



LIFESPAN *news*

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Presenting the Pro-Life Message in Southeastern Michigan Since 1970

May/June 2018



The most important person in the world is a Mother. It is true she cannot claim the honor of having built the Notre Dame Cathedral. She need not. She has built something far more wonderful and lasting... the cathedral of her child's immortal soul. Not even the angels have been so honored as to share with God in His work of creation. What in God's green earth is more wonderful than this... to be a mother?"

- Josef Cardinal Mindzenty

Words of Wisdom

What Pro-lifers Stand For and Against

By Paul Stark

Every human being matters, and we ought to act accordingly. The media often use the label “anti-abortion” to describe pro-life advocates. It’s true that we opposed abortion - and infanticide, euthanasia and embryo-destructive research. But we are only against those things because we are for something else.

What are we for

What are we for? We are for the proposition that human life is good, that it is worth living, that it deserves respect and protection. We are for the proposition that every human being has an equal worth and dignity - that every human being has a right to live.

The pro-life position rejects all attempts to divide humanity into those who have rights and those who don’t. Our society now recognizes that past discrimination on the basis of race, gender, ethnicity and social status was deeply unjust. We recognize that the worth of a human being does not depend on such characteristics.

Nor, however, does the worth of a human being depend on age, size, ability, dependency, state of development or the desires and decisions of others. The big are not more valuable than the small. The strong do not have more rights than the weak. The independent do not matter more than the vulnerable and needy.

No, we have value and a right to life simply because we are human - not because of what we can do, but because of what (the kind of being) we are. That’s why everyone matters. Everyone counts.

What we are against

It is because we support equal human dignity that we oppose the intentional killing of innocent human beings. And that means we oppose abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, and embryo-destructive research.

Pro-lifers oppose abortion because it takes the life of a human being before he or she is born. The scientific facts of embryology and developmental biology make clear that the unborn (the human embryo or fetus) is a distinct and living human organism, a full-fledged (though immature) member of the species *Homo sapiens*. Each of us was once an embryo and a fetus, just as we were once infants, toddlers and adolescents.

And all human beings, at all stages, have a right to life, whether or not they are “wanted” or “convenient.”

We oppose euthanasia and assisted suicide because killing is never the answer to the difficulties of life. All human beings should receive our compassion and care, irrespective of disease, disability or perceived “quality of life.”

We oppose embryonic stem cell research (but not adult or non-embryonic stem cell research) and human cloning because they require the destruction of human embryos. Human embryos are human beings in the embryonic phase of life. And all human beings, regardless of appearance and location (e.g., a petri dish), ought to be treated with respect and not as mere raw materials to use for the hypothetical benefit of others.

Living our conviction

But being pro-life is about more than just holding an ethical position. To be truly pro-life means to live and act accordingly.

It means treating other people with dignity and respect - even those with whom we disagree. It means helping pregnant women in need.

It means recognizing the moral gravity and scale of abortion - the premier injustice and leading cause of death in American society today - and taking action to save lives. Educating ourselves, talking to others, persuading them. Supporting pro-life educational and legislative efforts through pro-life organizations.

Being pro-life, ultimately, is about loving others, especially the most vulnerable. It is about loving our neighbors as we love ourselves. And love isn’t just a feeling. It is a commitment.

- *National Right to Life NEWS TODAY, March 26, 2018*



Where do the candidates stand on pro-life issues? Watch for LIFESPAN's July newsletter.

Conscientious Objection and the Duty to Refer

By Nancy Valko

When the Trump administration announced a new department of Conscience and Religious Freedom, the pushback from abortion and assisted suicide proponents like Planned Parenthood and Compassion & Choices was immediate and accompanied by apocalyptic predictions of harm to patients.

Now the term “conscientious objection” is increasingly being used rather than “conscience rights” when it comes to health care professionals. I believe this is not accidental. The term “conscience rights” is a powerful and accepted term about individual right while “conscientious objection” is associated with the traditional definition of “A person who **refuse to serve in the military due to religious or strong philosophical views against war or killing**” and who “may be required to perform some **nonviolent work like driving an ambulance.**” (Emphasis added)

Nevertheless, in a March 30, 2018 Medscape article titled “Should Clinicians With Conscientious Objections Be Protected?”, well-known ethicist Arthur L. Caplan, PhD criticizes the new Conscience and Religious Freedom Division as an expensive “overreaction” that can be mediated by allowing health care professionals to refuse to provide a legal act (like abortion or assisted suicide in certain areas) but requiring them “to tell patients where they can go and how they can go about getting it.”

