

OUR LATEST PRODUCTS

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Janet Morana, Associate Director of Priests for Life, and Dr. Theresa Burke, Founder of Rachel's Vineyard and Pastoral Associate of Priests for Life, have put together this powerful book describing why so many women grieve the children they lost through birth control that was abortifacient.

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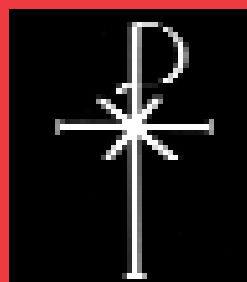
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vibrant and satisfying emotional, spiritual, and physical intimacy. Abortion is a traumatic death experience that is closely associated to relational/sexual intimacy creating a profound fracture of trust striking at the heart of the marital foundation. (This holds true whether the event preceded a marriage, or was experienced by only one spouse.) Partners experience unresolved, unspoken grief and shame as they struggle with depression, anxiety, and other pain numbing symptoms of trauma that can negatively impact marriage and family life. Extra marital affairs are not uncommon for persons with abortion in their history.

The good news is that with effective healing programs like Rachel's Vineyard, a ministry of Priests For Life, the relationship can become stronger than ever. The Rachel's Vineyard Retreat Process, used in many diocesan and church based outreach programs has proven to be especially effective at helping couples reclaim the satisfaction and joy of the emotional, physical and spiritual gifts of the marital union.

It is vital for Priests, Deacons and lay pastoral ministers to gently introduce this topic to couples. Bring up the issue in marriage preparation classes, educating couples on how abortion can impact trust and intimacy and acknowledging how sensitive and difficult it is to open up this secret area of one's past. The man or woman may want to discuss this with you privately before sharing it with their fiancé or spouse. You can respond to their fears and empower them with hope and resources for healing. Encourage them make the healing journey with the support and participation of their fiancée/spouse. Invite couples that have been through the process of healing to share their own testimonies of how abortion impacted their marriage. Place pamphlets for Rachel's Vineyard and other healing resources in the information packets you share in marriage prep and in the parish. Put information on this problem on your parish and diocesan websites with links to healing ministries like Rachel's Vineyard.

Theresa Burke, PhD., LPC, and Kevin Burke, MSS/LSW are founders of Rachel's Vineyard, a ministry of Priests for Life, offering nationwide retreats for healing after abortion as well as training for church ministries. Rachel's Vineyard can also connect you with information and referrals to men and women who are willing to share their witnesses of healing.
www.rachelsvineyard.org or call 1 877 HOPE 4 ME.



PRIESTS FOR LIFE

Assisting God's people to respond to the evils of abortion and euthanasia

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Number 1

SHOULD WE FOCUS JUST ON ABORTION?

On January 22, 1973, the US Supreme Court issued the *Roe vs. Wade* decision, which opened the door to an abortion-on-demand policy in the United States. Churches and other organizations nationwide observe this sad date each year. Many preachers who do not address abortion at other times of the year do preach about it on this occasion. Along with homilies, there are also many prayer services and other parish activities conducted.

The idea often surfaces, however, that pro-life homilies and activities *must address all "life issues" from conception to natural death.* Certainly, the Church embraces – and Priests for Life affirms – a “consistent ethic of life,” properly understood. In other words, life is *sacred at every stage*, and we must be concerned about every “life issue.” We also agree that when preaching about abortion, we should place the issue in the context of the consistent ethic – that is to say, we should point out that life is sacred from conception to natural death and at every stage and condition in between.

But that does not mean that it is somehow inappropriate to devote an entire homily to abortion, or to have a pro-life commemorative service or activity exclusively in honor of the tens of millions of children who have been killed by abortion. When the US Bishops write about the consistent ethic of life, they say the following:

“Among important issues involving the dignity of human life with which the Church is concerned, abortion necessarily plays

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Dear Father/Deacon,

If you have an email address and want to hear from me to be updated more quickly about pastoral resources and pro-life developments, please send us your email address at: clergy@priestsforlife.org! Please include also your name and the state in which you reside.

Your email will be kept confidential.

-- Fr. Frank Pavone, National Director



Fr. Frank Pavone is joined by his bishop, the Most Rev. John Yanta of Amarillo, Tx. and other Priests for Life priests for mass at EWTN on the Triumph of the Holy Cross, September 14, 2005. From l. to r.: Fr. Giacomo Capoverdi, Fr. Frank, Bishop Yanta, and Fr. Mark Clarke, CMF.

