

Footprints

The official newsletter of *Notre Dame Right to Life*

Fall 2008

Dear Friends of Notre Dame Right to Life,

It is exciting to have this opportunity to tell you of the work and successes, big and small, of Right to Life in this first quarter of the 2008-2009 academic year. This year has brought to Right to Life both new and old faces, events, and commissions. After a summer of intense planning, RTL started the year with a smashing Kick-Off Barbeque, held Sunday, September 6th, on Bond Quad behind Badin Hall. With more than 100 attendees, the inaugural hosting of this event was undeniably a success.

Another new and successful RTL initiative soon followed as Emily Toates, RTL vice-president, collaborated with St. Joe County Right to Life to host a weekend training on crisis pregnancy sidewalk counseling. With the presence of a 40 Days for Life Campaign vigil at the local Women's Pavilion (South Bend's abortion clinic), Notre Dame was invited to be present at the vigil's daily 4-5 PM "college hour." In addition to this, many members of RTL and the broader ND community have signed up for daily or weekly timeslots outside of the daily college hour. Since the campaign's September 24th launching, ND-RTL has had consistent daily participation in the vigil.

Working closely with Ann Firth, Associate Vice President of Notre Dame's Office of Student Affairs, the Motherhood Resource Commission has seen two seemingly small, but very important feats for RTL. The first is the addition of a session on the University's policies and resources for student pregnancy to the annual Resident's Assistant training program in August.

The second is the recent publishing of posters announcing the University's policy on student pregnancy and the available pregnancy resources on- and off-campus. The flyers will hang permanently in all 28 University dormitories. Currently this commission is working to extend this project by designing and publishing postcard-size editions of this information to be sent each University student. We hope to report to you of its success in the next Footprints!

An annual occurrence, Respect Life Week (October 5th-11th) was an exciting, and busy, week of successful and well-attended RTL events. Despite the bane of midterms and a few technical difficulties, commissioner John Gerardi did a wonderful job in organizing this Week. Keeping in mind the election season, this Week had an underlying focus on the importance of the life issues in this upcoming election. Please see J. Gerardi's coverage of these events for a more detailed account.

With November 4th fast approaching, the 2008 election has been a priority of ND-RTL. Though a non-partisan group, RTL is acutely aware of the implications this election will have for our nation and its future. In addition to the election-related Respect Life Week events, legislative commissioner Christine Romero has guided RTL efforts to encourage campus voters to support pro-life politics in their voting. These efforts have included: making Catholic, pro-life voter guides available on campus, producing a poster campaign publicizing each presidential candidate's position on key life issues, hosting a roundtable discussion on Catholic voting, and cosponsoring a panel of professor and community leaders discussing the role life issues should have in this election.

Looking forward to the rest of this semester and year, though we anticipate meeting internal and external difficulties and bumps in the road, with hard work, lots of prayers, and the knowledge of support such as yours, our efforts to promote the Culture of Life will continue. Currently, our plans include November meetings, March for Life signups, and a December "Dance for Life" to raise money for local unwed mothers.

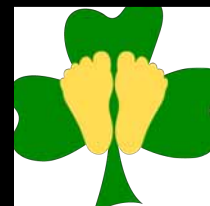
Thank you so much for your continued prayers for and dedication to Notre Dame Right to Life. We are gratefully blessed to have your support to strengthen the work that we do, even the smallest support from you is so great in our eyes! May God bless you, always!

In Notre Dame,
Mary K. Daly, '10, President 2008-2009

Mission Statement: We seek to promote and uphold the sanctity of all human life from conception until natural death through prayer, service, and education, and to help women in crisis pregnancies find alternatives to abortion through service and support, in the spirit of the Catholic Church.

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From the Commissioners...

March for Life *Steve Govea*

The March for Life is an annual event held on the anniversary of *Roe vs. Wade*, the Supreme Court case that legalized abortion in the United States. Every year members of Notre Dame Right to Life journey to our nation's capitol to stand as one with tens of thousands of other pro-life people from across the country as a public witness to the sanctity of human life. In January of 2009 we will once again make the trek to Washington D.C. to take part in this event. We are offering two different options for the trip to fit with our busy schedules here at the University of Notre Dame. One trip includes an extra day in the D.C. area to participate in pre-March events like a vigil Mass at the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception. The second trip will travel overnight to reach D.C. in time for the March and return immediately afterwards for those who want to minimize the time away from class while still going on the March. It should once again be a great trip for our club, a chance for us to show the pro-life community that Notre Dame cares for and respects the dignity of human life at all stages.