This echoes last year’s New England Journal of Medicine article “Physicians, No Conscripts - Conscientious Objection in Health Care” by Dr. Ezekiel Emanuel (one of the architects of Obamacare) and Ronit Y. Stahl, PhD who insists that medical professionals “cannot completely absent themselves from providing these services” and are still required to convey “accurate information” and provide “timely referrals to ensure patients receive care.”

The authors even state that:

“Health Care professional who are unwilling to accept these limits have **two choices: select an area of medicine, such as radiology, that will not put them in situations with their personal moral** **ity or, if there is no such area, leave the profession.**” (Emphasis added)

Their rationale for this extreme position is that “the patient comes first, which means the **patient’s conscience and autonomy receive priority over those of the physician.**” (Emphasis added)

However, this could now conflict with the recently amended federal Affordable Care Act (aka Obamacare) that states:

“No qualified health plan offered through an Exchange may discriminate against any individual health care provider or health care facility because of its unwillingness to provide, pay for, provide coverage of, or **refer for abortion.**”

and

“The Federal Government, and any State or local government or health care provider that receives Federal financial assistance under this Act (or under an amendment made by this Act) or any health plan created under this Act (or under an amendment made by this Act), **may not subject an individual or institutional health care entity to discrimination on the basis that the entity does not provide any health care item or service furnished for the purpose of causing, or for the purpose of assisting in causing, the death of any individual, such as by assisted suicide, euthanasia, or mercy killing.**” (All emphasis added).

The Duty to “Convey Accurate Information” and “Refer”

Ironically, do groups like Planned Parenthood and Compassion & Choices **really** want to require a medical professional opposed to abortion and/or assisted suicide to convey accurate information?

First of all, medical referrals require a measure of trust. For example. No doctor or nurse would knowingly refer a patient to another doctor or organization that he/she considers incompetent or unethical or for a procedure the medical professional considers harmful to the patient. When a patient asks for procedures like abortion or assisted suicide, the medical professional should be free to refer the patient to support services like crisis pregnancy centers, etc. or to an ethical palliative care specialist, mental health expert, etc. The medical professional should also be free to convey accurate information regarding abortion such as how abortions are performed, potential physical and emotional complications, fetal development, etc. With assisted suicide, the medical professional should be free to discuss such issues as the potential complications of a lethal overdose, the potential effects of family and friends, the criminal/civil immunity of the assisted suicide doctor if the assisted suicide goes awry, etc.

Medical professionals should also have the right to be honest and tell patients if they personally don’t know any doctor or organization that they would recommend to provide a referral for abortion or assisted suicide.

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Youth Report

I hope you had a great Easter and spring break!

Now that the junior high, high school, and college semesters are drawing near to end (or may have just finished up), I wanted to let you know that the plans are already underway for the 2019 "Movement in Motion" Youth Bus Trip to DC for the annual March for Life! The first planning meeting was held on Saturday, April 21st, and there are two adults, four young adults, and seven high school students who will be working with me in making things happen – getting things done so that the 2019 trip will be the most awesome yet! Thanks a lot, Team! I enjoyed our first meeting tremendously!



Our eight LIFESPAN buses will leave on Thursday night, January 17th, participate in the Rally and March for Life on Friday, January 18th, do

some touring - which hopefully will include the White House - and will, for sure, include a visit at the Arlington National Cemetery with our participation in the Wreath Laying Ceremony on Saturday January 19th, and return home the morning of Sunday, January 20th. We will stay at host churches in the Arlington, VA area. The cost is \$185.00 per person and includes the bus, two breakfasts, one dinner, and a cool scarf that will be worn for group identification.

Now is the time to start saving up for the March! Doing summer jobs helps in a big way!

Please mark your calendars! Registration begins on September 1st and goes till October 15th. Contact me at 248-816-1546 or oakmac@rtl-lifespan.org or Anne Marie Morin, Associate Youth Director, at 734-422-6230 or youth@milifespan.org to learn more about the trip and how you can register! If emailing, put in the subject line: 2019

LIFESPAN Youth Bus Trip.

