



Footprints

November/December
Volume 2, Issue II

The official newsletter of Notre Dame Right to Life

The President's Note

Peace and joy be with you all! As quickly as I can, before we all rush home for Christmas break, here is how Right to Life has been the past two months:

Our November meeting was successful, though slightly unusual as we had no guest speaker. Instead various commissioners presented updates on their groups and the floor was opened to club members to raise their questions, comments, concerns, and ideas.

Project Mom was a huge success this semester thanks to the hard work of Commissioner Julia Jenkins and Co-Vice President Jessica Pryor. With the help of the committee members, the Julia and Jessica raised over \$1,200.00 and made 21 baskets for local mothers in need. On December 2, they held a baby shower for the women at the Women's Care Center near campus.

Throughout these past two months, Commissioner Monica Quericagrossa successfully conducted March for Life registration, with the help of webmaster Philip Little. Currently, we are nearing capacity for the trip and so it looks like the Notre Dame and Saint Mary's community will be represented by approximately 200 people down in Washington D.C. on January 22.

The December meeting was moderately attended given that it was the last day class. Professor Emeritus Charles Rice of the Law School was our guest lecturer and took the theme of his talk, "Are We Just Animals?" from the debate among the Observer Viewpoint letters which had been dragging on for a couple weeks. Prof. Rice addressed the matter directly and by using basic philosophy, which sadly is rarely taught today outside upper level philosophy courses, demonstrated the difference between humans and animals. (Pardon my hasty summary) He explained the difference between animal and human soul—the soul being the life giving potential of a living thing, the primary distinction being that the human soul is capable of abstraction and reflection whereas animals are not. Therefore while biologists may explain that we are made up physical matter similar to animals and our bodily functions operate in a similar way, that is only half the story. The human soul is undeniably a higher thing than the soul of an animal, therefore we should not be considered or treated like animals, but instead, treated with the proper respect and dignity. This is not only something that faith can prove, but simple, pure, rational logic as Prof. Rice did at our meeting.

May God bless you all in this Advent and Christmas season, and thank you for your continued support!

Mary Elizabeth Walter
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Law School Prof. Em.
Charles Rice speaks...

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The Secretary's Note

With finals just under our belt, we here at Right to Life send our Advent Greetings!

This is a peculiarly relevant time as we remain in joyful expectation for our Lord, a joyful expectation of the remembrance of his birth in this season, and praying for a constant vigilance for his coming at the resurrection, vigilance we are to observe in the details of our daily lives. Further we remember Our Blessed Mother, what with celebrations like the Immaculate Conception and our very own Lady of Guadalupe. But especially, we see our mother as a model of that expectation. When in the eyes of the world she had more than enough reason to be troubled—St. Gabriel's salutation, the unexpected pregnancy, and by and large a situation she could not have anticipated—she took it all with humility as a theme for her sanctification: "I am the handmaid of the Lord." Moreover, she took it with hope that can be nothing short of the work of grace.

These past two months kept us pretty busy. Project Mom kept the dorms helping to spread that hope to expectant mothers, who stand like Our Lady stood, in expectation. Likewise we've been getting all ready for our trip to the March for Life in DC early next semester. Congrats to Julia Jenkins for making Project Mom a success and to Monica Querciagrossa for taking care of March for Life prep. Thanks much for all of your faithful support and best wishes for this Christmas from Right to Life.

Pax,
Victor Saenz
Right to Life Secretary
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One Prolifer's Outreach On Campus:

Wishing to more actively spread the word about the pro-life message to people on campus who need to hear it, I recently began a project of my own initiative. My idea was to make visits to every dorm in order to lead small discussions on the topic of abortion, humbly explaining the common-sense truths that show the pro-life position to be the only just, ethical, and reasonable stance on the issue of human life. To anyone who cares to attend the discussion, I outline a basic argument for the pro-life position and present refutations of common pro-choice objections. Prepared to answer any questions the audience might raise over the legitimacy of abortion, I am willing to be the person who patiently explains exactly why abortion is never an acceptable alternative, no matter if the opposition turns out to be difficult or hostile. Simply and clearly specifying the reasons for my strong conviction to the pro-life stance, I hope to plant seeds of insight into the most hard-hearted advocates of abortion, illuminating new perspectives perhaps previously unrealized.

