder.” “You shall not commit adultery.”)

Last summer I was responsible for creating the Bible study curriculum for a Lutheran youth camp. The theme for each Monday was “The First Creation; God Loves Life.” Each week I had the joy of watching the faces of one hundred third

through ninth graders as they saw a video of pre-born babies. I had them all hold up their thumbs as I shared that God has loved them before they were even the size of a thumb. As they passed around the tiny, plastic, fetal models I could see the amazement on their faces. “God loved me when I was only this big!”

According to surveys taken at the 2004 Lutheran Youth Fellowship Poll at the last Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod Youth Gathering, out of the 2,493 LCMS young people polled 75

percent consider themselves pro-life and 63 percent think that premarital sex is always wrong. (If you are interested in more survey results take a look at www.lcms.org/pages/internal.asp?NavID=1806) Young people do think about life issues. Situations involving the value of life and sexuality are not some theoretical idea floating in the clouds. They have solid ideas about what they think is right and wrong, burning questions that need answers, and a very real need to be able to express their views. Will we listen?

The youth of today are the Church of TODAY. They are online, cellular, and chat room connected. They have the ability to reach out to unchurched youth in a way that adults don’t. The young people that sit in your church’s youth room deal with the same life issues that adults do, plus some of their own. What have we done to equip and train them? How can we teach *and show* them that life is a gift from God? The world is sending them a strong message. What message are you sending them?



Crystal Auch is a high school senior from Lesterville, South Dakota. Crystal's mother, Lynette, is president of Lutherans For Life of South Dakota:

After 33 years, and over 43 million abortions, many members of Generation Y are missing because of abortion on demand—and more and more surviving members of this generation are saying “Enough!”

Enough of unfair death sentences against unborn children! Enough of the effects of abortion: missing brothers, sisters, friends, and spouses to-be! Such is the voice of this *Roe* generation, which is rising more ready than ever to fight the battle For Life!

Ready? Those immature teens in the local youth group at church? Yes—ready to be trained in the “how tos” of being pro-life.

Why teens? They possess the curiosity of youth, desire to be counterculture, and are of a generation that is willing to take a stand For Life!

Teens and pre-teens are known for often asking deep, probing questions about morals and ethics. What stimulates these inquiries? Curiosity! They want to know who they are, and they need to be told they are not just a result of chance, but were created by a Divine Intelligence—the Triune God. They need to know God is not a thing of the past, or some spirit who will just show up to judge at the world's end. They need to know that God is here with us, right now, and truly interested in a teen's life—every part of it. Teens and pre-teens not only desire their own identity, they desire to understand the purpose of life, in particular *their* life. This provides an opportune moment to define the Jesus of Scripture, His death on the cross for sinners, and God's ultimate plan for each of us. Teens that have the comfort of knowing Jesus know why they are here—and where they are going. They also understand that God has work for them to do during their short time on earth. This leads them to the last grand curiosity of youth: Making a Difference! Teens want to make a difference. What more can pro-lifers ask for?

Ever since I entered my teen years, I have been told that I am quite “counterculture.” (Isn't that normal for my age?) I believe this tendency is not for the worse, but for the better. The desire to be counterculture and different has lead me and other young people to live, as Linda Bartlett writes in *Generations of Hope for Generations to Come* (see page 10



of *LifeDate*), “by a different set of values than what the Baby Boomer generation created for them. They don't want a Christian culture that mimics the mainstream.” What a perfect opportunity for pro-lifers, because pro-life Christians just happen to be “counterculture”!

How do pro-lifers deliver the message to young reformers? By living according to the inspired Word of God, and teaching and mentoring that lifestyle to these little “rebels.”

These “rebels” dare to be pro-life, contrary to the example set for them by many in the previous generations—including many parents. They dare to be For Life because they know the facts: when life truly begins, what it looks like, and Who created it. Ultimately, they have an innate sense that life was created by a Higher Intelligence—by God.

However, their daring to be different does not come without its challenges. They often have no example to follow,

with many of their parents being among those who support *Roe vs. Wade* (a decision that has helped turn America's culture into a culture of death).

How, then, will these teens help turn America back to a culture of life? This is where experienced and older pro-lifers step in. Teens are seeking an example to follow, so why not give them a mentor to follow? Mentoring is not difficult. There are no specific requirements for

one. However, mentors can, by example, help the youth better understand how to use the Word of God to fight the battle successfully.

This presents a challenge, for teens need the Bible to be made alive for them. This doesn't have to make their elders fearful. The key to connecting the Bible and youth is to make it applicable to their lives, and show where and how God is active in the world around them.

Young people are ready for battle, but they do need some training. Therefore, it is up to members of Lutherans For Life, and other pro-lifers, to do their part. Show who you are in Christ—and your purpose on earth. Encourage teens in their efforts to be counterculture, in the right and proper way, according to God's Word. Youth need godly examples of pro-life workers and activities—asking God to direct us in our work.



What's a Parent To Do?

By Maggie Karner

“So . . . how far *can* we go?” asked the e-mail I received from a participant in one of my teen chastity talks. I’ve responded to this question numerous times and I’ve even grown to expect it following my talks. But this time, it suddenly hit me that this question is a symptom of a much larger phenomenon in our culture today.

Consider the 1960s and even the 70s, when we were surrounded by a radical generation of idealistic youth that wasn’t about to be told how to live their lives—especially by anyone of the older generation. (I grew up with that former generation, many of which believed if their folks knew about something, it wasn’t worth knowing.)

Contrast that attitude with those of today’s young people. Marketers have labeled them the “Millennial Generation,” or children born between 1982 and 2002. In the midst of a new “cultural revolution” where sex sells everything, basic morality is up for discussion, and truth is relative—or not an issue at all—our young people have somehow settled into a more conservative, traditional group than the previous “Generation Xers” or even most of their parents.¹

Millennials are not what we’d expect. Generally speaking, they are optimists, respect authority, are into education, and think of themselves as being on the cutting edge of the future. Surprisingly, most of these teens say they trust their folks and identify with their parent’s values. And when asked in a recent Roper survey, “What is the major cause of problems in this country?” teens blamed “selfishness” more than anything else.²

Our Lutheran kids seem to follow this same pattern. Polling data from the most recent 2004 Lutheran Youth Gathering in Orlando tell us that 79 percent feel they have “good” or “excellent” communication with their parents, 75 percent consider themselves “pro-life,” and “my own faith” was the number one concern of both boys and girls from a list of 26 topics.³

It all sounds too good to be true! Does this mean we have nothing to worry about as parents? Think again. What it simply means is that our kids are looking to US to help them find their way through a cultural maze of deception, sexual

propaganda, and difficult choices. They are looking at our values, lifestyle, and opinions as they shape their own.