On another note, by the time you have this newsletter, the annual LIFESPAN Celebration of Life dinner will be over. I am happy to say that we had 23 young people - Jr. High, High School and College Students - helping out that evening with various duties including greeting our guests and opening the doors to the building, assisting those who needed it from their vehicles to the registration desk and even to their seats in the dining area, playing the piano for entertainment ahead of time in the lobby, checking people in at the registration desk and handing out their name tags and our Resource Book, taking winning tickets to those who won tin can raffle items and Silent Auction items, etc. I thank all the young people for being so helpful that evening to all the guests! It was truly great to have your energetic willingness to give us a hand with whatever we asked of you!

If any students/young adults are looking for some service hours or wanting to help "just because", let me know! We could use some help in the summer at the Oak/Mac office with cleaning out our storage area. Lots of things to move out/throw out and lots of reorganizing will need to be done. Please call or email me as soon as you know if you have some free time in late June or early July. It would be a daytime volunteer job between the hours of 9 a.m.-3 p.m. on either a Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday. Thank you for your consideration of this request!

Our Wayne County office could also use some help this summer, especially with their Garage Sale, Mother's Day & Father's Day events. Please call Anne Marie at 734-422-6230 to volunteer.

Happy Mother's Day and Father's Day to all the moms and dads out there! I wish you all much joy, gratitude, affection and love from your children as they celebrate the gift of you in their lives! And to those who are no longer here in person with us, like my dad, that we feel their presence hugging us on these special days and we remember with great tenderness and appreciation their protection, attention, guidance, love and self-offering they gave us through all the years of our lives!

Until next time...keep on Loving Life!

A Program of Right to Life - LIFESPAN Educational Fund
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Lynn Gura, Director & Anne Marie Morin, Assoc. Director

Conscientious Objection

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Patients, especially those in distress, need a well-informed medical professional who really listens to their concerns and responds with facts and helpful options rather than one who just hands out a “politically correct” referral.

Conclusion

The so-called duty to perform/participate in a life-ending procedure or refer for one is not really about conscience rights but rather another way to extinguish resistance to abortion and assisted suicide, normalize such procedures into standard medical practice and discourage/bully ethical health care professionals into leaving or never entering the medical professions.

Those of us who believe in medical ethics as, first and foremost, doing no harm to patients must actively fight this for the sake of our professions and for the safety of the public that puts their lives in our hands.

If we don't speak up for our medical professions and our patients, who will?

- Nancy Valko.com, April 8, 2018



Follow us on #miLIFESPAN

Donations have been made -

In Memory of:

Norma Hardenburgh

Given by: Marilyn Schepansky

Stefanie Lawler

Given by: Joann Bonahoom

Brian Dimoff

Margaret Ezell

Margaret Hughes

Molly Koehler

Dr. David Kirsch

Mary Madani

Charlie Schott

John Schott

Francis Othmar Wey

Madeline Smyka

Given by: Michelle Mundle

Donations may be made in memory of loved ones who have died; a memorial card will be sent by LIFESPAN in your name to the family of the deceased. Donations may also be made to honor someone special, and near and dear to you, for a particular occasion, or just because... Send donations to your local LIFESPAN office.



47 Years of Abortion

Below are short reflections from our Rose Ceremony in January. Each year since 1973 is represented. Watch the next few newsletters for more reflections.

1983 - For all those who have ever lost a child, may the Holy Spirit surround them with His consolation and healing.

1984 - For the first time, the number of Pregnancy Help Centers surpassed the number of abortion clinics.

1985 - Over 90% of pre-born babies with Down Syndrome are aborted. May we respect all life, thus honoring our God who is the author of all life.

1986 - To help that pre-born child, we must first help that child's mother.

1987 - Then and now, Planned Parenthood performs more abortions than anyone else in America... and anyone else in the world.

You can live on after death by helping those whose lives are threatened by abortion, euthanasia or infanticide. A bequest in your will to Right to Life - LIFESPAN will be used to save the lives of many through our efforts.