Legislative *Christine Romero*

The legislative committee has been hard at work this semester in light of the upcoming elections. Our biggest priority has been to educate Notre Dame's campus on the issues presented in the upcoming elections. Right now, we are preparing to implement a poster campaign detailing Barack Obama and John McCain's positions on life issues, and also encouraging people to vote pro-life in elections of all offices on November 4. These elections are very important, and life issues should take precedence in forming our voter consciences. Especially important is the election of the President; the consequences could be dire in the United States for the unborn if the wrong person is elected. The following policy issues are telling of the presidential candidates' stances, some of which are detailed on our newly created posters: the Hyde Amendment, which would prevent taxpayer funding of abortion, the ban on partial birth abortion, and especially the Freedom of

Choice Act, which would virtually eliminate all restrictions on abortion now in place, such as mandatory waiting periods and parental consent laws. Other important issues are judicial appointments and embryonic stem cell research.

In addition to the poster campaign, the legislative commission advocates events on campus where life issues in voting are discussed. For example, NDVotes '08, a non-partisan voter education and registration campaign run by the Center for Social Concerns, has been holding panel discussions throughout the semester on various issues, and on October 13, they held a panel discussion on life issues with a focus on abortion. Professors Mary Keys and Paolo Carozza participated as panelists, as well as Notre Dame Right to Life's Christine Romero and Indiana Right to Life's Michael Parkinson. Professor Keys spoke on the importance of putting life issues first in voting. Professor Carozza talked about securing the right to life before securing any other human rights. Christine Romero outlined the details on Obama and McCain's records and platforms on life issues, and Michael Parkinson focused on the history of abortion and political philosophy in the United States.



Professor Mary Keys participates in an abortion-centered NDVotes '08 panel discussion.

We have a duty to the unborn and to God to vote in accordance with pro-life policy. Not only this, however; we should also do all we can to be active in informing our friends, neighbors, and especially our family on the issues and candidate platforms. Please stay updated and involved in the politics of the pro-life movement, as they are essential to changing the way life is valued in the United States.



Collegiate Conference

Holly Klejeski

Right to Life's Collegiate Conference will be held on March 27-28, 2009 at Notre Dame. This year's theme is Chapter IV of John Paul II's encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*: "You Did It Unto Me". Past Conferences have featured well-known speakers such as Alice Von Hildebrand, Fr. Tom Euteneuer, and Bobby Schindler. This year's Conference will continue our tradition of great speakers and dialogue about the different issues surrounding the prolife movement. Speakers will include Dr. Francis Beckwith, professor of philosophy at Baylor University and 2008-09 Visiting Fellow with Notre Dame's Center for Ethics and Culture. Dr. Beckwith is the author of several books, including *Defending Life: A Moral and Legal Case Against Abortion Choice*. Also speaking will be ND Law School graduate Chris Godfrey, the founder and president of Life Athletes, Inc.

In past years, students and faculty from Notre Dame and colleges across the country have joined us for the Collegiate Conference, and we're hoping that this year's will be the most successful yet. Registration for the Conference will open later in the semester, and this year we will be making special effort to reach out to the entire University community (including faculty and administrators), and also to prolife student groups from different universities. Be sure to check the Right to Life website for more information as the Conference approaches!

Sidewalk Counselor Training

Emily Toates, VP

I had the incredible opportunity this summer to work as a sidewalk counselor for the Prolife Committee of North Texas. While it was definitely the most spiritually challenging job I have ever done, it was also the most rewarding. I went into this job to save the babies. But what struck me the most out there was the tragedy abortion is for a woman. No woman going in for an abortion told me that she wanted this abortion because it is her choice; rather they said they had no choice. It's ironic that women feel that the "pro-choice" movement has effectively removed their choice.

While working on the sidewalk one

day, I began talking to Maria Graham, a friend and long-time counselor, about the possibility of starting sidewalk counseling in the South Bend area. Maria is a social worker in Dallas and a graduate of Franciscan University Steubenville where she organized their sidewalk counseling ministry. She has conducted sidewalk counselor trainings throughout the country and even in Mexico. She immediately began contacting South Bend groups and bought herself a plane ticket for the weekend of September 20th.

