



March / April
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Footprints

The Official Newsletter of Notre Dame Right to Life

April: A Pro-Life Rollercoaster

► Pro-lifers win in court, lose abroad as students host political speakers

By Tim Wymore

Between politically pro-life speakers on campus and important votes on life issues in both Congress and the Supreme Court, April was an extraordinary month for the pro-life movement, for better and for worse.

Ramesh Ponnuru and Daniel McConchie both came to Notre Dame to speak on pro-life politics. Thanks to Notre Dame Law School's student pro-life group, Jus Vitae, Ponnuru visited campus on April 12 to speak on "A Democratic Congress and the Future of Life Issues in America." The senior editor of the conservative political magazine *National Review* recalled how the Democratic Party was once the more pro-life party. During the 1970's the party leadership embraced social liberals, however, and as long as the percentage of Americans identifying themselves as pro-choice steadily increased (until the mid-Nineties) the pro-abortion strategy appeared to be the advantageous one.

No longer. Ponnuru – also the author of the case against the pro-choice establishment, *The Party of*

Death – pointed out that votes to restrict access to abortion are no longer seen as politically dangerous, since most Americans disapprove of most abortions. Finally, he applauded the incremental but effective legislation which states have passed to reduce the abortion rate, which continues to decline.

Just a few days later, as part of



The Supreme Court recently upheld the Partial Birth Abortion Ban

Notre Dame Right to Life's Collegiate Conference, Daniel McConchie gave a lecture on "The Day After *Roe*." Of all the many outstanding pro-life talks given the weekend of April 13-14, his dealt primarily with abortion politics, both past and present. Following a detailed history of the history of the

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From the President...

At last we have come to the end of other year...another year that has been phenomenally successful! It would take me more than the small space allotted me in this newsletter to sing the praises of everyone's hard work! This year we have been successful in living up to all points of our mission: education, prayer, service, and community. While most of our most glowing achievements have been praised in other articles, I'd like to point out some of our unsung heroes:

Jessica Hagemann and the Pregnancy Resource committee – they successfully organized several nights of free babysitting for the married graduate students at University Village. Because of their help, the grad students were able to begin Theology of the Body sessions which, as the report has it, 30 couples were able to attend.

Danielle Thompson, Club Liaison and I helped negotiate the co-sponsorship of a couple events with several other student organizations. Such events help raise the profile of Right to Life on campus while ensuring that these events fall within our mission and the Catholic tradition of our University.

David Varga and Rebecca Jakubisin, our Campus Outreach Commissioners successfully organized Theology of the Body discussion dinners every week this semester. These dinners allowed

students to come together, and share a meal and fellowship.



I'd also like to congratulate all the graduating seniors in the club, particularly our co-vice presidents Jessica Pryor and John Sikorski (who will return as a grad student), March for Life Commissioner Monica Querciagrossa, Legislative Commissioner Tim Wymore, Project Mom Commissioner Julia Jenkins, Prolife Presentation Commissioner Melissa Ryan, and Club Liaison Danielle Thompson (who will be returning to intern with Campus Ministry!). You all have been amazing and on behalf of the club, I wish you all the best!

Lastly, I'd like to thank all of our donors who have made the events of this year possible. Without your help many of the events would not be able to happen as they do.

Looking forward to the fall, I can't wait to begin another year with Right to Life! We have an amazing leadership team that is already stepping up to the task, and already proving that next year will be even better!

May you all have a wonderful, relaxing summer, and may God be with always.

Mary Liz Walter



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Cont: Pro-life Political Update

Supreme Court's abortion decisions, he discussed the need for more strict interpreters of the Constitution on the Supreme Court, and how most states would still permit abortion even if *Roe v. Wade* were overturned. He was hopeful, but not sure, that the Supreme Court would uphold the federal ban on partial-birth abortion.

These hopes were realized on April 18 when the highest court in the land issued its ruling that upheld the constitutionality of the ban on a class of particularly grisly late-term abortions that border on infanticide. The 5-4 decision, authored by Justice Kennedy, ruled that the prohibition of partial-birth killing of children does not pose an undue burden to women seeking abortion. The state maintains an interest in protecting life where the undue burden standard does not apply and, more particularly, in drawing a bright line between abortion and infanticide.

The ruling marks the first time a prohibition of a whole class of abortion has been upheld. Though the ban could save as many as several thousand lives, since that is the estimated number of partial-birth abortions performed annually in the United States, many of these young lives may be lost to other methods of abortion. Still, the federal law will make the crucial difference for life in the decisions of many mothers. And with the

ruling referring to "killing," the "baby," and the regret of the mother who undergoes a euphemized abortion, the legal establishment itself may even set a precedent for thinking truthfully about the real interests of mother and child. While the number of lives saved today is relatively small, the ruling may well prove far more valuable for its willingness to view abortion as something harmful. If future justices consider it harmful, they will probably be amenable to poking more substantial holes in the so-called right to abortion.