Have questions? Please contact Charles Kleinbrook at 248-352-9569 or MrChip1234@aol.com

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Co-Editors: Christina Hansen & Diane Trombley

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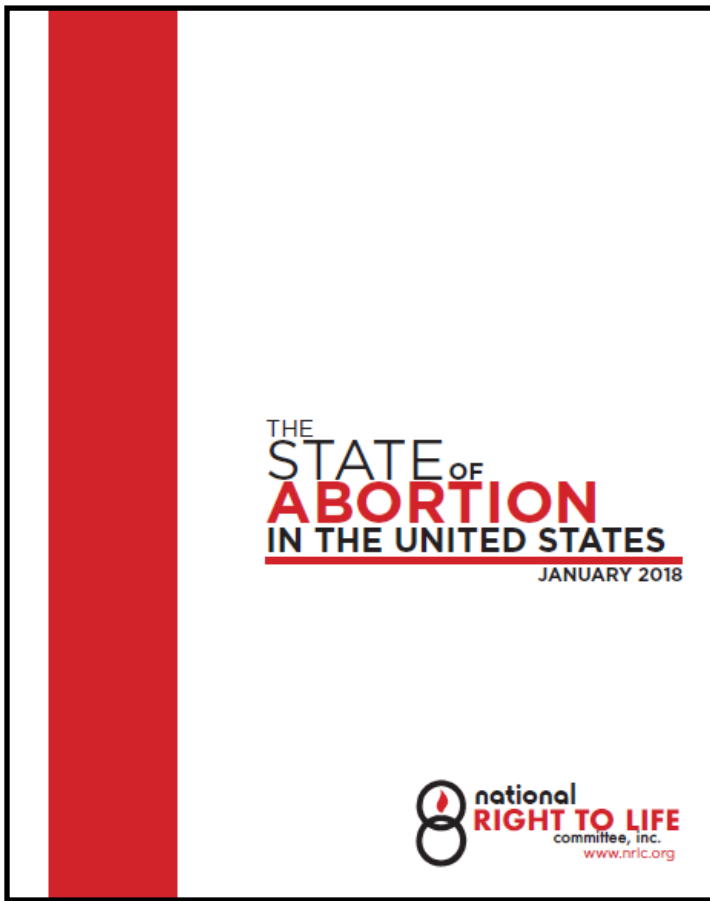
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Christina Hansen, Office Manager



The State of Abortion in the United States: A Critical Report



The State of Abortion in the United States

is a report issued by the National Right to Life Committee (NRLC). Founded in 1968, National Right to Life, the federation of 50 state right-to-life affiliates and more than 3,000 local chapters, is the nation's oldest and largest national grassroots pro-life organization. Recognized as the flagship of the pro-life movement, National Right to Life works through legislation and education to protect innocent human life from abortion, infanticide, assisted suicide and euthanasia.

Original Release: January 18, 2018

Abortion Numbers: CDC Data Analysis

(Continued from April LIFESPAN News)

Types and Timing of Abortions

Over two-thirds (67%) of abortions were performed at eight or fewer weeks gestation. The advent of chemical abortions has meant that more and more abortions are performed at earlier gestations. Thus, it is not surprising that just over four in ten (41.1%) were actually performed at six weeks or less in 2015. CDC data show that the num-

ber of abortions at 6 weeks or less has risen steadily since 2005.

About a quarter (24.5%) of the abortions occurred between nine and 13 weeks. The remaining 8.5% were performed in the second trimester or later: 3.3% at 14-15 weeks, 2% at 16-17 weeks, 1.9% at 18-20 weeks, and 1.3% at or beyond 21 weeks.

The CDC shows that 76% of all abortions continue to be surgical abortions (67.4% first trimester, 8.6% at second or third trimester). Most of the rest of the abortions (22.6%) were first trimester "medical" (chemical) abortions using drugs like mifepristone (RU-486) and misoprostol. An additional 1.5% were chemical procedures performed at 8 weeks or more.

Just a handful of abortions employed rarely used chemical or surgical methods like instillation or hysterotomy.

Overall, though data show first trimester surgical abortions still dominate the industry, they also show abortions being performed earlier and earlier, with more and more using chemical rather than surgical methods.