But in an MTV world where Hollywood knows that sex succeeds at selling virtually everything, we need to remember that our children are their target audience. In this virtual reality that the media has created on television and in pop culture, young people are encouraged to abandon inhibitions, and become numb to the sexual references and behavior they see everywhere around them. Even same-sex experimentation is seen as wholesome and normal when it appears on popular teen television shows.

Media messages (usually produced by older, more liberal generations) spread the lie that how you look, your personal pleasure (including sexual pleasure), and your sexual feelings are at the apex of your existence. Physical beauty is equated with happiness as our culture idolizes the red-carpet, sexually-infused version of beauty found in Hollywood.

Aside from the significant emotional and spiritual damage of early sex outside of marriage, teen sexual activity also heralds serious physical dangers as well.

While teen sexual activity seems to be decreasing, we are faced with sexually transmitted disease (STD) rates among teens of pandemic proportions, where about one in four sexually active teens are affected with some sort of STD. Despite years of “comprehensive” sex education programs that touted the myth of “safe sex” to our children, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has determined that the results are actually

having the opposite effect. Today’s youth are having sex at a younger age with declining condom use.⁴

Throw into the mix that stable two-parent families are an anomaly these days, as one in three children is born out of wedlock (nearly half of the mothers who give birth outside of wedlock are living with the child’s father at the time). Is it any wonder that these teens who grew up in a non-marital environment are continuing the out-of-wedlock birthrate that has been modeled before them?

As pro-life Christians, how do we take aim at this culture and affect real change for life in the larger world around us?

Baby steps!

Yes, the work begins with *our* baby’s first steps, right at home in our own living rooms. Talk early and talk often! Today’s world won’t allow us the option of not talking about sex with our children in age-appropriate ways. Kids will gather the information (or misinformation) they want to know—either from television, the locker room or from us. It



is up to us to make sure they get correct information within the values framework that we as Christians can provide for them.

Parents of today's teens can also take heart. It is never too late to begin the dialogue with our kids. Listen to those research profiles of the millennial generation and remember that our teens WANT to know what we think as they form their values. They are LOOKING for guidance and will usually listen if we model what we say. What they NEED is our effective communication on these critical issues.

Those of us who remember the embarrassing "birds and the bees" talk with our folks can get queasy just thinking about the prospect of a similar encounter with our kids. Therein lies the key: we mistakenly think in terms of a singular "encounter," instead of the many, many opportunities for communication over the years. And—like any skill—the more you practice, the easier it gets. The more you talk about this topic with your kids, the more comfortable you—and they—will be.

Once the doors are open for dialogue and a "safe zone" is established for your kids to discuss these issues, a healthy exchange can begin that allows them to bring up their own topics for discussion. When kids feel that their parents will actually listen to them in a relaxed, non-confrontational atmosphere to help them work through these issues, anything can become a springboard toward a discussion that allows them to see your values in action. The trick is to continually initiate the conversation. Ask questions and constantly be interested in your child's life—not just their values—but their life as a whole; who they are, what they think, how they are processing the information around them.

Parents are not powerless when it comes to influencing their teen's attitudes about their sexuality. In fact, most studies say that parents are the most influential factor in a child's life. By setting limits and establishing a Christian framework for our teen's growing relational skills, and at the same time offering guidance, attention, affection, and love, parents can go a long way toward meeting their teen's needs for acceptance and a healthy self-identity.⁵

Former LFL President, Linda Bartlett, (on her Titus 2 Ministries website: www.titus2-4life.org) takes this one step farther when she encourages *all* adults—not just parents—to adopt an attitude of mentoring the young. Linda uses this section of scripture as a functional model for adults in their roles and relationships with youth. **"Speak an accurate message that cannot be condemned. Then those who oppose us will be ashamed because they cannot say anything bad about us,"** says Titus 2:8 *GOD'S WORD*.⁶ "Future generations need order in the midst of chaos," writes Linda. "God reforms the culture with This Word, but with mysterious kindness and patience, He uses sinful people."

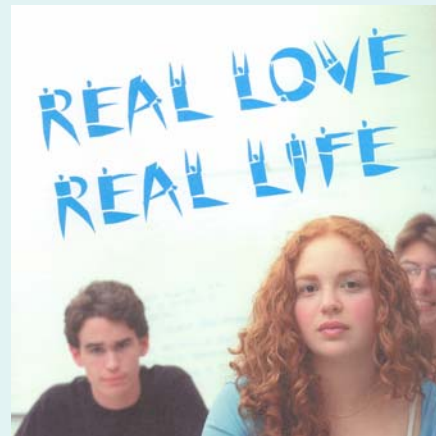
So what's a parent to do?

Trust. Trust that God loves your child even more than you do. Trust Him that He will give you the help and courage you need to embark on this lifelong journey with your child. Trust His forgiveness for our mistakes and His care for our children when Jesus says in John 10:28-29, **"I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; and no one can snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one can snatch them out of My Father's hand."** NIV

Fortunately, there are many wonderful resources to help parents with this responsibility. To get you started, check out these web sites for discussion starters, books, curriculum ideas and videos: www.lutheransforlife.org; worldrelief.lcms.org.

(Maggie Karner is Director of Life Ministries for LCMS World Relief and Human Care.)

