

LifeDate

Spring 2011

A quarterly journal of life issue news and commentary from Lutherans For Life

LFL – Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life!



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Lutherans For Life

LifeDate is a free, quarterly publication of Lutherans For Life (LFL), 1120 South G Avenue, Nevada, IA 50201-2774. Please notify us of address changes.

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Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life.

The Price of Victory



by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

White crosses in Normandy and Arlington remind us of the awful price paid for victory in WWII.

Easter is the victory of victories! **“Death is swallowed up in victory”** (1 Corinthians 15:54b). The bloody cross of Golgotha reminds us of the awful price paid for this victory. The white crosses call out, “Freedom is not free.” The bloody cross also speaks, “Freedom from sin is not free.”

And yet it is—for us. **“He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree, that we might die to sin and live to righteousness. By his wounds you have been healed”** (1 Peter 2:24). Jesus paid the price. The victory He won, the Father *gives to us*. **“But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ”** (1 Corinthians 15:57). The Christian life is not a battle *for* victory. It is battle *in* victory.

Of course, not everyone knows or believes this, which speaks to the joyous task to share it. But lack of knowledge or faith does not negate the objective and intrinsic value the price of victory gives to each life.

If I purposely damage a tool I borrowed from my neighbor, I not only destroy something of value, I insult my neighbor. He paid a price for it. He owns it. When we purposely destroy human life, we not only destroy something of value, we insult the one who gives it value, who paid the price and won victory for that life.

Christians often fail to grasp the significance of this as it relates to the life issues. When we call things like abortion

or embryonic stem cell research or assisted suicide political issues and avoid talking about them in church, our silence speaks loudly. Our silence allows the destruction of human beings who belong to God. He paid a price for them and won a victory for them. Thus, our silence insults Him. We need to speak for them. We need to speak for Him.

“I have a right to do what I want with my own body!” Sorry, **“you are not your own, for you were bought with a price”** (1 Corinthians 6:19b-20a). “I will freeze my embryo children in case I need them again.” Sorry, they are not your own. “I will decide the time and manner of my death.” Sorry, you are not your own. We need to speak so that people will see the terribleness, not just of destroying human life, but of destroying human life which God purchased at such a great price. There’s another side too.

“My life is such a mess and I’m so afraid. I’m pregnant!” Don’t be afraid. **“You are not your own, for you were bought with a price.”** God loves you. He will forgive you and strengthen you. “We’ve tried for years to get pregnant. Is God punishing us?” Don’t lose hope. You were bought with a price. You live in Christ’s victory. He knows His plans for you. He will never leave you or forsake you. “I’m not sure I can put up with this much longer. Why doesn’t God just call me home?” Do not despair. **“You were bought with a price.”** Your times are in His hands. He’s at work. Victory is assured.

I pray that as you move through Lent toward that empty tomb, that you will contemplate the awful price Jesus paid for you. I pray that you will rejoice and live in the victory Christ has purchased and freely gives. I pray that you will share the message of the value this gives to every human being.

Horror of Abortion

– *What We Can't Not Know*

by Chuck Colson



The statistic has everyone reeling: According to a recent survey, forty-one percent of pregnancies in New York City end in abortion. Forty-one percent. Nearly half.

As you might expect, pro-lifers are deeply concerned, and are already trying to find ways to bring that number down. Archbishop Timothy Dolan, to name one, called a news conference to say that the church would be stepping up its efforts to encourage and help women in crisis pregnancies.

But pro-choicers weren't too excited about this news either. *The New York Times*—hardly a pro-life bastion—reported, “No one is exactly celebrating ... Even abortion rights advocates expressed some concern about the numbers, trying to change the conversation to a broader one on reproductive health.”

The Times noted that the easy access to abortion makes the city a “magnet ... for doctors who wish to practice without restrictions [and] for women who want to live in an atmosphere of sexual self-determination.”