Significant Single-Year Shifts

CDC figures for 2014 show in 28 reporting areas, and another 20 showing increases. For the most part, the number of abortions rose or fell by modest amounts. However a handful of states saw big drops or increases. Unless noted otherwise, all increases/decreases are from 2013 to 2014.

Shifting Numbers

Why are the abortion rate and abortion ratio important? When the abortion rate drops, it means fewer women in the state are having abortions. A declining ratio means pregnant women are more often choosing to give birth instead of aborting their babies.

National decreases have been deep and sustained, providing encouragement to pro-lifers everywhere. Both long and short term statistics show not only fewer women becoming pregnant but fewer abortions among those women who did become pregnant.

There are some cautionary notes found in the most recent state of abortion data from the CDC.

Over the long term, numbers of abortions, abortion rates and ratios are down in virtually every state. Most states showed drops in most years going back over the past two decades or more. While most of the decreases were modest, a few states had profound declines.

It is also true some states saw increases over the numbers in the CDC's report for 2013. Generally, these changes were slight, only a few dozen or at the most a couple of

hundred more. In some cases, however, there appear to have been significant increases in just a year's time.

While the general trend speaks for itself, the larger moves up or down call for some explanation and educated examination.

BIG DROPS AND SIGNIFICANT INCREASES

The number of abortions in Texas dropped by a significant number - 9,020. Abortions fell by 2,278 in Illinois and 2,030 in Ohio. In New York, there were 1,335 fewer abortions while in Tennessee, there were 1,843 fewer abortions.

Some of this is simply a function of being a large state with a large volume of abortions from the beginning, but there are other reasons that will be discussed later. It is also important to note that a few smaller states saw diminishing numbers that were significant for them.

For example, Montana reported 152 fewer abortions, significant given their smaller population. But Montana also experienced a substantially lower abortion rate (down 0.9 abortions per thousand women aged 15-44, while the national drop was just 0.3) and lower abortion ratio (down 13 abortions for every thousand live births) in 2014.

Rhode Island reported only 261 fewer abortions. However this was huge given their smaller size and population. In addition, their abortion rate (again, the number of abortions per 1,000 women of reproductive age) fell 1.3, more than four times the national rate drop. Rhode Islands, abortion ratio (the number of abortions for every 1,000 live births) was down 25, nearly double the national ratio drop.

A look at the abortion rates and ratios show that some of the bigger states drops were for reasons more than just their size. New York's rate drop was just 0.4, a hair over the national 0.3 drop. However their abortion ratio dropped by a huge 143 abortions.

Illinois' abortion rate drop (0.9 fewer abortions per thousand women of reproductive age) was three times the national rate drop. Its abortion ratio fell 17. Ohio's rate drop (-0.9) was also three times the national rate drop and its ratio fell 15.

Tennessee and Texas saw huge drops in their abortion rates (drops of 1.5 in the abortion rate of Tennessee, and 1.8 for Texas) as well as significant drops in the abortion ratio (a decline in the abortion ratio of 26 for Tennessee and 28 for Texas).

To be continued in a future LIFESPAN News...

From the President's Desk

Dear Friends,

With Spring comes the renewal of LIFE - the rains come and wash away the filth of winter; it gives life to the dormant plants, trees and flowers. Before we know it, summer and the warm sun will penetrate the land and will nurture all plant life. It brings food and joy to those of us watching and experiencing this wonderful phenomenon God has given us every year. There is a great deal of discussion by the environmentalists worrying and condemning actions that will destroy this complex ecosystem. I too, am concerned about the environment and we must all be responsible, in our own way, to protect this earth that God has given to us.

But we must never confuse who is most important to the overall picture of LIFE. Man is not the enemy of the earth: man is the enemy of each other. I guess it depends on your spiritual beliefs but for me, man has a higher calling and the purpose of LIFE is sometimes beyond the comprehension of man. Killing humans in the womb or at the end of life, when productivity is diminished, should never be done to save the environment. Humans, no matter how small or how old, make this world stronger, healthier and give the earth a purpose to its existence. So, when you hear an argument that man is destroying the earth, think about what the earth would be like without man. What purpose would it serve to have an earth without man?

Be aware of those that want to determine who should live and who should die, or what is important in order to allow one to live! Call them on their arguments. If you do not, who will!?

All Human Life matters!! Without Human Life, nothing else is important!!