We are going to be using the Msgr. Reilly Method which is a prayerful and prayerful approach that focuses on saving the soul of the mother rather than just focusing on the child (www.helpersbrooklynny.org). St. Joseph County Right to Life graciously agreed to host the training session which was attended by both Notre Dame students and local community members. Eighteen new counselors were trained at the session and are looking forward to getting counselors out on the sidewalk in full force once the 40 Days ends.

For more information on sidewalk counseling please contact Emily Toates, etoates@nd.edu



Maria Graham and Emily Toates act out a typical sidewalk counseling scenario during the training.

40 Days for Life

Emily Toates, VP

The 40 Days for Life campaign is a national campaign being held in 179 cities in 47 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, American Samoa and two Canadian provinces this fall. The 40 Days consists of 40 Days of prayer and fasting, constant vigil outside of a local abortion mill and community outreach. Notre Dame Right to Life has had the opportunity to participate in the local 40 Days campaign along with members of the South Bend community. More than 20 Notre Dame students,

many new members of Right to Life, have been regular participants in the vigil providing coverage outside the clinic from 4-5 pm six days a week. For more information on the 40 Days for Life campaign, please visit their website www.40daysforlife.com.

Professor Snead on Abortion

Nathan Loyd

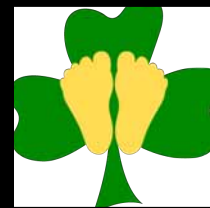


Professor Snead speaks to a packed auditorium.

On Wednesday, October 8, 2008 Professor Carter Snead of the University of Notre Dame Law School gave a presentation on the legal history abortion. Professor Snead has held many prestigious positions, including time serving the President's Council on Bioethics. Beginning with *Roe v. Wade* and ending with *Gonzales v. Carhart*, Professor Snead eloquently and thoroughly outlined how abortion became legal in the United States.

Students filled the auditorium where Prof. Snead was speaking and began to overflow into the hallways. Professor Snead's presentation was objective and factual, and the details presented by him are at the same time necessary and frequently forgotten in the abortion debate.

The presentation began with an understanding of the court case most commonly cited in the debate: *Roe v. Wade*. In this case, Professor Snead explained, the framework was established for striking down all abortion regulations established by the states, namely requiring an exception for the health of the mother. A case decided on the same day, *Doe v. Bolton*, established the requirements for the mother's health restriction. Through Prof. Snead's description of the case, it became apparent that proponents of both sides of the debate do not clearly understand why abortion is legal in the United States.



Respect Life Week 2008

John Gerardi

Notre Dame Right to Life hosted and sponsored a series of events for this year's Respect Life Week, October 6-October 12. Our mission as a club was to spread awareness of the teachings of the Catholic Church on pro-life issues, particularly in light of the upcoming November elections, and to educate our members and the student body as a whole.

On Monday, October 6, the week began with a student discussion on Catholic involvement led by Political Science professor Mary Keys. The students read two documents issued by then-Cardinal Ratzinger regarding Catholic political involvement; the discussion centered on identifying those issues that were most important for Catholic voters, among them the defense of human life, as well as the reasons why these issues are so central.

On Tuesday, October 7, we set up our Cemetery of the Innocents, comprised of six hundred white crosses planted into the area near the flag pole on South Quad. The six hundred crosses represent the number of abortions that take place in the United States during the course of an average football game. Right to Life also sponsored two Rosaries, a Divine Mercy chaplet, and a Mass in the Morrissey Hall chapel on this day.



A chilling view of the Cemetery of the Innocents as seen from Western South Quad.

At noon on Wednesday, October 8, Law Prof. Carter Snead gave a talk on abortion jurisprudence at the Law School, an event that was jointly sponsored by Right to Life and Jus Vitae, ND Law School's pro-life group. Later on in the evening, the Center for Ethics and Culture sponsored a debate between ND Law Professor Vincent Rougea of Barack Obama's National Catholic Advisory Council Steering Committee and ND Law Professor Gerard Bradley of Catholics for McCain National Steering Committee. The event was moderated by Prof. John McGreevy, Dean of Arts and Letters; the two professors debated which candidate was the more acceptable Catholic option.