Those are, of course, noble and laudable desires according to the pro-choice folks. And yet the tone of the article is distinctly uneasy. It quotes late-term abortionist Dr. Robert Berg, who says his patients tend to be “hostile” to him, treating him like “a punching bag” even though he's providing a service that they've asked for.

If abortion is a morally neutral medical procedure, as the pro-choicers would have us believe, why all the angst coming from people who are getting abortions? I

think it all comes back to what J. Budziszewski calls “what we can't not know.”

Why would a woman be angry at an abortionist? Because he is about to kill her child, and any woman knows that is wrong. She can't help but know it. None of us can. It's one of the deepest truths written on our hearts—that human life is sacred, and destroying an innocent life in the womb is one of the most violent acts imaginable.

The arrest of Dr. Kermit Gosnell in Philadelphia dragged that ugly truth into the spotlight. Gosnell ran a “house of horrors” where babies were slaughtered with scissors, where some of their mothers died as well, and where some of the babies' body parts were kept in jars.

The nation was horrified—but why? Late-term abortions often involve killing babies with scissors—the only difference is that it's usually done as the baby is still emerging from the birth canal, not after it's all the way out. Some difference.

But when Gosnell made the news, we were all reminded of what we can't not know—that it's wrong to kill babies in this way, or in any other way.

Eric Metaxas, author of *Bonhoeffer*, has written that the grand jury report on Gosnell may become the *Uncle Tom's Cabin* of the pro-life movement. I hope he's right. It's tragic that it takes something as drastic as a baby's foot in a jar, or a 41 percent abortion rate in a major city, to remind everybody that abortion is an unjustifiable travesty.

But when we see even pro-choicers getting upset about these things, then we know that the truth is written on their hearts just as it is on ours.

May the day quickly come when they can no longer ignore it.

(From BreakPoint, 1/29/10, reprinted with permission of Prison Fellowship, www.breakpoint.org.)

Abortion is the Number One Killer of Children in the World



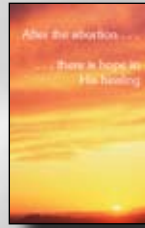
**In the USA alone,
53,310,822 babies have been
killed by abortion since 1973.
The number grows every day.**

Source: National Right to Life Committee



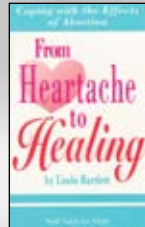
**Every day, women and men
are left hurting
and grieving
due to an abortion decision.**

After the abortion ...



**After the Abortion
There is Hope in His
Healing**, by Linda Bartlett,
offers hope to those
who are struggling with
an abortion decision.

"Through the power of
Christ's death and resurrection, you are
set free to rejoice in the newness of life!"
Item LFL405B. \$1.00 ea.



**From Heartache to Heal-
ing** – Author Linda Bartlett
encourages us all to con-
sider the reality of abor-
tion and the ways in which
the Church can minister to
the needs of those who

suffer abortion's effects. *Item LFL401BS.
\$4.85 ea.*



Hope in His Healing
(Spanish) – Abortion may
seem convenient, but
anger, guilt, and despair
are soon to follow. God
doesn't want us to carry
the baggage of sin.
Instead, He offers to set
us free to rejoice in the
newness of life!

Item LFL403T. \$0.25 ea.



Word of Hope offers
information on LFL's post-
abortion ministry, which
offers confidential post-
abortion counseling and
reconciliation. **Note: Limit
25 copies.** For larger
quantities call LFL.
Item LFL404T. FREE

Biblical Manhood and Womanhood

by Linda D. Bartlett
www.titus2-4life.org



Equal, But Different

God created male and female to be equal, but not the same. If you are married, you know men and women communicate, think, love, receive, and respond differently. If you are a parent of a son and daughter, you recognize they aren't the same. Read Genesis 2:7, 15-23. The Creator of male and female did not make them at the same time, in the same way, or for the same purpose.

It was **“not good that the man should be alone”** (Genesis 2:18). Man was in need of a “helper fit for him.” This literally means, “like his opposite.” Even many Christian women find the term “helper” scandalous. But God’s Word speaks to the respective headship and submissive roles of male and female.