*— Diane Fagelman,
President, Right to Life - LIFESPAN*



LIFESPAN Chapter News

What News Do You & Your Children Get

Our young people use social media dozens of times each day. They have their phones with them constantly and get much of their daily information from various media sites. Big social media companies like Facebook, Twitter, Google and YouTube are increasingly censoring pro-life voices. There are lots of examples, but as LifeNews.com has reported:

* Facebook Takes Down Christian Group's Page, Calls Abortion Opposition "Hateful & Threatening"

* Twitter Censors Pro-Life Group: "No Advertiser is Permitted to Use the Phrase 'Killing Babies'"

* YouTube Censors Video Exposing Planned Parenthood's Abortion Agenda Hours After Its Release

* Google Censors Six Conservative Media Sites, Treats Them as "Fake News"

The social media giant Facebook has repeatedly censored pro-life pages and advertisements from pro-life organizations. But during a congressional hearing this past week, CEO Mark Zuckerberg admitted Planned Parenthood has never been censored

(LifeNews.com 4/14/18). How will they ever hear the pro-life side of things?

Thanks Mom, for Life

How do we recognize our mom? They gave us life, gone without so we could have, taught us to pray, cook, read, laugh, comb our hair, have manner and - the list is endless. Often times we don't think to say "thanks mom". So today, if you are lucky enough to have your mom near you, look in her eyes and say a heartfelt Thank You. If she has gone from your sight, remember her special smile and whisper, "I love you, mom."

Thought for the Day

"If we are to teach real peace in this world, and if we are to carry on a real war against war, we shall have to begin with the children."

- Mahatma Gandhi

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Diane Trombley, Director

Lynn Gura, Ofc. Staff & Youth Director

Happy Mother's Day!

"Motherhood is the greatest potential influence either for good or ill in human life. The mother's image is the first that stamps itself on the unwritten page of the young child's mind. It is her caress that first awakens a sense of security; her kiss, the first realization of affection; her sympathy and tenderness, the first assurance that there is love in the world." - David O. McKay



that says "Thanks, Mom, for LIFE". **

As you celebrate Mother's Day, consider thanking your mom for LIFE with a milk chocolate rose that is individually wrapped! These will be available at area churches with a tag

Happy Father's Day!

"A good father is one of the most *unsung*, *unpraised*, *unnoticed*, and yet one of the *most valuable assets* in our society." - Billy Graham



As you celebrate Father's Day, consider thanking your dad for LIFE with one (or more) different flavors of milk chocolate that each say "Life is Sweet - Thanks for LIFE" and have a fact about baby development on it. **

GARAGE SALE MAY 17th - 19th

Be sure to come out and find some treasures and help to support LIFESPAN! **36709 Ann Arbor Trail, Livonia** (next to Rosedale Elementary School)..

** There will be some other items available, too: handy tape measure (how can we measure what a gift life is), pens (because the gift of life, we can write our own story), and phone kick stands (stand up for life with a stand for your phone).

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Eileen Brandt, Director

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Wee Care

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY WISHES TO:

- the 90 year old great-grandmother who sews exquisite dresses for our babies...
- the retired grandmas who make one-of-a-kind quilts and flannel blankets...
- the moms and grandmoms who organize showers and collections, who purchase baby gifts and who crochet and knit beautiful afghans...
- the mothers who pray for our babies as well as their own...

HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY WISHES TO:

- our mothers who chose life in spite of their fears and uncertainty...
- our moms who made the heartbreaking decision to chose a family to love and raise their child through adoption...
- our moms who struggle every day to provide food, safe housing and the bare necessities for their precious little

ones...

- our moms who take buses every day to sit by their preemie in NICU, hoping that soon they will be able to hold their tiny miracle...



HAPPY MOTHER'S DAY WISHES TO:

- those mothers who have lost a child...
- those who are about to give birth...
- those who are desperately praying to become pregnant...
- to our cherished great-grandmothers, grandmothers, moms and daughters...
- to all of you - who have the hardest and most rewarding job on earth...

May God bless you! May you have a beautiful day!

Love, Karen

A Program of Right to Life - LIFESPAN Educational Fund

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Office Hours: By appointment; Karen Patrosso, Director

All material and monetary donations to Wee Care are tax-deductible. Checks must be made payable to Right to Life - LIFESPAN Educational Fund.