- ¹ The Surprise? There Are No Surprises!, The 2004 Lutheran Youth Fellowship Poll; Dittmer, Terry; 2004
- ² Reaching the Millennial Generation; The Medical Institute For Sexual Health; Austin, TX
- ³ The Surprise? There Are No Surprises!, The 2004 Lutheran Youth Fellowship Poll; Dittmer, Terry; 2004
- ⁴ Steamy Teens In Tampa; Thomas, Cal; Tribune Media Services; 2005
- ⁵ Questions Kids Ask About Sex; Cox, Melissa; Revell, Grand Rapids, MI; 2005
- ⁶ GOD'S WORD for Life; God's Word to the Nations and Lutherans For Life; God's Word to the Nations; Orange Park, FL; 2005



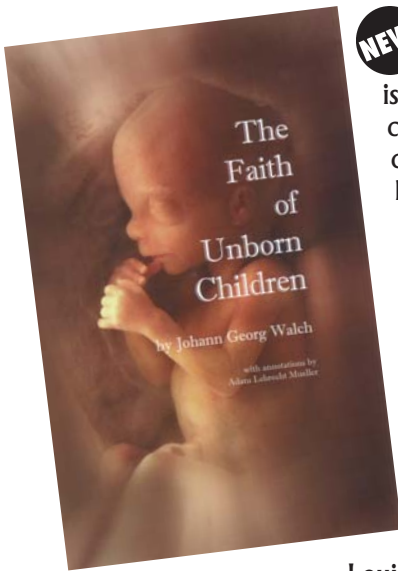
Real Love / Real Life - This unique 30" x 6" 10-panel fold out brochure covers fetal development, abortion facts, love and friendship, teen pregnancy, STDs, purity/chastity and sexuality, and safe choices. **Full color!** Item 615T. **\$0.50 ea.**



Teens Helping Teens - This brochure encourages teens to take time to think about their pregnancy; explains the physical, emotional, and spiritual effects of abortion; and shares God loves and the forgiveness found in His Son, Jesus Christ. Item 601R. **\$0.15 ea.**

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is a witness to the value of children before birth and a call for a return to that historic Christian concern for the preservation of such valuable life. The author, Johann Georg Walch, was a professor of exegesis, philosophy, and theology at Jena, Germany, and is, perhaps, best known for editing an edition of Luther's works which later became the St.

Louis edition ("Walch 2").

The style of his theological argument is one which our American Lutheran forebears, such as H.H. Muhlenberg and C.F.W. Walther, knew well.

This second edition is completely reformatted making Walch's classical Lutheran approach of presenting and defending these theses a little easier to read.

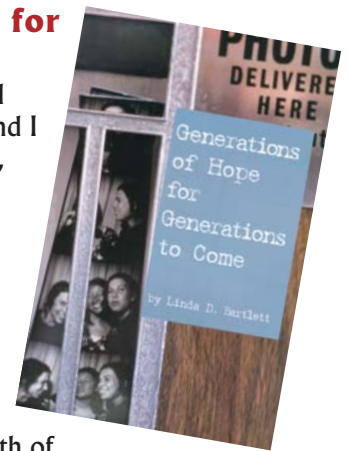
Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, Executive Director of Lutherans For Life says, "The question of the faith of unborn and unbaptized babies has always been an important one for Lutheran Christians. In an age when so many abortions are performed every day, the question becomes even more critical to address."

Regardless of your thoughts on this treatise, however, one thing is very clear. The question of the value and dignity of unborn human life is assumed and never brought into the discussion. As Dr. Jean Garton says in her foreword, "Whether it is a compelling argument for the faith of unborn children, theologians will, no doubt, continue to debate. But one thing is certain: This book demonstrates the unquestioned high regard with which the Christian Church, until recent times, has viewed the unborn child." **Item 211 B. \$4.95 ea.**

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An excerpt from *Generations of Hope for Generations to Come* by Linda D. Bartlett:

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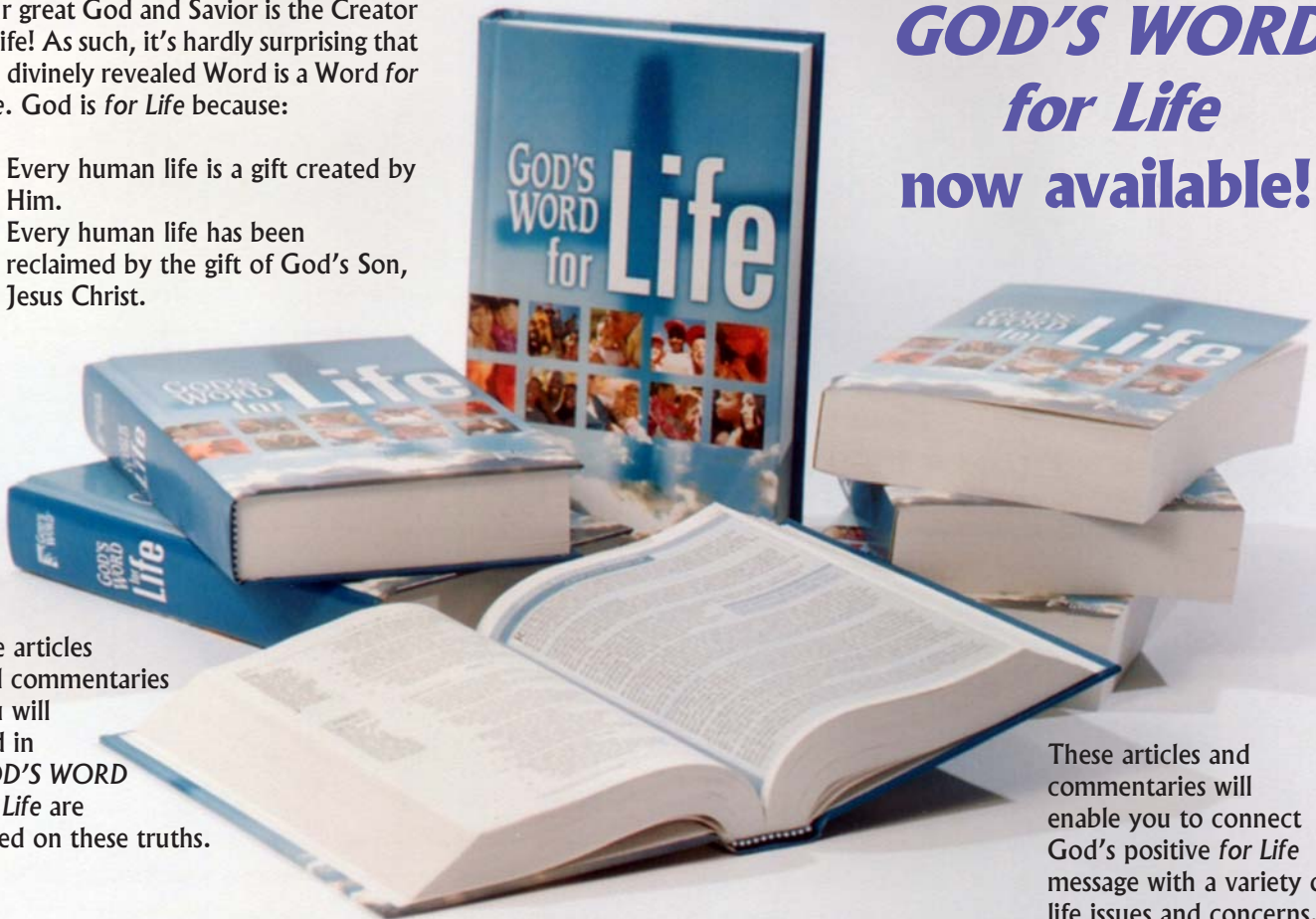
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Contributors include: Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, Linda Bartlett, Linda Luecke, Rev. Dr. Robert Wiese, Rev. Dr. Richard C. Eyer, Rev. Dr. Alvin Schmidt, Dr. Jean Garton, Professor James Westendorf, Jeannie Hannemann, Grace Kern, Rev. Edward Fehskens, Wesley J. Smith, Christian Life Resources.

