

PRIESTS FOR LIFE

Gospel of Life Ministries

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

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www.priestsforlife.org

Number 5

Friends, we are sending you this newsletter in "bulletin" format – somewhat shorter than usual, since we are allocating some of our newsletter budget to more electronic communications prior to the crucial November elections. Be sure you are signed up for our regular email to receive key updates! Request it at subscribe@priestsforlife.org or go to www.priestsforlife.org and sign up in the Email subscriptions box!



On June 27, Fr. Frank Pavone, along with Bishop John Quinn and hundreds of the faithful, buried seven aborted babies at Assumption Grotto in Detroit.

Time to elect pro-life candidates!

A Challenge to Politicians and Voters

Your one-stop website for Elections 2008 guidance is www.PoliticalResponsibility.com, a special site set up by Priests for Life with information on the Church's teaching on faithful citizenship, and concrete activities to implement.

You will find there the information about web-based teleconferences that we will conduct in preparation for the elections, and can sign up to be a participant. These conferences, to which you can listen

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Ending Abortion the Church's Way

Part 3: Prayer and Protest Do Mix!

by Fr. Frank Pavone

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (whose niece Alveda is a full-time Pastoral Associate of Priests for Life) spoke of a man who once said, "You Negroes should stop protesting and start praying." He responded as follows:

"The idea that man expects God to do everything leads inevitably to a callous misuse of prayer. For if God does everything, man then asks him for anything, and God becomes little more than a "cosmic bellhop." ... I am certain we need to pray for God's help and guidance in this integration struggle, but we are gravely misled if we think the struggle

will be won only by prayer. God, who gave us minds for thinking and bodies for working, would defeat his own purpose if he permitted us to obtain through prayer what may come through work and intelligence. Prayer is a marvelous and necessary supplement of our feeble efforts, but it is a dangerous substitute" (King 1963, p. 131-132).

We should never fall into the mistaken notion that prayer and protest don't mix, or that prayer and politics don't mix. No document of the Popes, the Bishops' Conference, or individual bishops suggests that because we believe in prayer, we should forsake all other action, nor that we should keep that action separate from prayer. In fact, the US Bishops' current Pastoral Plan for Pro-life Activities outlines prayer *as one of four key types of activity* which the Church must foster in defense of life. The others are public information/education, pastoral care, and influencing public policy. As Gandhi said, those who think religion has nothing to do with politics understand neither religion nor politics.

When we read the Gospels, we see Jesus not only praying privately, but also in front of the crowds. At the raising of Lazarus, Jesus prayed, "Father, I thank you that you have heard me. I knew that you always hear me, but I said this for the benefit of the people standing here, that they may believe that you sent me" (John 11:41-42). The Acts of the Apostles demonstrates a Church at prayer in public, confronting confusion, idolatry, and abuse of power.

The bishops' prayerful presence at the March for Life, and at abortion clinic vigils nationwide is an encouraging and instructive witness. Praying at an abortion clinic, or praying in front of the Supreme Court, is an expression of the fact that *union with God means opposition to evil*. God has something to say about public affairs, and about publicly advertised killing. Moreover, he is denied and ridiculed in public, just as he was at Calvary, and therefore he should be honored in public, including when we protest evil. Worship *inherently* is a stand against evil, and is also inherently public, because it is *the action of a community*. To publicly protest evil that is inherently contrary to worship is perfectly compatible with worship itself.

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

Time to Elect Pro-life Candidates!

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either by phone or over your computer (with links to follow during the call and download helpful documents), feature key leaders in the Church, the government, and the pro-life movement who will motivate and train you to live out your citizenship faithfully and effectively.

You will also find information on early voting. If your state allows this, please encourage people to vote *before Election Day (November 4)*. We also urge Churches to conduct get out the vote drives, helping people get to the polls, and to make sure the homebound fill out absentee ballots. Eucharistic ministers, when visiting the sick, can ask them if they will need one.

Churches are also free to inform their people, in a non-partisan way, of the positions of candidates on key issues. We find that this is the most frequently asked question that the laity have. It is a spiritual work of mercy to instruct those who lack information, and we therefore urge the distribution of non-partisan voter guides. Catholic Conferences and dioceses can create these within all the legal and ecclesiastical guidelines.

On our website, you will also find camera-ready bulletin inserts and homily hints for the weeks before the election.

In this election season, the James Madison Center for Free Speech (www.jamesmadisoncenter.org) and the Alliance Defense Fund (www.alliancedefensefund.org) will respond free of charge to inquiries by churches, pastors, and priests on permissible political activities. On our website, you will also see links to various legal guidance, including from the USCCB.

The advancement of the Culture of Life will be affected by this election. Let's work together to elect public servants who know the difference between serving the public and killing the public. After all, if a politician can't respect the life of a little baby, how will he or she respect yours?

On the sometimes contentious issue of distribution of political literature on Church parking lots, it has come to our attention that some citizens (who may not necessarily be Catholics) plan to vigorously defend their legal rights in this arena. We therefore strongly recommend that Churches not chase people off the Church parking lots, lest they invite legal entanglements which, no matter who is "right," can be lengthy and costly, not to mention the bad publicity. While the Internal Revenue Code prohibits Churches from activities and expenditures that distribute partisan election materials, the activity of an *outside group* or *private citizen* who does so is not an activity or expenditure of the Church.

Prayer Intentions

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

SEPTEMBER INTENTION:

For the continued growth of the Silent No More Awareness Campaign and Rachel's Vineyard.

OCTOBER INTENTION:

That voters may be active in the political process and elect pro-life candidates.

PRIESTS FOR LIFE IS SUPPORTED ONLY BY YOU!

Priests for Life is not subsidized by dioceses, the Bishops' Conference, or the Vatican. We rely completely on donations from individuals like you!

All contributions are tax-deductible, and may be designated for specific projects if you so choose.

You may donate at www.priestsforlife.org/donate. On that web page you will find several options:

1. Make a one-time donation by credit card, or by electronic charging of your checking or savings account.
2. Allow us to charge your credit card, checking, or savings account each month.
3. Sign up for monthly mailings that will remind you to send your donation.
4. Call us at 718-980-4400, ext. 232 to discuss other options, including remembering Priests for Life as a beneficiary when you do your financial planning.

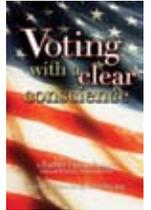
At any time, of course, you may write a check payable to "Priests for Life" and mail it to PO Box 141172, Staten Island, NY 10314.

Order form

Order at www.priestsforlife.org/store or mail your order to: Priests for Life, P.O. Box 141172, Staten Island, NY 10314; Or fax: (718) 980-3900; Or Email: orders@priestsforlife.org.

Voting with a Clear Conscience – Revised!

When you vote in this year's elections, do so with a clear conscience! This 47 page pocket size booklet will tell you how. This booklet meets all legal requirements for distribution by Churches and other 501 (c)(3) organizations. Available in a Catholic version and an Ecumenical version.



Send me Voting with a Clear Conscience Booklet(s) _____ Catholic (#1921) _____ Ecumenical (#2118) at \$2.00 each or \$1.75 each

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