There remain many individuals who entertain sympathies toward pro-choice views, perhaps because they have never heard the clear and inarguable rationalizations that support a human being's inherent right to life from conception to natural death. I wish to charitably and patiently reason with these people and share this message of splendid truth in order to turn the hearts of a nation hostile to life back to the knowledge of Him who is the Source of life and the Savior of all men.

David Varga
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December 12: Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe

Some meditations and a prayer used by Right to Life for the Rosary prayed at the Grotto on December 12, Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Americas and the Unborn:

PRO-LIFE MEDITATIONS ON THE MYSTERIES OF THE ROSARY

by Fr. Frank Pavone

The Sorrowful Mysteries

The Agony in the Garden

Let us pray for mothers and fathers who are in agony because they are tempted to abort a child. May they be given the good news that there are alternatives, and may they make use of the help that is available.

The Scourging

As Christ's flesh was torn by the instruments of those who scourged Him, so the bodies of babies in the womb are torn by the instruments of the abortionists. Let us pray that abortionists may repent of these acts of child-killing.

The Crowning With Thorns

Jesus suffered the pain of thorns in His head, and did so silently. We pray for the mothers and fathers of aborted children. So many of them suffer deep grief and regret over a choice they can never reverse. So many suffer in silence, because others tell them it's no big deal.

The Carrying of the Cross

Jesus was not condemned by the power of wicked people. He was condemned because of the silence of good people. Silence always helps the oppressor, never the victim. Let us pray that we may never be silent about abortion, but rather will clearly speak up to save babies from death.

The Crucifixion

As we ponder the death of Christ, let us remember the many women who have died from so-called "safe, legal" abortions. Let us ask forgiveness and mercy for them. May their memory save other women from making this tragic mistake.



Our Lady of Guadalupe, we turn to you who are the protectress of unborn children and ask that you intercede for us, so that we may more firmly resolve to join you in protecting all human life. Let our prayers be united to your perpetual motherly intercession on behalf of those whose lives are threatened, be they in the womb of their mother, on the bed of infirmity, or in the latter years of their life. May our prayers also be coupled with peaceful action, which witnesses to the goodness and dignity of all human life, so that our firmness of purpose may give courage to those who are fearful and bring light to those who are blinded by sin. Encourage those who will be involved in the March for Life; help them to walk closely with God and to give voice to the cry of the oppressed, in order to remind our nation of its commitment to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all people. O Virgin Mother of God, present our petitions to your Son and ask Him to bless us with abundant life. Amen



Despite Electoral Losses, ND Legislative Gets Out the Vote

With the midterm elections fast approaching, October was a busy month for the Legislative Commission. Though Mother Nature was not kind to the second day of our registration drive, scheduled for the Monday of Respect Life Week (the first week of October) we were still able to help many passersby register to vote and request absentee ballots.

The rest of the month focused on the pro-life ad campaign. Though the *Observer* refused to publish our creative, conspicuous, and very attractive "Vote for Life" ads, the *Irish Rover* (Notre Dame's truly independent, conservative newspaper) ran them for free. Dorm representatives and other volunteers then posted dozens of these posters all around campus. A hearty thank you thank you is order to all who helped post these ads, to the *Rover*, and especially to the commissioners who contributed poster ideas. They made many people think about life-and-death issues in advance of the elections.

Finally, during the Wednesday club meeting before the November 7 vote, Legislative Commissioner Tim Wymore gave a brief talk on the state of pro-life politics, what was at stake in the elections, and what the Church teaches on both political involvement and the pro-life issues themselves. No one can call anyone at that meeting apathetic! While the pro-life cause suffered some significant setbacks in November, it was not because our country suddenly became more pro-choice. Far from it: Democrats would not have won as many seats were it not for the pro-life beliefs of at least a few of them. Were it not for your votes and your political support for the unborn and for life in all its stages, Congress would not have retained as many pro-life leaders. For a more detailed, upbeat take on the pro-life angle of the November elections, please see Tim Wymore's article reprinted from the *Irish Rover* on the following pages.

Life Is Good



Let's Make It A Right

Vote Pro-Life

Brought to you by Notre Dame / St. Mary's Right to Life



Above: One of the poster images hung around campus



Lose Some, Win Some: A Pro-Lifer's Take on the 2006 Elections

Republished from the December 7 issue of "The Irish Rover"

Tim Wymore, RTL Legislative Commissioner

One of the favorite activities of most any political journalist is the interpretation of major elections. Given 435 House races, 33 Senate races, gubernatorial and state-house races, and hundreds of ballot initiatives, the goal is to assign to The People a single voice. What is the unifying theme of the 2006 elections, they ask. This is what America wants, they say.