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Assisted Suicide Law Upheld

The Supreme Court ruled 6-3, on January 17, 2006, that the Bush Administration cannot prohibit the use of federally controlled drugs from being used in assisted suicides in Oregon. The majority, which included all of the Justices who back abortion, said federal law does not trump state law, even though the supremacy of federal law is normally upheld.

In 2001, former Attorney General John Ashcroft said that Oregon doctors shouldn't be using drugs that are regulated by the Controlled Substances Act, which governs illegal narcotics, because the drugs do not constitute a "legitimate medical purpose."

Rev. Robert Fleischmann, national director of Christian Life Resources, commented: "It is disappointing but not surprising that the U.S. Supreme Court has upheld Oregon's assisted suicide law. Medical care at the end of life has become the societal benchmark for personal autonomy, regardless of what that autonomy may mean.

"The ruling should compel Christians to work harder in providing quality and loving care at the end of life. In doing so, the goal is to not only to communicate that suicide is contrary to God's will, but is also undesired because of the more positive care alternatives."



In a commentary that appeared in the *Washington Times*, Jonathan Imbody, Senior Policy Analyst, Christian Medical Association, wrote, "With the elderly today often disdained or discarded by their own families, consider the incentives for a state-sponsored suicide program like Oregon's. Why fritter away an inheritance on expensive end-of-life care? Why care for 'useless eaters' who are no longer 'productive' to society? Don't the financial and emotional tolls of terminal illness suggest a 'duty to die'?"

Mr. Imbody's research in the Netherlands, which has also legalized medical killing, found "Government-sponsored studies reveal that nearly a thousand Dutch patients are terminated by doctors each year without ever having requested euthanasia. Yes, euthanasia and assisted suicide provide autonomy—but for the doctors, not the patients.

"The answer to state sponsored suicide includes . . . aggressive, pain-relief prescribing regulations . . . and tools to help alleviate the financial burdens . . . But the most powerful prescription for a terminally ill person is the unwavering love of family and friends and the hope of a life to come in which 'there shall no longer be any death; there shall no longer be any mourning, or crying, or pain.'"

(LifeNews.com, Christian Life Resources, 1/17/06; Christian Medical Association, 1/26/06)

"We need you, Uncle Bob!"

by Rev. Robert L. Lee

Pro-life means much more than opposition to abortion. My wife Gloria and I learned this lesson personally when we received a call that our 21-year-old grand-nephew, Justin, was hospitalized after a serious motorcycle accident. He sustained major head injuries, was placed on a life support system, and it looked like he might not survive. I led the family in prayer, and we waited, hopeful in the Lord and in the fine medical care that he was receiving.

A few days later I was awakened after midnight by a phone call: "We need you, Uncle Bob! Come to the hospital right away." It was about 2 a.m. when a meeting was held with a man who, we understood, represented a division of the hospital—a strange hour, indeed. A chaplain, whose faith community would have been very difficult to identify by her virtual silence and unusual appearance, accompanied him.

The family was distraught. We were told that our grand-nephew had indicated on his driver's license that he was willing to be an organ donor. The hospital representative spoke of loved ones who live on through their generous gift of vital organs, and it seemed that a decision needed to be made immediately by the family.

"Is he gone then?" I asked. "Is there no hope?" I addressed my questions to a nurse who was standing nearby, and who seemed somewhat disturbed by what was happening. "No," she said firmly, "he is not gone. He is still fighting!"

"Then a decision does not have to be made at this time," I concluded, thanking the Lord for that brave young nurse. The hospital representative excused himself, and left the room.

What happened to Justin? Well, he woke up after the doctors decided it was time to end his induced coma. He has seen major recovery, and the good news recently is that he got his driver's license again. His mind is clear, and there is no recollection of his accident or most of his time in the hospital. There's still progress to be made, but he continues to be hopeful, and so are we.

What happened that night in the hospital? One cannot be completely sure, but, hearing similar stories from others, I have learned to be uneasy when I hear about "quality of life" and "living on in the bodies of others." My wife and I are learning, too, that our commitment to the sanctify of life means a commitment to all of the seasons of life, from the unborn child to the aged—even to the accident victims like Justin whose future "quality of life" may be questionable—because life is a gift from our Creator God that only He has the right to terminate.

(Rev. Robert L. Lee is president of the Association of Free Lutheran Congregations, the fourth largest Lutheran church body in the United States, with over 250 member congregations; www.aflc.org.)

Children, Not Choices—Donor Insemination and Our Kids

by Charles Colson

The following is a transcript of a BreakPoint radio broadcast from February 2, 2006:

Last month, I told you about the growing trend among children conceived through donor insemination to seek out their half-siblings. For the kids featured in a *New York Times* story, it was a necessary corrective to what they called their “lopsided” personal histories.

The piece inadvertently highlighted an ugly truth about our culture: We are so intent on safeguarding the personal autonomy of adults that we sacrifice the needs of children. Abortion, of course, is a prime example. But so is the case when moms *deliberately* set out to deprive kids of what every child needs: a father.

Births through donor insemination, or DI, have “more than doubled in the past decade.” But, as Bradley Wilcox, an outstanding young scholar at the University of Virginia, recently pointed out, while our attitudes toward conceiving children out-of-wedlock through DI have changed, the needs of our kids have not.

In a recent *Weekly Standard* article, Wilcox reminds readers of what any objective social scientist will tell you: Kids who grow up without their fathers are at a greater risk for problems like drug and alcohol use, incarceration, and quitting school. I have seen thousands upon thousands of these kinds of cases in the prisons.

