

Life News



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Life Newsbytes

After reaching a high of over 1.6 million in 1990, the number of abortions performed annually in the U.S. appears to have dropped to about 1.06 million a year. Two independent sources confirm a downward trend: the government’s Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Guttmacher Institute (GI), which was once a special research affiliate of abortion chain Planned Parenthood. The CDC ordinarily develops its annual report on the basis of data received from central health agencies (50 states plus New York City and the District of Columbia). GI gets its numbers from direct surveys of abortionists conducted every few years ... Guttmacher’s latest report ... shows a significant recent decline, seeing abortions fall 13% from 2008 to 2011. Most all of this decline appears to have occurred at clinics with annual caseloads of a thousand abortions a year or more. The number of abortions performed with RU-486 and other chemical abortifacients were up despite the overall decline.

TOTAL ABORTIONS SINCE 1973: 57,496,011 (based on calculations using information from the reports described above). (*CLR Life News*, 1/22/15; *National Right to Life Committee*)

Speaking Up For Life

“We limit the power of God if we say He can accomplish things only in people who are healthy and up and around. He’s God! He can work in your life as well as in the life of Paul. He can work in the life of the chronically ill or the terminally ill or the bed-ridden grandma unaware of her surroundings. Christ isn’t honored because of what we do. He is honored because of what He does in us! In fact, you could say that the less we are able to do, the more Christ is exalted as He works through us!”
Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb, Lutherans For Life

“Like other bonds—friendship, relationships between siblings, parents, and children—marriage involves a union of hearts and minds ... its all-encompassingness refers to its distinctive feature; that is, in addition to being a union of hearts and minds, it’s a bodily union, where the bodily union is made possible and intelligible by the sexual reproductive complimentary-ness of man and woman ... an all-encompassing union ... that is pledged to permanence and to sexuality fidelity, that which strengthens marriages when respected. Marriage unites husband and wife holistically.” *Dr. Robert George, McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton University and director of the James Madison Program in American Ideals and Institutions*

www.lutheransforlife.org/media/life-quotes

The Speck and the Spectacle by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

During Lent we prepare for a spectacle. Luke describes the crucifixion as such. **“Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, ‘Certainly this was a righteous man.’ And all the crowds that had assembled for this spectacle, when they saw what had taken place, returned home beating their breasts”** (Luke 23:48 ESV). There did seem to be something different about this spectacle compared to other crucifixion spectacles. The centurion certainly thought so. He helped crucify a “righteous man,” indeed “the Son of God” (Matthew 27:54). Many people knew it too and went away in sorrow.

“Son of God” is an appropriate name for the recent movie about Jesus’ life. This title brackets His life. The centurion pronounces it upon the spectacle of His death, and Gabriel pronounces it upon the speck in Mary’s womb. **“The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God”** (Luke 1:35 ESV). Before the Son of God could be a spectacle upon a cross, the Son of God needed to be a speck in a fallopian tube. How appropriate that we observe this latter event during Lent—the Annunciation of Our Lord, March 25.



As we focus upon the spectacle of the cross, we are reminded why there needed to be a speck. First, we were sinful specks. **“Surely I was sinful at birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me”** (Psalm 51:5 NIV). We needed a Savior to take our place from the very beginning, a holy conception to cover our unholy conceptions. Second, Jesus needed a physical body with hands and feet to be nailed to that cross, blood to flow from it, lungs to breathe their last, and a body to die, be buried, and rise again. Third, Jesus had to be both God and man so that He could bear the sins of the world, suffer the entire wrath those sins deserved, and be a sufficient ransom to purchase forgiveness and life for all. Yes, before there could be the spectacle of the Son of God dying, there needed to be the Son of God as a speck living in a womb.

The speck and the spectacle also demonstrate God’s great love for human life. Loving the rebellious and unlovable and loveless is one thing. Loving them enough to empty yourself of equality with God and become a microscopic speck and a bloodied spectacle is love beyond human comprehension.

And from this unparalleled love of life flows the unparalleled value of life. God did not become a speck and a spectacle because life had value. His doing so *gives* life value. That makes the value objective and non-dependent upon any human quality or condition. That makes the value universal. It applies to all human “specks” and to all humans regardless of the “spectacle” of their human condition.

So when you think about it, March is not such a bad Sanctity of Human Life month. I know I am writing to people who affirm this, and I thank you for being those kinds of people! I thank you for your desire to see others become equipped so that they too can see the connection between the Speck and the Spectacle and the specks and spectacles in people’s lives today.

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