Right to Lifers close Respect Life Week with a special Mass at the Basilica.

On Friday, October 10, after a Mass in the Basilica sponsored by ND RTL and offered by Fr. Kevin Rousseau, CSC, ND Right to Life hosted a talk by Philosophy Professor Adrian Reimers on the topic of Paul VI encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. Professor Reimers discussed the call of John Paul II to build up the "civilization of love" in society, and explained how contraception is so opposed to this endeavor due to how it works against the love that is at the heart of marriage and the family.

On Saturday and Sunday, Notre Dame Right to Life ended the week by distributing thousands of pro-life prayer cards to be passed out to students and guests at every dorm Mass, as well as all the Sunday Masses in the Basilica. We additionally encouraged all the priests on campus to give pro-life homilies during their various Dorm Masses. It is our hope that Respect Life Week was able to change a few hearts and fill a few heads, and it is our hope that these efforts will bear significant fruit. ♣



Professor Reimers Delivers “*Humanae Vitae*” Lecture

John Gerardi

On Friday, October 10, Notre Dame Right to Life hosted a talk on Pope Paul VI’s 1968 encyclical *Humanae Vitae* by Professor of Philosophy, Dr. Adrian Reimers. Drawing upon the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and John Paul II’s encyclical *Mulieris Dignitatem*, Professor Reimers discussed a concept he called “the civilization of love,” and the importance of the teachings of *Humanae Vitae* in establishing it due to the manner in which contraception undercuts the love that is at the root of marriage and the family, themselves the cornerstones of any society.

Dr. Reimers began his talk by discussing the call of the Second Vatican Council in *Gaudium et Spes* for Catholics and all Christians to work towards building a society “worthy of man,” one that contributes to the building up of the common good, which is the goal of all political activity. Part of this building up of the common good is the defense of human life, a positive mission (rather than a mere negative rule) that God has entrusted to all men, not merely to governments, as part of our mission to love. Political action is not the only arena, nor the most important one, for establishing the civilization of love; rather, it is in our own lives, families, and marriages where this civilization must be established.



Reimers explained that the teachings of *Humanae Vitae*, far from being some strange “Catholic thing” analogous to Mormon prohibitions against caffeine, are actually essential for any person who wants to build up the civilization of love in his own life and family. Reimers explained that the basis for the Church’s condemnation of contraception was not that it was necessarily unnatural; clearly, the Church has no problem with contraceptive practices to control populations of cats or mosquitoes. The reason lies in the meaning of marital love itself. We see in sexual love two aspects or meanings: the unitive and the procreative. The unitive aspect refers to the union of two persons (not merely bodies, but persons) who give themselves entirely to each other. Pope Paul attempted to show that this unitive aspect loses its meaning if the procreative end of the act is also removed. It is possible for a couple to express love for each other in numerous ways: kissing, talking, hugging, hold-

ing hands, etc. However, in the marital act, the two persons become one flesh, a man and a woman; and their identities as a man and as a woman are determined by their capacities, respectively, to cooperate in God’s creative love by begetting children and by bearing them. As Reimers puts it, “To be Man and to be Woman are both to be able to unite in complementary ways so as to become one flesh so that procreation may occur.” Removing the procreative end of sex effectively eliminates sexual love’s sacred character of cooperating with God in his creative activity and transforms it into “an activity for pleasure, an amusement.”

Reimers concluded his talk by discussing how John Paul II’s encyclical on the dignity of women, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, fits into the discussion. In the woman, who sacrifices her body and

energies for the bearing, feeding, and care of the child, we see the icon of sacrificial love to which all are called. Contraception denies woman this true dignity and beauty of hers because it rejects her capacity for motherhood for reasons of convenience; her highest dignity of being an icon of loving self-giving is eliminated, and she runs the risk of becoming an instrument of a man’s pleasure.

Women in our society are portrayed as needing to look similar to

Halle Berry and needing to be sterile in order to be acceptable partners for sex. If sex is merely about pleasure, there is nothing wrong with this; however, as Reimers said, “But if it [sex] is for love, then the sexual union must be governed by the laws of love.” Sexual love must be about the total gift of self (and all love is, in a way, a gift of one’s self) to one’s spouse and to one’s family. Contraception and abortion, on the other hand, seem mostly to be helpful for selfish men looking for pleasure without consequences.