While the extremely weak protections of life in the womb have thus been strengthened somewhat in the United States, the heretofore strong protections of two traditionally Catholic countries disintegrated over the course of a few weeks last month. On April 10, the president of Portugal signed into law a statute allowing abortion on demand up to the tenth week of pregnancy. Now in Europe only two large European nations maintain substantial legal protections of life, Ireland and Poland, and pro-life Polish politicians recently lost a battle to enshrine the right to life in their constitution.

Even more damaging to the cause of life was Mexico City's legislators' overwhelming vote two weeks later to legalize abortion on demand in the first three months of pregnancy. Women from throughout Mexico will now be able to travel to

the capital city to obtain their abortions. Fr. Thomas Euteneuer, the founder of Human Life International and another speaker at the recent Collegiate Conference, predicted during his lecture that many other Latin-American countries would follow Mexico's lead if and when it loosened its protections. Hopefully he will be proven wrong. As a deputy of Mexico's National Action Party said so well, "A country that accepts abortion is not teaching its people how to love. It is teaching its citizens how to use violence to obtain what they want."

American law, while shifting ever so slightly to the pro-life side, nevertheless threatens to open itself to a wide variety of new kinds of violence against life. Destructive embryonic stem cell research has again been passed by the House and now the Senate; while President Bush will be able to veto it, it is only the stroke of a pen that stands between the life and death of these youngest among us. Meanwhile, new threats arise in the form of health care rationing; many typically pro-life politicians have failed to understand that the regulated distribution of health care often results in the withholding of the best life-saving drugs.

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RTL Co-sponsors Forty Hours Devotion

► Initiated by St. Philip Neri, devotion comes to Morrissey's Little Flower Chapel

By Will Erickson

As campus prepared this April to honor Our Lord in its third annual Eucharistic Procession, several students also began working hard to provide the faithful on campus with the best way of preparing for the grand day—that is, by a Forty Hours Devotion.

Initiated in Rome by St. Philip Neri, and championed in America three centuries later by the tireless St. John

Neumann, the Forty Hours is a much beloved devotion to the Blessed Sacrament. Our Lord, in the Eucharist, remains exposed in the monstrance for forty consecutive hours for us to visit, praise, beseech, and adore. This year's Devotion, the first of many more to come, was largely planned and organized by the men of Morrissey Manor and their rector Fr. Ron Vierling, and took place in Morrissey's own Little Flower Chapel. Right to Life happily co-sponsored the Forty Hours, which ran from Friday



Morrissey Manor's Little Flower Chapel

night until the morning of the Sunday of the Procession, April 22. In addition to sponsoring one of the bouquets surrounding the altar of exposition, Right to Life members also congregated in front of their Lord on Friday night to pray the Sorrowful Mysteries for an end to abortion.

It is interesting to remember the circumstances under which the two

Saints mentioned above were called to single-handedly bring the Forty Hours Devotion to their flocks. Both men felt that the time was ripe for the Devotion, despite—or perhaps *because of*—a virulent

hostility toward the Faith in their dioceses. The Rome of St. Philip Neri's day was plagued by complacency, the Reformation, the recent sacking at the hands of Charles V, and worst of all, corruption within the hierarchy of the Church herself. As for mid-19th century America, particularly St. John Neumann's diocese of Philadelphia, anti-Catholic sentiment was so prevalent and heated that parish windows were frequently pelted with rocks during Mass, and churches were burned to

the ground overnight (mostly thanks to the Masonic members of the Know-Nothing Party). Understandably, Bishop Neumann feared that forty hours of exposition might simply be an invitation for the mobs to desecrate the Blessed Sacrament. But many hours of prayer and one small miracle later, the zealous Bishop was reassured that the Forty Hours was indeed Our Lord's Will and that He would not allow His Body to be profaned. So despite continued opposition, even from among his own clergy, Bishop Neumann pressed ahead, organizing and presiding over the Devotion all throughout the parishes in his diocese. The faithful flocked to adore their Lord, the threat of desecration passed without fulfillment, and a year after the establishment of the Forty Hours, oddly enough (but not really), the Know-Nothing Party collapsed in the north.

We look around today and see that things aren't that different. All around us, Our Lord and His Church are derided, abortion is legal and looked upon as a cherished right, and human life is desecrated without a second thought. Just as St. Philip's and St. John's times cried desperately for renewed devotion to the Most Blessed Sacrament, so too does our day and age.