Wilcox then makes the connection that the *New York Times* refused to: By deliberately turning fathers into “donors,” DI exacerbates the problem. In his book about these kids, psychiatrist Kyle Pruett writes that they “hunger for an abiding paternal presence.” As one girl told her mother, “You know I need a daddy, or I can’t be a child.”

While others don’t go so far, they are still affected by their mothers’ “choices.” One young Canadian spoke about her “grief” and “anger” at having a “lopsided” personal history forced upon her. “How dare someone take my choice away from me? How dare the medical profession tell me it doesn’t matter?”

Her resort to the language of “choice” answers her own questions. Personal autonomy and the right to “choose” are the highest values in Western culture—codified in the law after *Roe v. Wade* and central to the Alito hearings. Being able to “choose” is so important that questioning whatever is

being chosen is regarded as a kind of “intolerance.”

This is especially true when it comes to what are euphemistically called women’s “reproductive issues.” For much of the elite, people who dare to point out the obvious are being intolerant bigots. But the fact is, children need more from their fathers than their DNA and depriving them of this to enhance your freedom is selfish.

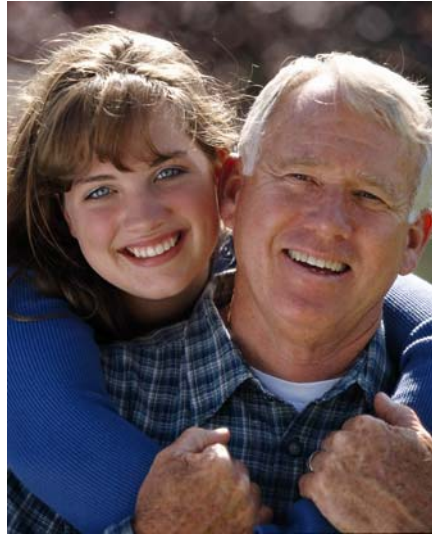
For these very reasons, some European countries have banned the “donor insemination of single women,” the “anonymous donation of both sperm and eggs,” or both. Their own commitment to personal freedom has not blinded them to the folly of deliberately conceiving children “without flesh-and-blood fathers committed to playing a paternal role in their lives.”

Let me be clear: My principal beef is with the “neutral, positive, or breathlessly celebratory tone” in which these choices are often discussed. This tone, and the worldview underlying it, is what makes this tragedy possible.

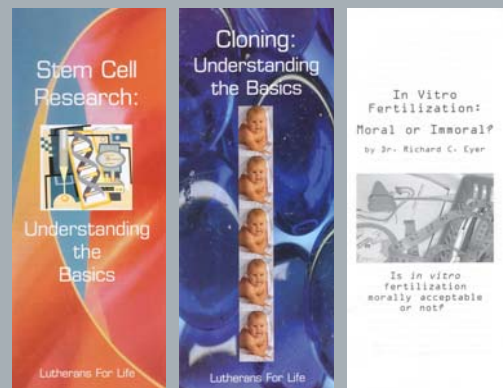
Changing that tone starts, as in the abortion debate, by pointing out that it is “a *child*, not a choice” that we are really talking about. Only then can we hope to keep kids from going to bed with a hunger that our culture does not want to recognize:

the hunger for Dad.

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United Nations – UN researcher Theodor Winkler has warned that there are 200 million “missing” women worldwide because of infanticide and sex selective abortion: “We are confronted with the slaughter of Eve, a systematic gendercide of tragic proportions . . . It starts in the womb. There are societies where male births are preferred, particularly if the number of births are limited [i.e. China and India]. That’s where abortion for gender reasons starts.” (*AlertNet*, 11/18/05; *SPUC*, 11/2/05)

Italy – The Italian pro-life group Movement for Life has responded enthusiastically to Health Minister Francesco Storace’s proposal that pro-life representatives should be allowed into Italy’s 2,000 state abortion facilities to offer advice and alternative support to women considering abortion. Storace spoke of the duty to protect “lives which are about to be born” and observed that Italy’s abortion law was “designed to prevent abortion not just legalize it.” (*ANSA*, 11/20/05; *SPUC*, 11/21/05)

Liechtenstein – Voters in the small Alpine principality of Liechtenstein have rejected a pro-life constitutional amendment by 80 percent to 20 percent. Instead, the majority chose to accept a government counterproposal which will legalize abortion. Archbishop Wolfgang Haas campaigned heavily in favor of the pro-life measure, calling the government counterproposal “a death melody.” Liechtenstein’s population of 33,000 is said to be 75% Catholic. (*The Guardian*, 11/28/05; *SPUC*, 11/29/05)

Norway – Researchers at the University of Oslo have found that women who undergo abortions suffer more long-term mental distress than women who have miscarriages. The study of 40 women who had had a miscarriage and 80 who had an abortion noted that after 10 days, 47.5% of women who had miscarried suffered mental distress, compared with 30% who had had an abortion. However, after five years 2.6% of women in the miscarriage group were still suffering distress compared with 20% in the abortion group. Richard Warren of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists said: “It has always been considered, and this study also shows, that the decision to terminate may bring with it long standing feelings of anxiety and guilt.” *The Daily Telegraph* (in the Leader section) highlighted the need for women suffering after an abortion experience to receive help and called for a change in the current abortion law. It comments: “Abortion, like miscarriage, involves the loss of a baby; unlike miscarriage, the loss is the result of a conscious decision.” (*BBC*, 12/2/05; *The Telegraph*, *SPUC*, 12/13/05)



Australia – Data released by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare reveals that over 84,000 Women had abortions in 2003. The highest number was among women in their early 20s where the rate was 33 abortions per 1000 women of childbearing age, compared with the national average of 19.7 abortions per 1000. (*News.com.au*, *SPUC*, 12/14/05)

Spain – The number of abortions in Spain rose by more than 70 percent between 1995 and 2004. Among women in their 20s the rate reportedly doubled during that period. Of the 85,000 women who had abortions last year, more than one in seven was a teenager. (*The Guardian*, 12/28/05; *SPUC*, 12/29/05)

