

PRIESTS FOR LIFE

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

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THE MISSION OF PRIESTS FOR LIFE

For the Service of the Clergy and Laity...

PriestsForLife.org
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SeminariansForLife.org

For the Healing of those Wounded by abortion...

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On December 12, 2005, Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Bishop John Yanta of Amarillo, TX signed the Constitutions of the Missionaries of the Gospel of Life, officially establishing this new Society that will train priests, deacons, and lay missionaries for the work of Priests for Life.

Quiz Yourself:

How Well Do You Know the IRS Regulations?

In which of the following examples does the minister or Church violate the IRS regulations for what clergy and Churches may or may not do politically?

Example 1: "Church R distributes a voter guide prior to elections. The voter guide consists of a brief statement from the candidates on each issue made in response to a questionnaire sent to all candidates for governor of State I. The issues on the questionnaire cover a wide variety of topics and were selected by Church R

based solely on their importance and interest to the electorate as a whole. Neither the questionnaire nor the voter guide, through their content or structure, indicate a bias or preference for any candidate or group of candidates."

Example 2: "Church P is located in the state capital. Minister G customarily acknowledges the presence of any public officials present during services. During the state gubernatorial race, Lieutenant Governor Y, a candidate, attended a Wednesday evening prayer service in the church. Minister G acknowledged the Lieutenant Governor's presence in his customary manner, saying, "We are happy to have worshiping with us this evening Lieutenant Governor Y." Minister G made no reference in his welcome to the Lieutenant Governor's candidacy or the election."

Example 3: "Minister A is the minister of Church J and is well known in the community. With their permission, Candidate T publishes a full-page ad in the local newspaper listing five prominent ministers who have personally endorsed Candidate T, including Minister A. Minister A is identified in the ad as the minister of Church J. The ad states, "Titles and affiliations of each individual are provided for identification purposes only." The ad is paid for by Candidate T's campaign committee."

(Answer and explanation found on page 2.)

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IRS Quiz

(Continued from page 1)

The answer to the IRS quiz on page one is that *in none of the examples* does the minister violate any IRS regulations. Each example describes a perfectly legitimate activity, within all the proper boundaries laid out for Churches and clergy by the IRS. As a matter of fact, the three examples we give are exact quotes from the guidelines of the IRS itself, in its publication “Tax Guide for Churches and Religious Organizations” (Publication 1828, Rev. 09-2003, posted at www.priestsforlife.org/elections/p1828.pdf). The publication offers these (and other) examples to illustrate what is permitted.

“May I say in the pulpit, ‘Elect pro-life candidates?’ Yes!”

Particular diocesan policies are, of course, often more restrictive than the IRS itself, and that is an area for dioceses – not us – to comment upon. Part of our work at Priests for Life, however, is to help clear up the widespread confusion that exists regarding *what the law actually allows and does not allow*.

One of the key distinctions to keep in mind is the difference between *issue advocacy* and *candidate advocacy*. Churches are always permitted to preach and teach about *the issues facing their people*, even if those issues happen to be issues that politicians are also debating. Indeed, if we don’t address the issues, we become irrelevant, and our people will go to other Churches that are talking about things they are dealing with each day, rather than telling them stories that have no concrete implications. Talking about the issues, and clarifying what is and is not in line with God’s Word, *is issue advocacy*.

On the other hand, *candidate advocacy* means directly or indirectly endorsing or opposing a specific candidate for elected office. Churches may not carry out or fund such activity. It means, for example, that I get into the pulpit and say “Vote for John Smith” or “Vote against Jim Smith.” It would also be candidate advocacy if, in the same talk, I say *both* “You should elect pro-life candidates” *and* “Candidate John Smith is pro-life and Jim Smith is pro-abortion.”

However, may I simply say in the pulpit, “You should elect pro-life candidates?” Yes, I *may* say that and I *should* say that, because that simply explains a moral imperative of self-governance, namely, that through our leaders and laws we protect the lives of our children.