Committee Update: Pro-Life Presentations

▶ Presentations focus on abortion issue; also addresses other life issues

Greetings from the Pro-Life Presentation Committee! Formerly the “Abortion Presentation Committee,” we instituted a name change and now include other important life issues in our presentations, which are geared toward middle school and high school youth.

We spent last semester and a good part of this one creating a presentation about abortion, stem cell research, and end-of life issues, such as euthanasia and assisted suicide. We then gave presentations at the annual Right to Life youth rally and at a meeting of the Kosciusko County Teens for Life group in Warsaw, Indiana.

Our presentation begins with an introduction to fetal development and necessary biological foundations. We then describe various early- and late-term abortion procedures, including abortifacients such as the birth control pill. After describing what abortion does to the unborn baby, we discuss the risks and negative effects of abortion on the mothers, both physical and psychological. We then consider the larger societal effects of abortion, such as the

dramatic increase in child abuse in the wake of its legalization, and the extent of abortion, using statistics about its prevalence and revealing it

“...we emphasize that the pro-life position is rooted in the supreme and immutable dignity and value of the human person...”

as the number one cause of death in America, killing more than heart disease and cancer combined. We tell the story of its legalization and then give some common pro-choice

approximately one-hour presentation, but believing in the importance of education about other life issues, we manage to squeeze them in! Basic information is given regarding end-of-life issues and stem cell research, and common pro-death arguments are presented and dispelled. In a rather dramatic claim for a pro-life group, we assert that we are NOT against stem cell research – only that which destroys human life. We describe the many cures provided by adult stem cells and contrast these with the complete lack of cures and utter laboratory failure of embryonic stem cells.

Discussing each of these issues, we emphasize that the pro-life position is rooted in the supreme and immutable dignity and value of the human person, regardless of stage or condition of life. Desiring to spread this message and educate young people about life issues, the major goal for the committee in the

coming year is to give more presentations, as many as the schedules of committee members will permit!



The Pro-Life Presentation Team

arguments and rebuttals in a kind of introduction to pro-life philosophy and the abortion debate.

The discussion of abortion comprises most of our



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Lecture Review: Katrina Zeno Inspiring

► “Theology of the Body” expert delivers excellent talk at Conference

By Will Erickson

We can never properly respect human life without first recognizing the *true* nature of the human body and its exalted role in God’s plan. Living in a culture loath to view the body as anything but a mundane composite of chemicals, *we* know we can look to our Mother and Teacher the Church in order to find the one true meaning behind the human body, at every stage of life. Decades ago now, while the culture of death was beginning a growth spurt of its own, none other than Pope John Paul II fought to counter its lies with the eternal Truth as taught by the Church; this is the message that was brought to life so wonderfully during the conference by Catholic spokeswoman extraordinaire, Katrina Zeno.

A mother, speaker, EWTN personality, author, and prolific freelance writer with a degree in theology from Franciscan University of Steubenville, Katrina provided conference attendees with a lively explanation of Pope John Paul’s insights in her talk entitled “Theology of the Body and *Evangelium Vitae*.” Animating her message with PowerPoint, personality, and even some choice props, she continually insisted upon the core of the Church’s teaching on the human body; namely, that *the*

body reveals God.

Katrina first broke down Pope John Paul’s “Theology of the Body” , starting as the Pope did with the words of Our Lord concerning marriage. She then guided her audience through the Pope’s explanation of humanity as male and female, from the innocence and selflessness before the Fall, to the lust and selfishness introduced by original sin, and finally to the end of time when our human bodies will be resurrected and glorified. Throughout this progression, she especially highlighted the goodness of the body, its purpose and our obligation to fulfill that purpose, our roles as men and women created in God’s image, and the importance of human relationships.

Best encapsulating this truth of the human person was Katrina’s four-part summary, the catch phrase of the night, complete with accompanying hand motions (which, according to undercover *Footprints* reporters, several Right to Lifers have purportedly since been seen using as some sort of secret handshake): that is, that God created man and woman from ...

- *one* nature
- embodied in *two* ways

- for the sake of *unity*
- through the sincere *gift of self*.

This gift of self—the highest call for all of us, present in every true vocation—was Katrina’s chief

message throughout the evening, one which she repeated often. (“...Man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself *except through a sincere gift of himself.*” *Gaudium et Spes*, n.24 c)

Finally, covering encyclicals such as *Evangelium Vitae* and *Redemptor Hominis*, Katrina summarized Pope John Paul’s diagnoses of this culture’s malaise and reiterated his exhortations to stand up for God, for His Church, for chastity, and for human life.

The conference crowd was visibly both entertained by Katrina’s talk, and it’s no surprise; it was a wonderful conclusion to the opening day of the conference, a passionate and comprehensive summary of Pope John Paul’s vast legacy in all matters pro-life. . Her personality and unabashed love for the Church were certainly welcome at this year’s Collegiate Conference.