This political journalist is no different. I am hesitant to assign a single voice to the tens of millions who did vote November 7, but I am especially eager to read the tea leaves and predict how last month's vote will affect the next two years of the pro-life movement, the most energized social movement in America.

Don't let the pro-choice commentators fool you: Election 2006 was not a victory for the pro-abortion forces of America, despite much evidence seeming to point to the contrary. Yes, the pro-abortion party did regain power in both the House and the Senate. Yes, a few pro-life ballot initiatives did fail. But a few caveats are in order.

First, the Democrats' pickup of seats, numerically speaking, was very average. For an election in the sixth year of a two-term presidency, it is typical for the president's opposing party to gain as many seats as they did.

It may not be much of a consolation for most pro-lifers, but 2006 losses were held to average despite the unusual factors working against the Grand Old (pro-life) Party. The two most important of these were institutional corruption and stubbornness in Iraq. The Republican Party cannot expect to win elections when it funds bridges to nowhere, when it cannot police itself of child predators and when its president appears unconcerned about the American presence in Iraq. Conservatism did not lose last month, but the Republican Party did, and in some respects deserved to.

Among those who place a higher priority on saving lives at home than on trying to introduce liberalism to those who do not want it, there is legitimate anger over how

mismanagement in Iraq has helped to catapult the pro-abortion party to power. After all, the Democrats now control every single committee on the Hill, meaning that they have the most control over which bills make it to a vote. Though there have always been a few pro-life Democrats, they are not powerful enough to convince their pro-choice counterparts to make saving lives a priority.

Still, Republicans would have lost more had it not been for the staunch support of pro-life groups. National Right to Life's Political Action Committee was successful in a higher percentage of its races than was Emily's List, the far richer group that supports pro-choice candidates. It should be remembered that Republicans, who in the *Roe* period have never been more pro-life, still make up 49 percent of the Senate and are down only about 30 seats in the House. The loss can be made up. Maybe it will even chasten the party into the renunciation of its bad habits, which would advance the pro-life cause immensely.

The three most important abortion-related ballot initiatives did fail in November. California and Oregon rejected parental notification and mandatory waiting period measures. South Dakota denied the passage of a bill that would have banned all abortions except those necessary to save the life of the mother. But it is important to realize that, while it is indeed tragic that children in California can get abortions easier than they can get medicines, the two Pacific states are among the most socially liberal in the country. And in South Dakota, 45 percent of all voters voted to ban all abortions in question. There is good reason to suspect that, if a very small concession had been made for rape and incest, the bill – though it would have been struck down immediately as unconstitutional – would have become law.

As for the future, there is more than a little cause for hope. Though pro-life Dems are a minority among that party's incoming freshman class, they are the probably the ones who received the most favorable attention. Here is a kind of candidate that can win in the South, said the pundits. Heath Shuler is one such candidate who appears to be genuine in his pro-life convictions



Joe Donnelly, University of Notre Dame graduate and Congressman-elect for ND's own district, has proven the kind of candidate who can win in this moderate-to-conservative district. The change will be slow, but 2006 might eventually be looked back upon as the year when Democrats finally began to welcome pro-life voices to its party. Such bipartisanship will be necessary if we are going to keep pro-life laws on the books in a post-Roe era.

The appointment of pro-life judges and justices remains a central concern. New York Senator Chuck Schumer seems to have accepted that incoming Senator Bob Casey, Jr. of Pennsylvania is pro-life on abortion, but only with the implicit hope that he and all other Democrats will unite to oppose any future Supreme Court nominee that would even think about overturning *Roe v. Wade*. It is very difficult to predict, but there are some very elderly and ailing liberal Supreme Court justices who may well be retiring soon, especially now that Democrats have more control in Congress. Then again, they may try to wait it out until the end of the president's term. In any event, there are perhaps four justices who currently would vote to overturn *Roe v. Wade*, and the Court may need only one more conservative justice.