That assertion leads us to another distinction: *partisan vs. non-partisan*. If I say in the pulpit, “Elect only Republicans,” I am being partisan, and the Church is not permitted to be partisan. However, to say “Elect pro-life candidates” is not partisan. There are pro-life and pro-abortion candidates in both major parties; moreover, both candidates and parties can change their positions. The essence of being *non-partisan* is not that we try to prevent our words from having any impact. The essence of being *non-partisan* is that *we don’t care* what political fallout our words may have; we care only about articulating the demands of the moral law.

Another important distinction to keep in mind is the difference between a priest speaking on behalf of his parish (or using its resources) and speaking as an individual citizen. As a private citizen, a priest may endorse a candidate, as the IRS makes clear in one of the examples quoted above. That endorsement, however,

can neither be made in the name of the parish, nor communicated through the resources of the parish (such as its pulpit, bulletin, mailings, etc.).

The bottom line is that we need to pay attention to IRS guidelines, but these guidelines are neither as complicated nor stringent as many attorneys cause us to believe. Confusion about these guidelines has reduced many pulpits to silence. Ironically, some are more afraid of displeasing the IRS than of displeasing God, who has commissioned us to preach truth and justice.

The fact is that no Church has ever lost its tax-exempt status for speaking up against abortion. No Church has ever lost its tax-exempt status for educating its parishioners about the positions of candidates in an election. No Church has ever lost its tax-exempt status for conducting non-partisan voter registration or get-out-the-vote drives. No Church has ever lost its tax-exempt status for clearly articulating the responsibility of government to protect life, and of citizens to advance the culture of life in the voting booth. No Church has ever lost its tax-exempt status for doing these things, nor will any Church lose it in the future as long as the First Amendment of the United States Constitution endures, and as long as we – who do not lose the benefits of citizenship because of our ministry – claim the freedoms of that Constitution and exercise them without fear.

Expose the Evil

Fr. Frank Pavone

I have spent more than half my life strategizing about how the people of God can most effectively fight and end abortion. There is no one line that summarizes my conclusions better than what St. Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:11, “*Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.*”

Evil flourishes when it is hidden; injustice festers when the victim is unseen. And history demonstrates that those who have overcome social injustices have followed Paul’s advice to expose the evil. For instance, those who fought the slave trade in Britain went to the ports to draw pictures of the boats and how the slaves were kept in them like sardines.

Exposing evil causes it to collapse under its own weight, as it confronts the light of human conscience. Overcoming injustice does not require that *everyone* believe it is injustice. There is, rather, a critical mass at some point in the spectrum, when “enough” people are so convinced. The good news is that those people already have the conscience to reject the evil. The problem is that the evil hasn’t been sufficiently exposed for them to see it.

(Continued on page 3)



Babies Sarah (l.) and Patrick (r.), aborted in the second trimester and retrieved from a dumpster in Chicago.

Expose the Evil

(Continued from page 2)

So it is with abortion. The more it is exposed, the more people reject it. Public opinion on abortion in America has been amazingly stable since *Roe vs. Wade*. The most significant shift occurred when the details of the partial-birth abortion procedure were exposed in the mid-nineties. Never did a larger audience see and hear in more detail what abortion actually is.

Abortion needs to be exposed in five distinct ways:

Statistics. Most Americans have no idea of the immense numbers of abortions, or that abortions occur throughout pregnancy. The abortion supporters themselves provide us the statistics. See the Alan Guttmacher Institute’s website, www.agi-usa.org. Just seeing these facts awakens many people that a change in abortion policy is necessary.

Descriptions. Medical textbooks like *Abortion Practice* use the word “decapitate” and “dismember” to describe what happens to the baby in abortion. Moreover, there are now more sworn court testimonies from practicing abortionists than ever before, on all different abortion procedures (see www.priestsforlife.org/pba). Again, the abortionists’ own words work against them! When we expose evil in this way, nobody can accuse us of making it up!