Headship and Submission

God’s order is for the good of His creation. In keeping with His order, man is given headship. He was created first. He is the first to receive instruction from God (2:16-17). The woman is made from the man and for the man (2:18, 22) and the male names the female (2:23).

Male headship is a result of God’s love for His creation and special concern for women and children. God desires order, peace, and safety for families. Ephesians 5 discusses the headship of the husband and the submissive role of the wife. There is no shame in submission! While

on earth, Jesus submitted to the will of His Heavenly Father. Look closely at the Triune God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. There is one union, one God, yet three distinct persons and roles. Jesus, the Son, honored the “headship” of the Father to His glory and for the good of humanity. It is the husband who is called to love his wife as much as Christ loved the Church (Ephesians 5:25). He is to love her as much as he loves himself by considering her needs above his. Loving headship generates loving submission.

Adam’s Rib

God made (literally: “built”) woman using a rib taken from man. With this, He established their relationship within the order of creation. A rib is structural; it supports. A rib guards the heart and breath of life, yet it is vulnerable. Under attack, it can be easily fractured or broken. Satan despises the order of creation that God uses to protect the man and woman He so loves. So, that day in the garden, Satan set his target and, by-passing man, went straight to the woman. Man was “with” Eve when she was attacked, but he did not step between his beloved and the evil one. He did not engage the deceiver. He failed to cover his “rib.” Man was held accountable (3:9) because it was to him that God entrusted the word for life and warning away from death.

Today, when Satan whispers to the young woman, “Did God really say ... it’s wrong to have sex outside marriage?” and the boyfriend fails to cover her with respect, he is leaving her physically, emotionally, and spiritually vulnerable. In placing his perceived needs before hers,



the man leaves the woman open for attack. When a man does not promise to love, cherish, and cover a woman with his name, but simply shares living quarters and a bed, he is leaving her open to attack. When a man fathers a child but does not accept the privilege and responsibility of being a daddy, he is leaving both the mother and child vulnerable to the harshness of the world.

But, when a man remembers God's call to headship, he is able to make a positive difference. A man makes a difference when he guards the virtue of his girlfriend, remains true to his wife, or engages faithfully as a father. When Joseph learned that Mary was pregnant (Matthew 1:19-25), he probably felt betrayed and angry. He could have broken the engagement. Instead, Joseph trusted the Word of the Lord, covered his "rib" by taking Mary as his wife, and named the Child Jesus. All men who desire to protect their "rib" find hope and help in Jesus (Ephesians 5:25, 28-29).

Womanhood and Motherhood

Today, young women have been encouraged to seek self-fulfillment in every possible area of interest except as a wife and mother. Modern feminists celebrated legalized abortion because it "evens the playing field" by making a woman's body more like a man's. The world misunderstands the meaning of "equality." The attempt to change a woman's procreative design proves that we fail to understand the high calling of motherhood.

The Bible has a high view of motherhood (Isaiah 66:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:7). Timothy was greatly influenced by motherly (and grandmotherly) love and instruction (2 Timothy 1:5).

A mother need never fear children that seem inconvenient or strip her of her "freedom." Like Jesus, she can welcome

a little child (Mark 10:14). And, when a mother grieves because she aborted her child in a moment of fear, she can look to Jesus the Savior who hears her cry of repentance and welcomes her into His waiting and forgiving arms. In Jesus, she is free to love and defend the blessing of life.

Manhood and Fatherhood

Jesus, who was there at man's creation, knows a man's strengths and weaknesses. For this reason, God's Word provides man with all that he needs to lead and instruct wisely. A mature generation, including both mothers and fathers, encourages the next generation to follow the treasures of true wisdom, especially the knowledge of salvation by grace through faith. Psalms 78 speaks about fathers passing on to children the wonders of what God has done. Proverbs 4 is a father's wise instruction to sons. **"Get wisdom; get insight; do not forget, and do not turn away from the words of my mouth"** (v. 5). The Father God gave the first man the instructions of life, but also warned man away from death. An earthly father is called to do the same with his sons and daughters.