Katrina Zeno:
Collegiate Conference
Lecturer

On-Campus Youth Rally a Success

► Event at Stepan Center attracts “the future” of pro-life movement

On March 4, 2007 we held our 3rd annual youth rally.

Drawing more people than last year, it boasted speakers from Rock for Life (Erik Whittington, Phil Eddy and Joey Kerlin), and Annie Casselman of Generations for Life in Chicago. The day started with games that, among other things, had the teens running around Stepan Center and attempting to sit down while other teens tried to keep them up.

The rally was baseball themed and aptly named “Step Up to the Plate”; its message for the youth was to not fear stepping up to the

immortality and culture of death and proclaim the dignity of life and of the body—to be John Paul II’s great hope for the new evangelization.

There were two parts to the day—chastity and pro-life issues—and students from the club presented for both parts. Rally day concluded with Mass in Zahm Hall, with music by the 4:7 band and a pro-life

rosary. It was a successful rally and will hopefully only grow and attract more youth in the coming years.



Annie Casselman with Youth Rally attendees

Collegiate Conference an Overwhelming Success

► 2nd annual event hosts nationally acclaimed speakers

By John Sikorski

On April 13-14, Right to Life hosted the 2nd annual Collegiate Conference. The conference brought together students from Notre Dame, as well as from five other universities and colleges from across the Midwest. This year’s theme was the second chapter of *Evangelium Vitae*, “I came that they might have life.”

Nationally acclaimed speakers participated in the event, and shared their insights on topics ranging from Pope John Paul II’s

Theology of the Body, to a history of the euthanasia movement. The event was a great success, and for its efforts, Notre Dame Right to Life was awarded the “Special Interest Division Club Program of the Year” award from the Notre Dame Student Activities Office.

Rev. Tom Euteneuer (a ND alumnus) and president of Human Life International opened the conference with an informative and encouraging lecture on the Catholic Church’s teaching on contraception, and helped remind participants of

the spiritual battle between the culture of life and the culture of death.

Katrina Zeno spoke over dinner in North Dining Hall on John Paul II’s revolutionary teachings in the *Theology of the Body*, and its relation to the Gospel of Life. In particular, she showed how John Paul II’s theological anthropology based on the call to communion with God is the basis for developing an

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Our Mission Statement:

The Notre Dame Right to Life's mission is to promote and uphold the sanctity of all human life from conception to natural death through education, service, and prayer, according to the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church.

Education: We are primarily called to instruct and communicate the pro-life message on the campus of Notre Dame. Our secondary mission is to proclaim the Gospel of Life beyond the campus of Notre Dame, by means of outreach, sponsoring educational events, and by example.,

Service: Charity calls us to reach out and support our peers, especially those women who find themselves in crisis pregnancies. We will work to service the needs of ND students in this manner.

Prayer: We will hold steadfast to prayer, the most powerful means of bringing about change.

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Cont: Conference

adequate understanding of the human vocation.

Saturday morning began with Holy Mass celebrated by Fr. Alfred Wierzbicki, a special guest to campus, and director of the John Paul II Institute at the Catholic University of Lublin, Poland. He gave a beautiful homily in the spirit of John Paul II, and preached about seeing God at work in the beauty of all of creation.

The day's lectures began with Dr. Jose Bufill, an oncologist working in South Bend, IN. He gave a historical overview of the philosophical and cultural undercurrents that led to the development of the euthanasia movement.

The day continued with lectures by Kristan Hawkins, Daniel McConchie, and Deirdre McQuade. Ms. Hawkins, a representative of Students for Life of America, gave many practical points for helping maintain pro-life clubs at the collegiate level. Mr. McConchie, from Americans United for Life, spoke on abortion law on America,

which coincided well with the recent Supreme Court decision to uphold the Partial Birth Abortion Ban. The evening's lectures closed with Deirdre McQuade, Spokeswoman and Director of Planning and Information for the Pro-Life Secretariat of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. She spoke of the beauty of living a Catholic, pro-life

vocation, which is marked by joy and love.

The conference ended with a special event, a screening of the movie "Bella," which will be released in theaters in

August 2007. The movie is a beautiful and very artistic film about the beauty of choosing life. Notre Dame Right to Life is grateful for this opportunity to preview the film, and highly recommends that all who are pro-life see and promote the movie.

We are grateful to all of our benefactors and supporters for helping us to host this conference. As one of the nation's largest collegiate pro-life clubs, we are called in a particular way to help our brothers and sisters in other universities develop their own pro-life activities, so that we might all contribute to the building of a civilization of life and love.



Fr. Tom Eutenuer lectures at Conference