Photos. Show people what abortion looks like, and they will never feel the same about it again. See how the photos impact people by reading their testimonies at www.priestsforlife.org/resources/abortionimages/graphicspraise.htm.

Devastation to women, men, and families. More and more mothers, fathers, and families of aborted children speak out about how they have been devastated. The power of their testimony changes minds and hearts. (See www.SilentNoMoreAwareness.org/testmonies).

Corruption in the abortion industry. Read the book *Lime 5* (see page 4 to obtain it) and see how malpractice, fraud, and sexual abuse are rampant in legal abortion clinics. See www.ClinicWorker.com to learn of other abuses and violations.

The road to ending abortion is clearly open in front of us. Simply take the evidence above and put it before the conscience of everyone you can.

Politicians, Communion, and the Unborn

The debate about whether public officials and candidates who support legal abortion should be given Holy Communion will not go away any time soon. While it is not the role of Priests for Life to set policy about this in any particular diocese, we would like to offer the following consideration, which is a dimension of this discussion that is rarely brought forward.

Many debate this topic from the perspective of the politician’s “beliefs” or “moral convictions” about abortion, and how the Church should treat him or her in the light of those beliefs. But it

seems to us that the more relevant framework in which to consider one’s position on abortion *is not beliefs, but relationships*.

Our Lord teaches, “*Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to your brother; then come and offer your gift (Matthew 5:23-24).*”

To partake in the sacrifice of the altar, we must seek right relationships with God and all our neighbors. The altar is no place to bring hatred, unforgiveness, or prejudice. *Those who allow abortion are not reconciled with their unborn brothers and sisters.* To fail to see the equal dignity of children in the womb with children outside the womb is prejudice. To consider the unborn as “non-persons” and unworthy of Constitutional protection is an insult. And to consider one’s unborn brothers and sisters as “tissue” or “parasites” is name-calling of the worst kind.

Those who do this have to go first and be reconciled with their unborn brothers and sisters before they can present their gift at the altar.

Pope Benedict XVI, in his first encyclical, “God is Love,” states the following: “In sacramental communion I become one with the Lord, like all the other communicants. As Saint Paul says, “Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread” (1 Cor 10:17). Union with Christ is also union with all those to whom he gives himself. I cannot possess Christ just for myself; I can belong to him only in union with all those who have become, or who will become, his own... Here the usual contraposition between worship and ethics simply falls apart. “Worship” itself, Eucharistic communion, includes the reality both of being loved and of loving others in turn. A Eucharist which does not pass over into the concrete practice of love is intrinsically fragmented” (n. 14).

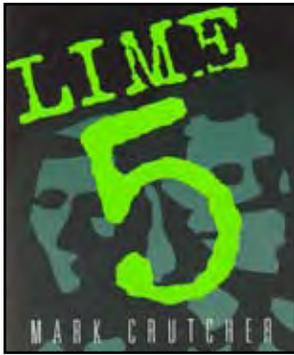
To be reconciled with our neighbors, furthermore, we have to respond appropriately to their needs. “How can God’s love survive in one who has enough of this world’s goods but turns his back on his brother when he sees him in need?” (1 Jn. 3:17) Is there anyone more in need than the child in the womb? Is there any need greater than to have one’s life saved from a lethal threat?

To be reconciled to our neighbors, we must avoid false witness. To hold, in word or action, that the unborn are of less value than the rest of us, is to “bear false witness against your neighbor.” If we are doing that, we are not ready to present our gift at the altar.

Communion means *union*, and union requires reconciliation. This applies to *every* citizen. How much more does it apply to those who, as public officials, have the opportunity to pass laws that either grant or remove protection from their most vulnerable neighbors?

“Those who allow abortion are not reconciled with their unborn brothers and sisters.”

