



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 6

Many of you expressed a preference for our shorter "bulletin style" newsletter, so we are doing it that way again in this issue. We will alternate between the two formats as the needs require.



On July 12, 2008, Fr. Frank Pavone baptized two children, Shaelyn and Brandon, who were saved from abortion when sidewalk counselors intervened as the mothers approached the abortion facility

Vote for Life!

A Challenge to Politicians and Voters

"The inviolability of the person, which is a reflection of the absolute inviolability of God, finds its primary and fundamental expression in the inviolability of human life. Above all, the common outcry, which is justly made on behalf of human rights -- for example, the right to health, to home, to work, to family, to culture -- *is false and illusory* if the right to life, the most basic and fundamental right and the condition of all other personal rights, is not defended with maximum determination . . ." (John Paul II, *The Vocation and the Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and in the World*, n. 38)

"Adopting a consistent ethic of life, the Catholic Church promotes a broad spectrum of issues . . . Catholic public officials are obliged to address each of these issues as they seek to build consistent policies which promote respect for the human person at all stages of life. But being 'right' in such matters can never excuse a wrong choice regarding direct attacks on innocent human life. Indeed, the failure to protect and defend life in its most vulnerable stages *renders suspect* any claims to the 'rightness' of positions in other matters affecting the poorest and least powerful of the human community" (US Bishops, *Living the Gospel of Life*, 1998, n. 23).

Ending Abortion the Church's Way

Part 4: Bishops and the Movement

by Fr. Frank Pavone

While some pro-life organizations have tried to activate the Church for pro-life by criticizing the bishops, Priests for Life has instead promoted their teachings and documents, encouraged their initiatives, and served the clergy and laity of their dioceses through seminars, parish weekends, and materials provided without charge.

To work in harmony with the bishops, it is important to understand their role in relationship to the pro-life movement.

A careful reading of the bishops' own *Pastoral Plan for Pro-life Activities*, as well as of the many documents of the Magisterium about the structure of the Church, tells us that the bishops do not see themselves as sitting at some master control switchboard, creating strategy and projects for pro-life organizations. In fact, the pro-life committee of the US bishops' conference does not even see its role as giving "approbation" to pro-life groups. Rather, as confirmed by correspondence between the committee and Priests for Life, the committee sees its role as encouraging all those who are engaged in promoting the Gospel of Life. Catholics are to be in union with the teachings of their bishops. But they are responsible for implementing those teachings through their own new initiatives. Moreover, the pro-life movement reaches far beyond the Catholic Church.

Who, then, "directs" the pro-life movement?

The answer is that the movement is not a single entity that anyone directs; it is a *movement*, which gives rise to many entities. It starts in the depths of the human heart and soul, moved by the call of conscience. It begins to take shape around the kitchen table and the telephone, the email and the coffee shop. It coalesces into county groups and parish committees, pregnancy centers and lobbying efforts.

It is the role of bishops to herald the Gospel of Life by their preaching, teaching, and stirring into flame the gifts of God in the hearts of the laity. They are a sign of Christ among us, proclaiming reconciliation for all who have had abortions. They are good shepherds and servants of the People of Life.

And it is to that people that the movement belongs.

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

Calling All Heralds

“Deacons for Life”

by Deacon Neil Crispo, M.E.V.

On the day of ordination, these words pierce and penetrate the heart of every deacon as the bishop presents him with the book of the gospel.

Receive the book of the gospel whose herald you have become. Believe what you read. Teach what you believe. Practice what you teach.

Upon ordination the deacon is specifically constituted a sacred minister and member of the hierarchy of the church, configured to Christ the servant. As herald he is an official messenger who announces the “good news” of Jesus Christ through word, sacrament and charity.

Pope John Paul II begins his great encyclical *Evangelium Vitae* with: “*The Gospel of life is at the heart of Jesus’ message... it is to be preached with dauntless fidelity as “good news” to the people of every age and culture.*” (#1) The Holy Father makes it clear throughout this teaching that there is only *one* Gospel—“*the Gospel of God’s love for man, the Gospel of the dignity of the person and the Gospel of life are a single and indivisible Gospel.*” (#2) The Gospel of Jesus Christ is the Gospel of life! Every deacon, therefore, is called to believe, teach and practice the Gospel of life.

Indeed in this day of moral relativism, when there is no clear definition of right and wrong, when what was once a crime is now defended by the law as a “right” and when what should be the safest place the mother’s womb—is the deadliest place for a little human, more than ever there is an enormous need for such heralds. In fact, with the tentacles of the culture of death extending into every aspect of society (and alarmingly even infiltrating the church) what is required is a whole *army* of heralds!

As bleak as it all looks, we will not give in to despair. The Holy Spirit, leading the Church Militant, has been preparing an army of Permanent Deacons for over 40 years! Primed and standing by, we are a force of holy heralds— experienced husbands and fathers who have been called into service (diakonia) by the Supreme Commander. We have been formed, equipped, ordained and are waiting to be lead into battle! A regiment is already poised in dioceses across the country with

a vast supply of fresh troops in training. Pope John Paul gives us the mission: *we must build a new culture of life.* These are our orders: *a general mobilization of consciences and a united ethical effort to activate a great campaign in support of life.* (#95 EV) Pope Benedict gives us the starting point for the mission: God is Love.

I invite all Permanent Deacons to mobilize as heralds of the Gospel of Life in this great Campaign for Life! *Believe what you read, teach what you believe, and practice what you teach.* For further instruction visit the command post: www.deaconsforlife.org.

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.

Pro-life Spirituality and Activism: A Training Seminar (9 CD Set)

Fr. Pavone has trained pro-life leaders across the Country. Now you too can benefit from his seminars.

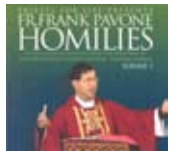


2009 Priests for Life Wall Calendar

Share in the joy of the work of Priests for Life with this monthly reminder.

Fr. Frank’s Homilies from the EWTN Live Televised Mass (Available on four CD’s)

Fr. Pavone will inspire you with these homilies aired on EWTN.



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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.