Until *Roe* is overturned or significantly weakened, much pro-life work for the foreseeable future will focus on passing pro-life laws that the Court will allow. This means requiring more parental notification, funding more ultrasound imagery and crisis pregnancy centers, distributing information about fetal pain, and banning unethical stem cell research and all cloning. One hopeful sign from Congress is Speaker-elect Nancy Pelosi's decision not to oppose the Dec. 6 vote on the Unborn Child Pain Awareness Act, even though the bill is opposed by Planned Parenthood. The bill would require the distribution of pamphlets to all mothers pregnant more than twenty weeks, and require the option of anesthesia for the child to be aborted. Her plan presumably is to avoid taking such an extreme anti-life position so soon after the elections, so as not to give the public the impression that her party is out the mainstream, especially while the Republicans retain their majorities for a few more weeks.

While the 2006 elections do represent a temporary setback for the legal front of the pro-life movement, there is good reason to suggest that the pro-life position is

beginning to transcend party lines, and that the diffusion of this philosophy will only continue. The institutions that demand pro-abortion political orthodoxy are not ascendant,

while our pro-life generation is. It bears repeating that, ultimately, the success of the right kinds of laws depends not on the party in power but on the convictions of the 300 million people who live in this country. We will probably never speak with one voice on abortion, but with every passing day the court of public opinion rules a little bit more for life.



Month 4
At this stage...

This image is of a child at 18 weeks development

By the end of this month:

- Sex is established
- Baby grasps with hand
- Swims, kicks, summersaults
- Vocal cords are developed

www.nd.edu/~prolife

Highlights:

Charlie Rice—Dec 6

March for Life registration online

December Events

1 Fri	Game Night! 8PM	Knott Hall 24 hr Space
2 Sat	Project Mom Baby Shower	@ the Women's Care Center Email Julia: jjenkin5@nd.edu
6 Wed	Meeting 8 PM	Montgomery Rm, LaFortune
	Lecture 8:30	Prof. Em. CHARLES RICE
	Mass 9:30	Log Chapel
12 Tues	Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe	Rosary 9:00 pm @ Grotto
14 Thurs	March for Life Registration Ends	Email Monica: mquercia@nd.edu





Project Mom Report

This semester's Project Mom drive was a great success! The drive was coordinated with Commissioner Julia Jenkins and set out to raise baskets full of goods for new and expectant mothers in need from the local Michiana area. The mothers were reached through the local Women's Care Center, a pro-life non-profit service agency and pregnancy resource center. Originally the project aimed to help 18 mothers — including one with triplet boys! — but at the last minute the WCC contacted us and asked if we could sponsor 4 more!

Boxes were placed in each dorm, and posters and emails were sent to all the dorms asking the students to help out.

The result: Over \$1,200.00 was raised and 21 baskets were made for the mothers! Much thanks goes to the winners of the drive, the men of Morrissey Manor, for raising over \$250.00 in monetary donations and supplies. The ladies of Welsh Family Hall and Walsh Hall came behind as very close seconds.

On Saturday, December 2, Project Mom concluded with a baby shower for the mothers at the WCC.

Commissioner Julia reported:

"We probably took about 4 hours Thursday night just to organize collections, since it was only me, [Co-Vice President] Jessica [Pryor], two committee members, and another commissioner for about half the time. On Friday Jessica, my committee member Kendra and I spent about 7 hours shopping and further organizing in the Lewis basement, so they both deserve a lot of thanks....but the baskets ended up looking really good and having a lot of helpful stuff in them for the moms."

"For the shower, I think we had 13 moms total show up (including the mom with all 3 triplets and one of their big sisters). Of course 4 of those were people who hadn't been on our original list, so we had to do some last minute rearranging...Other than that, it was really fun, we played 3 games and the moms seemed to get into them...we had a lot of their family members show up too...Some of the moms had their kids there and even the young ones were a huge help in translating to Spanish."

Each mom was given onsies, a blanket, towels and/or washcloths, socks, bottles or pacifiers, two sets of diapers, wipes, baby care supplies (lotion, shampoo, diaper rash cream, powder) clothes, toys and stuff for the mom, plus other items collected that we split evenly among the moms. Before the additions at the shower, it was for 12 baby boys, 4 girls, and 4 unknown sex, the oldest being 4 mos."

Thanks again to everyone for their hard work and participation! Positive efforts like these are essential to helping increase the culture of life and encourage women to realize there are alternatives to abortion.

For more information about the Women's Care Center of northern Indiana visit:

www.womenscarecenter.org



Above: The South Bend Women's Care Center



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

Pray for us!**



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