Suggestions For Parish Activities As We Observe Another Memorial of Roe vs. Wade

1. Commission your Pro-life Group: Invite the members of the parish Respect Life Committee to be together at one Mass, and bring them into the sanctuary for a special commissioning and blessing. This will encourage them and show the whole parish that this is a ministry integral to the Church. A suggested commissioning ceremony can be found at www.priestsforlife.org/liturgy/prolifecommittee
2. Phone numbers on bulletin: Place on the cover of the parish bulletin, as a standard item, a phone number for alternatives to abortion and healing after abortion.

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This newsletter is available by email, along with a bi-weekly column written by Fr. Frank. Subscribe free of charge at subscribe@priestsforlife.org



Charnette and Tom Messe and their children

Charnette and Tom Messe and their children were guests on some of our recent television shows. Tom, a medical doctor in the Navy, has successfully defended his right to refuse to administer contraceptives. Charnette is part of the Silent No More Awareness Campaign, and speaks about how her abortion led to breast cancer. Her son, shown here, was in her womb while she had chemotherapy, and is as healthy as can be. See Charnette's testimony (and many others) at www.SilentNoMoreAwareness.org.

MARRIAGE PREPARATION AND ABORTION

Raising the Question of Abortion in Marriage Preparation
Kevin & Theresa Burke, Pastoral Associates, Priests for Life

Marriage preparation is a time of great joy and excitement for young couples as they prepare for their special day. Unfortunately abortion is one topic that will not likely come up in meetings with their priest/deacon or in their Pre-Cana class. This can have tragic consequences because without healing, post abortion issues have the potential to become a silent ticking time bomb in a marriage. Given the prevalence of abortion, we know that many of these couples participated in the abortion of a child prior to meeting their future spouse, had an abortion during the engagement-dating period or may have an abortion after they are married.

Abortion creates a relational and spiritual wound. A healthy marital relationship is marked by a deep bonding between husband and wife with a foundational trust that leads to

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PRAYER INTENTIONS

You are encouraged to remember the following intentions as you pray the Liturgy of the Hours:

JANUARY INTENTION:

That more Americans may understand how extreme is the policy that Roe vs. Wade imposed.

FEBRUARY INTENTION:

For all those who share their abortion testimonies through the Silent No More Awareness Campaign.

Activities... Continued from page 1

More information at www.priestsforlife.org/resources/bulletinhotline.htm

- Intercessions and bulletin inserts: Use the General intercessions and bulletin inserts you can find at www.priestsforlife.org/liturgy as a way of incorporating pro-life themes into the daily life of the parish.
- Promote the Prayer campaign!! – Urge parishioners to pray daily for an end to abortion by joining the National Prayer Campaign to End Abortion, sponsored by Priests for Life and accessible at www.PrayerCampaign.org. We will provide prayer cards for all your parishioners free of charge.
- Have a pro-life essay/poster contest in your parish school. Post the winning posters in the vestibule, and have the essay winners present their essays to the congregation after Communion.
- Many options in the liturgy allow us to focus on abortion and the unborn. In particular, the mass "For the Progress of Peoples" has prayers that apply well to our efforts to secure protection for the unborn. Likewise, the alternate prayer for the 17th Sunday in Ordinary Time can be used at a mass for life. The following Penitential Litany is especially suitable for masses with a pro-life theme:

Lord Jesus, Victor over Death, Lord have mercy...
Lord Jesus, Giver of Life, Christ have mercy...
Lord Jesus, Coming in Glory, Lord have mercy

For additional information, visit www.priestsforlife.org/liturgy

BULLETIN INSERT IN SPANISH Regarding Roe vs. Wade

Norma McCorvey, conocida como "Jane Roe" del caso Roe vs. Wade de 1973 en el que la Corte Suprema de los Estados Unidos legalizó el aborto, es ahora una Católica pro-vida. El 23 de Marzo de 1997, ella declaró con las siguientes palabras: "Yo soy Norma McCorvey. Fui conocida como Jane Roe el 22 de Enero de 1973 cuando la Corte Suprema de los Estados Unidos declaró que la mujer tiene el "derecho de abortar". Ahora me reconozco como una hija de Dios, una nueva criatura en Cristo; He sido perdonada y redimida. Hoy, públicamente me arrepiento de haberme involucrado con el aborto. Humildemente pido perdón a los millones de mujeres y niños no nacidos que han experimentado la violencia del aborto. En este lugar de sanación, El Monumento Nacional de los no-nacidos, me uno a todos los que honran el valor de cada niño creado a la imagen y semejanza de Dios, y declaro que lucharé en el nombre de Jesús, hasta ver abolido este holocausto".