Parents Influence the Culture

Men and women help influence the culture by being godly parents. This begins with recognition of their equality as persons in God's sight, yet uniqueness as male and female. Children need to see father and mother not competing with one another, but complimentary of each other. **"Two are better than one ... though a man might prevail against one who is alone, two will withstand him—a threefold cord is not quickly broken"** (Ecclesiastes 4:9-12). God, a man, and a woman. This "threefold cord" is for the benefit of all—including children and grandchildren!

Our Schools and Society and Their Impact

by Robert Schulze



Permit me to begin by sharing the perspective from where I come. I have completed 40+ years as a Lutheran high school teacher/administrator. It scares me as I see what is going on in today's schools.

Having spent the better part of my life in a Lutheran school; having the privilege to have all four of my children graduate from a Lutheran grade school as well as a Lutheran high school; having had the opportunity to be a consultant in starting several Lutheran schools; it truly scares me as I see and hear what is happening in today's public schools.

This is not to say that public school teachers are not Christian—it is to say that they are discouraged in being able to share their Christian beliefs with their students.

Living now in the mid-Atlantic area, I just recently read in our local newspaper that 71.6 percent of the births in the city of Richmond, Virginia, are to unwed mothers. This means that many of these babies will perhaps have little or no family support. Also, just recently, a school in Memphis reported 90 pregnancies in a school with an enrollment of 978 (508 girls). That constitutes 18 percent of the female population in that school. The article put the blame on the media and

channels such as MTV (i.e. shows like *16 and Pregnant* and *Teen Mom*). The media has an influence; however, I believe many of our public schools also are sending negative messages.

In working with a group of individuals interested in opening a Lutheran high school in Oklahoma City, I interviewed a member of a public school board in the area. I explained that a Lutheran high school would share with the students messages that supported the Christian stance of the home and parents. His response was quite interesting. He asked, "Does that mean you wouldn't share condoms with the students?"

In so many of the textbooks used in



public education, false information is shared as a matter of fact. You will find science books report the earth to be millions or even billions of years old. Other evidences of our society's leanings include the

stance that was recently taken by the military relative to homosexuality and the health care bill affording funds for abortion. The profanity, violence, and sexual innuendoes found on a regular basis on TV are desensitizing our young people. And yet we are removing certain words from classics such as Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn*.

It brings to mind a quote: "The philosophy of the classroom is the philosophy of the next generation." George Washington, in a quote attributed to him, said, "True religion affords government its surest support—a future of a nation depends on the Christian training

of its youth—it is impossible to govern without the Bible.”

In a rather strong statement by Martin Luther, we hear him say, “I am much afraid that the schools will prove to be the great gates of hell unless they diligently labor in explaining the Scriptures, engraving them on the hearts of youth.”

In the teaching of my junior/senior theology classes, wherever appropriate, I pointed out the Lord’s will and direction as we live out a God-pleasing life. Psalm 139:14 and Jeremiah 1:5 were passages prominent in my classroom. Many times we spoke of the three “A’s” in the lives of young people: **Abstinence, Abortion, and Adoption.** I have shared chapel messages that focus on (1) the unborn, (2) the challenged, (3) the elderly, and (4) biotechnology. I have taught a six-week course relative to pro-life issues. We focused first on the Creator/creation. We next learned of proper relationships in dating. That was followed with the issues of abortion and post abortion. Stem cell research and embryonic stem cells were discussed. In week five we dealt with end-of-life issues. And finally, in week six, we focused on sexual purity and marriage. In each of these units, the use of Lutherans For Life resources was invaluable.

As we look to the future, these issues will become more and more important in bringing to light the importance of the life issues. Again, as time passes, I believe the issues need to be shared with younger and younger audiences. As is the case with so many things, younger individuals will be presented with these significant life decisions much sooner than in years gone by.