Uganda – Uganda’s Catholic Bishops’ Conference has written an open letter to the government and people of Uganda warning against the ratification of the *Protocol to the African Charter on Human and Peoples’ Rights: on the rights of women in Africa*. The protocol includes an obligation to legalize abortion under certain circumstances. The bishops’ letter stated: “Abortion is always a defeat for humanity: the elaborate, mixed, and confused semantics under which it is increasingly disguised by powerful lobbies at work in many

of the International and national fora, also here in Uganda, will never hide the fact that it is a willful homicide of the most defenseless form of life.” (*All Africa*, 1/25/06; *SPUC*, 1/26/06)

United Kingdom — Three organizations involved with palliative care have condemned the Voluntary Euthanasia Society’s decision to change its name to Dignity in Dying. In a letter to *The Guardian*, representatives of Help the Hospices, Marie Curie Cancer Care, and The National Council for Palliative Care, wrote “the implication of this now widely publicized name is that euthanasia is the only dignified death . . . This is manifestly untrue and will be misleading for vulnerable patients and their families. We believe the development of excellent palliative care at the end of life in the last decade has ensured that thousands of people have experienced a dignified death.” (*The Guardian*, *SPUC*, 1/27/06)

United Kingdom – *The Guardian* newspaper has run a strongly pro-abortion article on couples who make the “agonizing decision” to abort their disabled babies. Alison Davis, coordinator of the disability rights group No Less Human, criticized the approach taken. “This article concentrates on two such babies, one aborted for spina bifida and the other for heart problems,” she explained. “The assumptions about the negative value of these babies lives is truly breathtaking. Having been born with spina bifida and hydrocephalus myself I was appalled to see that the baby with spina bifida was dismissed as ‘a child who couldn’t be anything.’” (*The Guardian*, 1/26/06; *SPUC*, 1/27/06)

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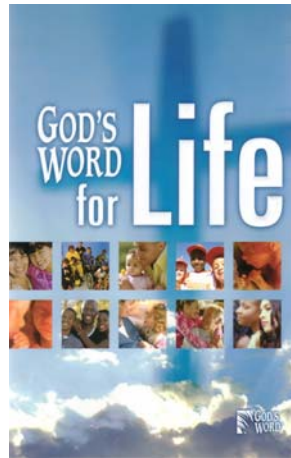
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Asked why the *GOD'S WORD* translation was used, Dr. Lamb said, “When God's Word to the Nations mission society [www.godsword.org] heard about our idea to produce a pro-life specialty Bible, they saw the importance of this project and allowed us to use one of their already-published Bibles for inserting the commentaries. This eliminated the need to ‘start from scratch.’ An added bonus is that the audience targeted by *GOD'S WORD* is the same audience Lutherans For Life wants to reach with our For Life message (‘those well-versed in Scripture as well as first-time readers, Christians as well as non-Christians’).”

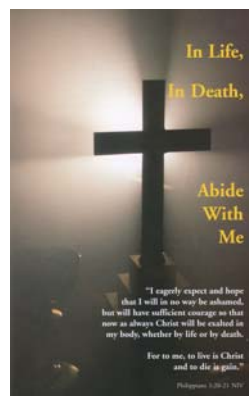
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Lutherans Join March for Life

Wet conditions from intermittent rain and a new parade route didn't dampen the spirits of an estimated 100,000-plus people—including several dozen under the Lutherans For Life banner—who gathered for this year's "March for Life," January 23, in Washington, D.C.

Dennis Di Mauro, president of LFL's Northern Virginia chapter, said the "spirits of the marchers were energized by the experience," which included remarks via phone from President George W. Bush.

Di Mauro said that the Lutheran contingency included people "with a range in age and backgrounds" from a number of states and the United Kingdom.

Each year, the march is held to mark the anniversary of the 1973 U.S. Supreme Court's *Roe v. Wade* decision that legalized abortion in the United States.

"You believe, as I do," Bush told the throng this year, "that every human life has value, that the strong have a duty to protect the weak, and that the self-evident truths of the Declaration of Independence apply to everyone, not just to those considered healthy or wanted or convenient."

Ed Szeto, Director of Outreach for National Lutherans For Life, who was also at the march and rally, said, "It is important for Lutherans to participate and be witnesses along with other church bodies at the march. It serves as a wonderful witness to the entire nation of what we believe and how life is precious and valuable."

LFL activities began with a worship service at Immanuel Lutheran Church, Alexandria, Virginia.

Immanuel's pastor, Rev. Christopher Esget, in his homily for that service noted that green is the liturgical color for use on January 22, the day of the abortion-decision anniversary.

"But perhaps every January 22 . . . we should strip the church of everything festive, and vest all in black, for a day of mourning," he suggested. "We would have to toll the bells about 45,951,133 times to account for all the helpless, defenseless children slaughtered in America by the reprehensible evil that is abortion."

Esget also suggested that the abortion-decision anniversary might be commemorated on the same day "we remember the Slaughter of the Holy Innocents, which recounts Herod's cruelty in destroying the children of Bethlehem."

"The slaughter of the holy innocents that continues in our day is not something that we can simply talk about, lamenting it among ourselves," Esget said.

He reminded the worshipers that the *Small Catechism* explanation to the Fifth Commandment "calls us to help and befriend our neighbor in every bodily need.

"What bodily need could be greater than those condemned to die simply because they are deemed an inconvenience, a



mere byproduct of lustful desire to be discarded like trash, rather than the human beings whom God has given life?"

Esget challenged the worshipers to remember that "many [abortion] proponents are misguided by false and misleading philosophies. In naming the crime of abortion as sin," he said, "we recognize that we also are sinners. Even if we could end this heinous evil today, we would not put an end to sin. We would not make America righteous or godly. For none of us is righteous . . . Our only righteousness is the righteousness of Christ, freely given to us wretched sinners, freely marked on our foreheads with the cross, freely poured over our heads in Baptism, freely poured into our mouths with the wine that makes glad the heart of man, the wine of our Lord's innocent blood."



Rev. Christopher Esget at the 2006 March for Life.

He also reminded those gathered that the Epistle for the day "should put us in the proper mind: 'Do not be wise in your own eyes,'" he said, quoting St. Paul. "'Repay no one evil for evil.'

"Our message is not one of first being against something, but of being for, being proponents of God's love, grace, and peace," Esget said.

"Come and receive His forgiveness, given freely to you," he said. "Then go in peace, proclaiming by your words and demeanor the love of God. For not by changing laws, but by changing hearts, will this great scourge be truly ended."