Should We Focus... Continued from page 1

a central role. Abortion, the direct killing of an innocent human being, is always gravely immoral (*The Gospel of Life*, no. 57); its victims are the most vulnerable and defenseless members of the human family. It is imperative that those who are called to serve the least among us give urgent attention and priority to this issue of justice.

"This focus and the Church's commitment to a consistent ethic of life complement one another. A consistent ethic of life, which explains the Church's teaching at the level of moral principle—far from diminishing concern for abortion and euthanasia or equating all issues touching on the dignity of human life—recognizes instead the distinctive character of each issue while giving each its proper place within a coherent moral vision" (USCCB, Pastoral Plan for Pro-life Activities, 2001).

Cardinal Joseph Bernardin is often invoked for his firm articulation of the consistent ethic of life. Yet he, too, make it clear that it is perfectly legitimate to focus on a particular issue, as long as the overall context is not lost or the linkage with other issues is not obscured. This aspect of the late Cardinal's teaching seems to be forgotten easily. A few excerpts of his actual words follow:

"A consistent ethic does not say everyone in the Church must do all things, but it does say that as individuals and groups pursue one issue, whether it is opposing abortion or capital punishment, the way we oppose one threat should be related to support for a systemic vision of life. It is not necessary or possible for every person to engage in each issue, but it is both possible and necessary for the Church as a whole to cultivate a conscious explicit connection among the several issues" (A Consistent Ethic of Life: Continuing the Dialogue, The William Wade Lecture Series, St. Louis University, March 11, 1984).

And on another occasion he asked, *"Does this mean that everyone must do everything? No! There are limits of time, energy and competency. There is a shape to every individual vocation. People must specialize, groups must focus their energies. The consistent ethic does not deny this. But it does say something to the Church: It calls us to a wider witness to life than we sometimes manifest in our separate activities"* (Address at Seattle University, March 2, 1986).

He also acknowledged on numerous occasions the primacy of the right to life, as the two following quotes make clear:

"The fundamental human right is to life—from the moment of conception until death. It is the source of all other rights, including the right to health care" (The Consistent Ethic of Life and Health Care Systems, Foster McGaw Triennial Conference, Loyola University of Chicago, May 8, 1985).

On Respect Life Sunday, 1 October 1989, Cardinal Bernardin issued a statement entitled "Deciding for Life," in which he said, *"Not all values, however, are of equal weight. Some are more fundamental than others. On this Respect Life Sunday, I wish to emphasize that no earthly value is more*

fundamental than human life itself. Human life is the condition for enjoying freedom and all other values. Consequently, if one must choose between protecting or serving lesser human values that depend upon life for their existence and life itself, human life must take precedence. Today the recognition of human life as a fundamental value is threatened. Nowhere is this clearer than in the case of elective abortion. At present in our country this procedure takes the lives of over 4,000 unborn children every day and over 1.5 million each year."

Therefore, as *Roe vs. Wade* observances occur this month, and as the message of life is proclaimed anew, let nobody hesitate to give to the abortion tragedy the "urgent attention and priority" (*US bishops*) that it deserves, and let nobody invoke Cardinal Bernardin as a reason for their hesitation.



The hand of an aborted baby found in a dumpster.

DO PEOPLE REALLY KNOW?

There are still some within the Church who claim that showing the graphic photos of abortion is not necessary because people "already know" what it looks like. The following email is typical of many we receive and shows that this isn't true. Visit www.priestsforlife.org/images and help many come to know the truth!

"Thank you. I can't stop crying and had to stop looking at your website. I have completely changed my views on abortion and now am against it. How is it that I, as a 30 year-old woman never knew what an abortion really looked like? Those innocent tiny bodies are ripped apart? We would be appalled if we treated animals like that but we do it to humans all the time? Why aren't high school boys and girls (if not younger) made to look at these pictures? I know I never saw them until I saw your website. – Kim"

Can you make a gift to enable us to send this newsletter to every priest in your diocese?

Call Jerry at (718) 980-4400