While our voice in the elections, as individuals, might be rather small, Prof. Reimers encouraged us to help make an enormous difference in society by “insisting on love” in our marriages, families, lives, and interactions with our fellow man. It is only by adhering to this Gospel of Life (which is, John Paul II said, the same as the Gospel of Christ) that this can take place for ourselves and for society at large. ♣



Notre Dame Fund To Protect Human Life

Elizabeth Kirk, RTL Faculty Advisor

In September 2008, with a generous initial gift from Bill and Peggy Dotterweich, a new fund was established at Notre Dame, under the auspices of the Center for Ethics and Culture, called “The Notre Dame Fund to Protect Human Life.” The purpose of the Notre Dame Fund to Protect Human Life is to educate Notre Dame students in the rich intellectual tradition supporting the dignity of human life, specifically in its beginning stages, and to prepare those students, through personal witness, public service, and prayer to transform the culture into one where every human life is respected. The Fund is also intended to encourage relevant understanding, support and involvement among the administration and faculty, and to promote activities and projects which will enhance the University’s institutional involvement and reputation as a leader in issues pertaining to the dignity and worth of human life in its beginning stages.

The Fund will be used to support activities such as transportation and other costs of student participation in the annual Right-to-Life march each January in Washington, D.C., as well as other off-campus seminars and conferences; the expenses of the Undergraduate and Law School student Right-to-Life clubs for amounts in excess of what they receive independently; essay contests and other such academic competitions which encourage scholarly development of Right-to-Life issues; costs of speakers and seminars on the University campus, including publicity; faculty, student and intern research into issues regarding human life in its beginning stages, including participation in related conferences and seminars; awards and prizes recognizing outstanding service in activities supporting human life in its beginning stages; development of relevant curricular offerings and programs; and other related activities and events.

It is important that this Fund not negatively impact the fundraising activities of the undergraduate and law school student Right-to-Life clubs, but rather should support and amplify their activities and programs. While those groups do receive some minimal University funding, their fundraising efforts have not always been sufficient to support their desired agendas. It is a challenge for students, who have just returned to campus each Fall to start a new school year with a full course load and a panoply of extracurricular activities, to then carry the additional burden of trying to raise funds to support those activities. Each year, funds have to be raised anew. This has made the club activity agenda somewhat “tentative” each year, depending on the success of fund raising, and in some years the full planned agenda has not been completed due to lack of funding. Therefore, it is hoped that, if successful, this Fund will be available as a backstop to ensure that the full student agenda of Right-to-Life activity gets funded each year.



If you have any questions or would like information about the Notre Dame Fund to Support Human Life, please contact David Solomon or Elizabeth Kirk, Center for Ethics and Culture, 1047 Flanner Hall, Notre Dame, IN 46556, telephone 574-631-9656, e-mail ndethics@nd.edu. If you are interested in making a donation to the Fund, please contact the Department of Development, 1100 Grace Hall, Notre Dame, IN 46556, telephone 574-631-7164, e-mail develop@nd.edu.





Pictures!

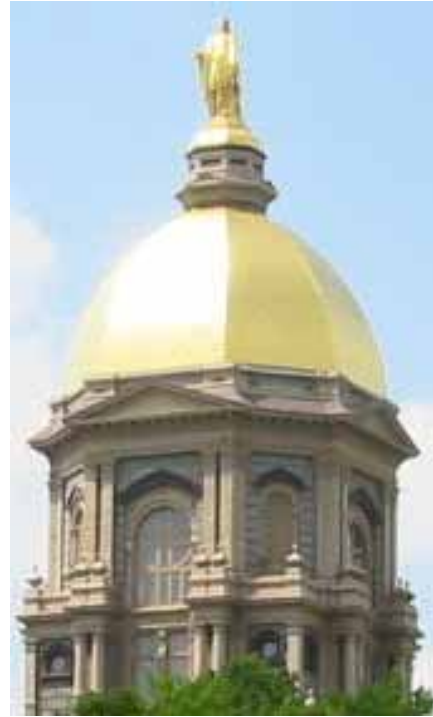
More photos from a busy first quarter at Notre Dame Right to Life!





**Our Lady of
Guadalupe,
Patroness of the
Unborn
and
Notre Dame,
Our Mother,

Pray for us!**



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