Thursday, May 17th

8:30 am - 6:00 pm

Friday, May 18th

8:30 am - 6:00 pm

Saturday, May 19th

9:00 am - 5:00 pm

36709 Ann Arbor Trail, Livonia

(next to Rosedale Elementary)

Items still needed for garage sale!

Call Ray at 734-525-0749 for drop-off information

Call Anne Marie at 734-422-6230 for Volunteer information

Why bodily autonomy—“My body, my choice”—doesn’t justify abortion

By Paul Stark

Abortion is justified, many of its defenders argue, because women have a right to control their own bodies. “My body, my choice,” signs and bumper stickers proclaim. The bodily autonomy argument takes a few different forms. None, however, are successful.

Some people think that the unborn (the human embryo or fetus) is a mere part of the woman’s body. But science, of course, has established that the unborn—though physically dependent on and inside of the mother—is a distinct, self-developing individual with his or her own DNA, brain, arms and legs, etc.

Abortion attacks and kills the body of someone else.

Other people believe that even though the unborn is a distinct human organism, a pregnant woman should be able to decide what happens in or to her body. Whereas many arguments for abortion contend that the human being in utero is not a “person” with intrinsic value and rights, this argument holds that abortion is permissible regardless of whether or not the child is a valuable person.

The Sovereign Zone argument

Trent Horn helpfully distinguishes between two variations of this approach. The first version, which he calls the “Sovereign Zone” argument, claims that a woman has an absolute right to do whatever she wants with anything that is inside her body. And the unborn child—even if she is a human person—is currently within that sovereign zone.

But sovereignty cannot be absolute. Consider an analogy: May we do whatever we want with anything that is on our private property? May we attack or kill innocent people who are passing through or seeking refuge? No, we must respect the rights of other people. “Mere ownership,” acknowledges pro-choice philosopher Mary Anne Warren, “does not give me the right to kill innocent people whom I find on my property.” And so it is with pregnancy.

May a pregnant woman ingest drugs that she knows will cause her child to be deformed or disabled? Clearly not. And if knowingly harming the child is wrong, killing her (through abortion) is even worse. Bodily autonomy is important, but there are obvious limits to that autonomy when someone else’s body is also involved.

The Right to Refuse argument

The second, more sophisticated version, which Horn calls the “Right to Refuse” argument, was first introduced by moral philosopher Judith Jarvis Thomson in 1971. It contends that a woman has a right to refuse to let the unborn child use her body to survive. Just as a person is not obligated to donate an organ to save the life of someone else, the pregnant woman is not obligated to provide her uterus (and the sustenance and protection it affords) to her child.

This argument has enormous problems. Abortion, in the vast majority of cases, is not merely the withholding or withdrawing of “life support” from the unborn child—it is the intentional and active killing of that child, often by dismemberment. This killing violates the child’s right to life (the right not to be intentionally killed) and right to bodily integrity. Indeed, “if people have a right to bodily integrity and so do not have a duty to donate a kidney,” writes philosopher Christopher Kaczor, “then people in utero have a right not to have their bodily integrity fatally violated through abortion.”

Moreover, even if abortion were not intentional killing (i.e., if it were simply a refusal to aid the child by removing her from the womb), abortion would still be wrong because a pregnant woman does have an obligation to allow her baby to live and grow in the womb. Here’s why.

First, the father and mother, except in cases of rape, willingly engaged in an activity that caused the creation of a new, dependent human being. So they bear responsibility for the resulting child.

Second, parents have special obligations to their dependent offspring that they do not have to others. Fathers, for example, must pay child support even if they did not intend or desire to become fathers. Parents may not abandon their children or refuse to provide for their needs (though they may relinquish those obligations through adoption).

Indeed, more generally, “we are by nature members of communities,” explains ethicist Patrick Lee. “[O]ur flourishing involves being in communion with others. And communion with others of itself—even if we find ourselves united with others because of a physical or social relationship which precedes our consent—entails duties or responsibilities.”

Parental obligation may not require extraordinary acts (like donating a kidney), but it does require basic, ordinary care, such as the nourishment and shelter provided during pregnancy. If unborn children are valuable members of the human family, like born children, then the same parental duties that apply after birth are present beforehand as well.