OUR LATEST PRODUCTS



Lime 5, by Mark Crutcher (with contributions from Fr. Frank Pavone) exposes how legal abortion clinics exploit, injure, sexually abuse, and kill women. It shows how medical records are distorted on purpose, and also offers commonsense legislative proposals to begin correcting these abuses. One story is more horrifying than the next

– it is not pleasant reading, but necessary for the pro-life movement to know and spread.

ORDER FORM

Please mail your order to: Priests for Life PO. Box 141172, Staten Island, NY 10314 Or fax it to (718) 980-3900 or Email: orders@priestsforlife.org

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Senator Brownback Points out how Unsettled “Roe” is

On January 11, 2006, Senator Sam Brownback of Kansas said the following in his questioning of Judge Samuel Alito at his confirmation hearings. Senator Brownback’s words deliberately challenge those who so easily speak of “Roe vs. Wade” as “settled law,” and show that even pro-abortion legal experts have problems with it. (*Note: In January, Fr. Frank presented Senator Brownback with the Pro-life Recognition Award on behalf of the National Pro-life Religious Council, of which Fr. Frank serves as President.*)

Senator Brownback: “Roe v. Wade: you have had every question on that. But I want to point out its difficulty. My colleagues on the other side look at this as completely settled law, but let’s see what the legal experts say about how settled it is.”

“Lawrence Tribe, who will be here to testify, I believe probably against you, in a little bit. Let’s see what he says, professor of law at Harvard. Quote, ‘One of the most curious things about Roe is that behind its own verbal smokescreen, the substantive judgment on which it rests is nowhere to be found.’”

“Settled law? Super-duper precedents? Lawrence Tribe asked some questions about it.”

“Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg: ‘Roe, I believe, would have been more acceptable as a judicial decision if it had not gone beyond a ruling on the extreme statute before the court. Heavy-handed judicial intervention was difficult to justify and appears to have provoked, not resolved, conflict.’”

“Provoked, not resolved, conflict” one of your potential colleagues says.

“Edward Lazarus, former clerk to Chief Justice Harry Blackmun, who wrote Roe: ‘As a matter of constitutional interpretation and judicial method, Roe borders on the indefensible. I say this as someone utterly committed to the right to choose, as someone who believes such a right was granted elsewhere in the Constitution instead of where Roe placed it, and as someone who loved Roe’s author like a grandfather.’”

“Settled law? Edward Lazarus has some questions about it being settled.”

“Let’s look at John Hart Ely, former dean of Stanford Law School. Excellent law school in the country -- one of the top law schools in the country. Roe v. Wade, quote, ‘is not constitutional law and gives almost no sense of an obligation to try to be. What is frightening about Roe is that this superprotected right is not inferred from the language of the Constitution framers’ thinking respecting the specific problem at issue, any general value derivable from the provisions they included or the nation’s governmental structure.’”

“John Hart Ely -- think he thinks Roe is settled law? Not constitutional and gives no sense of an obligation to try to be.”

“Alan Dershowitz, professor of law, Harvard Law School, one of the top law schools in the country. It’s not Princeton, but -- Roe v. Wade and Bush v. Gore, quote, ‘represent opposite sides of the same currency of judicial activism in areas more appropriately left to the political process. Judges have no special competency, qualifications or mandate to decide between equally compelling moral claims, as in the abortion controversy. Clear governing constitutional principles are not present in either case.’”

“Settled law, super-duper precedents? I think there’s places where the court gets it wrong, and hopefully they will continue to be willing to revisit it.”

“Senator Brownback remains one of the pro-life movement’s strongest allies in the United States Senate.”

See commentary on Pope Benedict XVI’s first encyclical, *God is Love*, at www.priestsforlife.org.

Prayer Intentions

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

MARCH INTENTION:

For a proper and balanced understanding of the consistent ethic of life.

APRIL INTENTION:

That those seeking to adopt a child may have courage and success.