Noting that this was the first time he had participated in the rally and march, Esget said, "I was not expecting to have such strong emotions. To see so many people supporting the gift of life and asking the government to protect all human beings, not only those we find convenient or useful—and doing so in a peaceful and loving way—was very moving. I wish that everyone, including our whole congregation, would have been there."

(Adapted from a Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod "Reporter" article, February 2006, written by Joe Isenhower. Used by permission.)



Answering the Nudge

by Karen Frohwein
Director of Development, Lutherans For Life

“Your heart will be where your treasure is” (Matthew 6:21) *GOD’S WORD*.

Ever feel like you are receiving a gentle nudge to do something? I know that happened to me when I became involved in Lutherans For Life just a few years ago. I had known about LFL for years, and maybe there was a small voice telling me I should “do something,” but at the time, I just patted myself on the back for being “against abortion” and thought there were more important things I needed to invest my time and treasures in. Some of those things were important, but many times I was more interested in worldly pursuits and didn’t respond to those “nudges” of the Holy Spirit.

I still look back and wonder what took me so long to listen and take action and become involved in Lutherans For Life. God’s timing is not always our timing, and I now understand that God was at work all along. What I don’t wonder about is how wonderful God is to use us when we stop doing things our way and let Him lead us. I am thankful for those gentle nudges, delivered through servants of the Lord of Life. I hope you feel those nudges this year and ask God to lead you to where He wants you to be.

If you are being nudged toward involvement in LFL this year, you might be asking, “What can I DO to answer this call?” “How can I make a difference?” “How can God use me?” “I want to become more involved but _____.” (You can fill in the blank – “I don’t have enough time, money, skills, knowledge; I’m too old, too young, too busy . . .”)

Jesus knew about our excuses that would keep our hearts away from His work and He gave a simple solution to our excuses: invest your treasures and your heart will follow. If you are asking yourself how to get more involved, the answer is make an investment in God’s work. After all, those treasures that you have are God’s anyway. Your time, your talents, your possessions, and yes, your money, are all on loan from the Lord. He knows what you do with your treasures will be where



your heart follows. It’s not the other way around. God does not say “put your money where your mouth is” as the world leads us to believe. Don’t let your sinful heart lead the way. God’s message is a Gospel message. He wants our hearts, and he knows that through the Holy Spirit, the way we use our treasures captures our hearts. If our treasures follow the way of the world, our hearts (and our mouths) will follow. If our treasures are invested in Gospel-based ministries such as Lutherans For Life, our hearts will follow.

One of our members who is very involved in a caring pregnancy center in her area recently told me, “The more involved I get with our CPC, the more I see the need for Lutherans For Life!” That’s Jesus’ message in action. A treasure invested in action for life has led a heart to understand the importance of God’s message of life. Answer that gentle nudge and invest in the Lord’s work this year. Give of your treasures, your time, your talents, your possessions. Become pro-life, but most of all become pro-eternal life through God’s work in your heart.

Here are a few suggestions on how you might help:

- Study God’s Word (*GOD’S WORD for Life!*) and read *LifeDate* and other LFL resources.
- Support LFL through prayer, and service activities.
- Contribute to LFL on a monthly (sponsor) or yearly (annual) basis—and other times as you are able.
- Become a Life Ministry Coordinator for your congregation.
- Join or start a local LFL chapter.
- Include LFL in your will or other planned gifts.
- Ask your employer to include LFL in their matching gift program.
- Volunteer at your local caring pregnancy center.
- Reach out to your neighbors with the Gospel message of life.

To find out more, fill out and return the enclosed envelope, or you may call me at 888-364-LIFE or e-mail kfrohwein@lutheransforlife.org.

Our Mission . . . To witness to the sanctity of human life through education based on the Word of God. LFL has 15 state federations, 159 local chapters, and 748 Life Ministry Coordinators in the United States.

Our Vision . . . To be a powerful, Biblical, pro-life voice and resource to Lutherans and, through them, transform society.

Our Philosophy . . . Lutherans For Life believes that the Church is compelled by God’s Word to speak and act on behalf of those who are vulnerable and defenseless. The crisis of our times is the repudiation of Biblical truth manifested in the wanton destruction of innocent human life through legalized abortion-on-demand and the growing threat to the lives of others through legalized assisted suicide and euthanasia. Therefore, as Lutherans For Life, we will strive to give witness, from a Biblical perspective, to the Church and society on these and other related issues such as chastity, post-abortion healing, and family living.

Lutherans For Life thanks all those who have given Donations in Loving Memory of:

Bill Antes by Hugo & Muriel Armbrecht; **Matthew Beise** by Harvey F. & Marlene C Beneke; **Hannah Block** by Rev. & Mrs. Orval Friedrich; **Linda Blue** by Rev. John & Carol Schleicher; **Kristine M. Boche** by Rachel L. Sattgast; **Mark Danner** by Stevie Herndon; **Paul Eggers** by Edith Armbrecht, Hugo & Muriel Armbrecht; **William Eng** by Mrs. Joan Eng; **Joan Engel** by Douglas & Lynette Auch, Terry & Connie Davis, C. Jefferson, Mr. & Mrs. John Schleede; **Jane Graham Genseal** by Rev. & Mrs. Bruce Lakamp; **Ewald Goeringer** by Rev. & Mrs. Michael Harman; **Rev. Doug Haynes** by Rev. & Mrs. Michael Harman; **Christine Hoch** by Byron & Donna Zuehlk; **Joan Buchhop's father** by Paul & Linda Bartlett, Margaret Mesmer; **Ann Krueger** by Lloyd & Dorothy Barhite, Paul & Linda Bartlett; **Gertrude Kukuk** by Bryon & Donna Zuehlk; **Alice Lowe** by Janet Bartlemy, Richelle R. Gengler, Lorraine Jamison; **Wilbert Maschke** by Ruby A. Maschke; **Rev. Gilbert C. Meilaender** by Marion Meilaender; **Brian Millbrandt** by Rev. & Mrs. Bruce Lakamp; **Our precious grandbaby** by Mark & Marcilee Hergenrader; **Betty Penno** by Welma Klute; **Marvin Pfantz** by Hugo & Muriel Armbrecht; **Henry & June Pothast** by Dennis & Elaine West; **Maxine Rahe** by Rev. & Mrs. Bruce Lakamp; **Eileen Seifferlein** by Matt & Ruth Benge & family, Mr. & Mrs. Robert Bertossi, Kyle & Cheryl Chuhran & family, George & Gertrude Clark, Jason & Sarah Gottschalk, Mr. & Mrs. Ed Harm, Ronald & Carol Harm, Don & Cindy King & family, Alvin H. Kukuk, Mr. & Mrs. Jim Lind, Charlie & Cheryl Matthews, Harold & Rose Reh, George Roggatz, Wilma E. Wangelin, Robert & Deborah Zuehlk, Byron & Donna Zuehlk; **Bernadine Sternberg** by Dennis & Elaine West; **Mary Stevens** by Rev. George Naylor; **Aidan Lucas Toebben** by Robert & Lois Cook; **Randy Tollefson** by Hugo & Muriel Armbrecht; **Herman Wehmeyer** by Ralph & Ruth Wehmeyer; **Wyman Wenzel** by Mr. & Mrs. Gene Jandrey; **Dr. Frank Williams** by Helen Williams