Third, the purpose of the uterus is to gestate the unborn child – it is where that child belongs. All human beings, during their prenatal stages of development, rely on it for care and protection. “The uterus exists for the unborn child rather than for the mother,” notes Stephanie Gray. It is reasonable to think that a child has a right to live in her natural environment.

Finally, even apart from the other reasons, a moral obligation seems to arise when we alone are in a position to provide ordinary care (food and shelter) to someone who needs it to survive.

“Suppose you live in a cabin far out in the wilderness, cut off from civilization by extreme distance and weather for much of the year, say, nine months,” writes Mathew Lu, a philosophy professor at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul. “One day you return to the cabin to discover that an infant has been left at the door without explanation. ... Do you have an obligation to care for the infant, who will surely die if you do not take it in?”

Most people would say yes. “[W]e have a general obligation to protect the vulnerable, and a special obligation towards those we contingently encounter,” Lu concludes. Bodily rights do not justify abortion

The right to control one’s body does not justify the intentional killing of others. Nor does it nullify our obligations to the youngest and most vulnerable members of the human family.

Indeed, the autonomy argument turns common sense and justice upside down. The unique nature of pregnancy – the bodily dynamic between an unborn child and her mother – is not, as the argument supposes, a reason to think that killing or neglect is permissible. It is, instead, a reminder that human beings are connected to and dependent on each other.

“The so-called right to abortion has ... sown violence and discord at the heart of the most intimate human relationships,” observed Mother Teresa of Calcutta. “It has portrayed the greatest of gifts – a child – as a competitor, an intrusion, and an inconvenience. It has nominally accorded mothers unfettered dominion over the independent lives of their physically dependent sons and daughters.”

This “unconscionable power,” Mother Teresa said, must be rejected. Both mother and child deserve respect, protection, and care.

- *National Right to Life NEWS TODAY, April 16, 2018*

Pro-Life Events - Save the Dates!

Mother’s Day Flower/Chocolate Sale
Sunday, May 13th

LIFESPAN Garage Sale
Thursday, May 17th - Saturday, May 19th

Father’s Day Pen/Candy Sale
Sunday, June 17th

Movement in Motion Bus Trip to DC Registration
September 1st - October 15th

National Day of Remembrance
Saturday, September 8th

LIFE CHAIN
Sunday, October 7th

Right to Life - LIFESPAN Membership Form

Right to Life - LIFESPAN believes that human life has value in all stages of development from conception until natural death, and is committed to speaking on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves—the preborn, the aged, the incapacitated. Won’t you please help in our struggle to preserve respect for human life? A contribution brings you the monthly newsletter as well as educational materials and special mailings.

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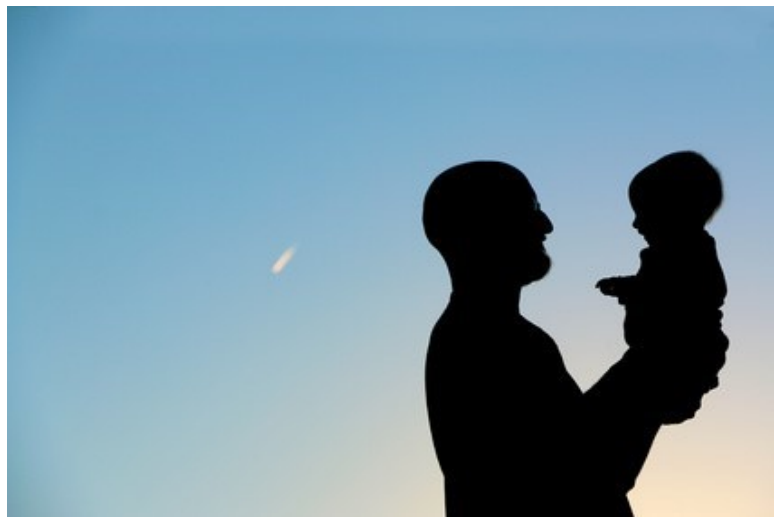


DATED MATERIAL



**Anyone can
be a father.**

**It takes
Courage to
be a Dad!**



HAPPY FATHER'S DAY!