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Note: Lutherans For Life is **not** able to receive gifts through the Thrivent's GivingPlus® program. To find out more go to: www.lutheransforlife.org/Support_LFL/GivingPlus_Thrivent.htm

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Life Thoughts in the Church Year

(based on the appointed readings from *Lutheran Worship*)

April 2 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

Jesus came for a purpose. “He became the source of eternal salvation” (Hebrews 5:9). This purpose came through suffering (Hebrews 5:7). This suffering brought Him glory (John 12:23). There is no greater example of purpose and glory in the midst of suffering than Christ. There is no greater hope for His people when they suffer today.

April 9 – Palm Sunday

“Rejoice greatly, O Daughter of Zion! . . . See, your king comes to you” (Zechariah 9:9). Rejoicing in and worshiping a King beaten and bleeding and crowned with thorns is either an act of mockery (Mark 15:16-20) or a display of faith so radical it can only be engendered in the human heart by God. Only such faith can follow a Savior to a cross. Only such faith can call that Friday Good.

April 16 – The Resurrection of our Lord

Doesn't it seem sometimes like death wins? We cannot avoid it. It is no respecter of persons. It claims those we love. But this day of the Resurrection assures us that death does not win, for the prophecy has been fulfilled, “He will swallow up death forever” (Isaiah 25:8). Life wins! Life is what we celebrate today and every day! Life is what we look forward to for eternity!

April 23 – Second Sunday of Easter

The influence of the world can be so powerful. But faith overcomes the world. Not just faith in anything and not even just faith in Jesus. The faith that overcomes the world is faith in Jesus as the Son of God! (1 John 5:4, John 20:31). Only God has the power to overcome the world and He has! Those “born of God” share in that victory! The world and its ways need not influence us. We have what it takes to influence the world!

April 30 – Third Sunday of Easter

The Apostles touched Life. Jesus invited them to touch Him (Luke 24:39). John tells us they touched “the Word of life” (1 John 1:1). Now we “touch” the Word of Life in the Scriptures where He reveals Himself to us. It is the Word of Life that we proclaim. It is the Word of Life that touches and changes hearts and lives.

May 7 – Fourth Sunday of Easter

In the midst of threats, the Apostles “spoke the word of God boldly” (Acts 4:31). They were filled with the Spirit of the Resurrected Christ. The same Spirit fills us. May we boldly speak the Word of God. May we boldly apply it to life issues even in the midst of opposition and threats.

May 14 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

Being “For Life” is more than opposing those things which devalue life. Love for life gets translated into actions (1 John

3:18). It is not enough to oppose abortion. We must support those experiencing a crisis pregnancy. It is not enough to oppose assisted suicide and euthanasia. We must care for those facing illness and death. Through faith in a living Savior we are able to love one another (3:23).

May 21 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

“The one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world” (1 John 4:4). What great encouragement as we face a world so hostile to Christ's Church and her message of life. The world can only offer a “spirit of falsehood.” We have the “Spirit of Truth” (4:6). Truth always wins!

May 28 – Seventh Sunday of Easter

Jesus prays for us. He knows what to pray for because He experienced what we now experience. We are not “of the world” (John 17:14), but we are sent “into the world” (17:18). As we confront the “evil one” and his lies and deceit that promote perversion and death, we do so comforted and strengthened by Jesus' prayer, “Holy Father, protect them by the power of your name” (17:11b).

June 4 – The Day of Pentecost

Pentecost brings a message of hope to the hopeless. Nothing can be more hopeless than a valley full of dry dead bones (Ezekiel 37:1-14). But God brings life to them with His “breath.” Nothing can be more hopeless than our innate sinfulness and inability to do anything about it. But God brings life to us through His Holy Spirit. Therefore, regardless of life's circumstances, we are assured we are never without hope!

June 11 – The Holy Trinity

The Trinity testifies to God's love for life. God the Father loved the life His hands created so much He sent His only Son (John 3:16). The Son loved life so much He allowed Himself to be lifted up as a sacrifice for the sins of the world (John 3:15). The Holy Spirit loves life so much He gives us a new birth so we can know God's love for life in Jesus (John 3:5).

June 18 – Second Sunday after Pentecost

We are “jars of clay” (2 Corinthians 4:7). Our value does not come from the “clay.” It comes from the “treasure” the clay contains. Thus, even though we may be at times “hard pressed” or “perplexed” or “persecuted,” our value is never diminished. The Spirit of Jesus, life itself, is at work in us (4:12).

June 25 – Third Sunday after Pentecost

The greatest of human problems are “light and momentary” compared to the eternal glory that awaits believers in Jesus (2 Corinthians 4:17). We need not turn to the things of this world in an effort to find hope in the midst of our struggles. Our hope is in what is “not seen” (4:18).



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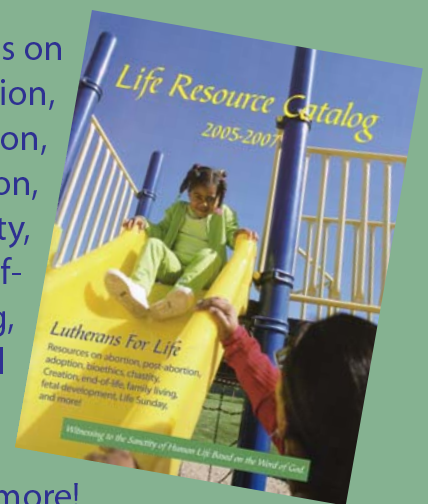
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