I would encourage others to make use of any opportunities to share the “We Are For Life” message whenever possible!

LFL Spanish Resources!

Amor Real/Vida Real - This unique 30” x 6”

10-panel fold out brochure (translated from *Real Love Real Life*; made possible by a grant from the Texas LWML)

covers fetal development, abortion facts, love and friendship, teen pregnancy, STDs, purity/chastity and sexuality, and safe choices.

Spanish: Item LFL615T-S. **\$0.75 ea.**



Tips for Teens On How to Say “No” – Topics

include: making a commitment, things to avoid, planning ahead, values, breaking off a relationship, waiting to date, who to date, and being friends first.

Spanish: Item 602T-S. **\$0.25 ea.**

Watch Me Grow – This beautifully illustrated brochure documents the growth stages of a baby for nine months in the womb. Appropriate for all ages. **Spanish:** Item LFL125T-S. **\$0.50 ea.**

What About the Facts of Life? – This excellent full-color fold-out brochure will help answer questions about fetal development. **Spanish:** Item LFL113T. **\$0.70 ea.**

God's Gift of Christian Motherhood

by Rev. Mark Gullerud



On Mother's Day it has been customary for children to remember their mothers with gifts as a way of showing them their love and appreciation. Such gifts may be the simple gesture of sending a Mother's Day card with a meaningful message inside, sending a bouquet of flowers or some other thoughtful present.

It is good for us to remember our mothers in such ways, for they are God's representatives placed over us for our blessing and therefore are truly worthy of being honored. In those cases where we have been blessed with Christian mothers, it is good not only to remember our mothers on Mother's Day, but also the Lord. He, above all, is worthy and deserving of our praise and thanksgiving because Christian motherhood is a gift of God. The Bible account of the Old Testament believer Hannah (1 Samuel chapters 1 and 2) beautifully sets forth the various facets of this precious gift from above.

Through the working of the Holy Spirit, this God-fearing woman first of

all recognized children as being special gifts from the Lord. She recognized that when God blesses couples with children, one of the purposes of marriage is being fulfilled (Genesis 1:28; 9:1). When Hannah was unable to conceive a child, she turned to the Lord in prayer, trusting that God **"gives to all life, breath, and all things"** (Acts 17:25 KJV).

This understanding seems to be lost on many young couples in our day. This

becomes apparent when we hear some speak of "making babies," as if the beginning of human life rests primarily with them. Or when couples are unable to conceive a child, they may rely solely on professional medical help without recognizing that it is God alone who can work through such means to bless them with a child.



Dedicating Children to the Lord

Hannah's God-given motivation for motherhood did not spring from a self-serving ego-trip—as has been the case with various individuals in this generation. On occasion we may hear it said that motherhood is desirable, because it can be so self-satisfying and self-fulfilling.

From the prayer Hannah offered up in seeking the blessing of a son (1 Samuel 1:11), it is obvious that she was more concerned about the interest of God's

kingdom, and the service of the Lord, than about her own personal interests. Hannah made a promise to God that if He were to bless her with the gift of a son, she would raise him to be dedicated to the Lord and the religious service of God's people.

This exemplary devotion to God's kingdom draws our attention to a very special purpose of Christian parents—raising children in the Lord. If each succeeding generation of lost and condemned sinners is to learn of their Savior, it is paramount that there be Christian witnesses who testify to others of the saving truths of God.

How very important for Christian mothers and fathers to raise their children in the Lord, not only that they might gain saving faith, but also that they might use their gifts and talents for service in God's kingdom and for the glory of His holy name.

What a blessing Hannah's son Samuel turned out to be for the people of God, for by the grace of God he became a great religious prophet and judge in Israel. Under his leadership Israel underwent a much needed religious reformation and spiritual renewal.

A major factor behind Samuel's fruitful life in God's kingdom was his being blessed with a fine Christian mother!

Thank God for His gift of Christian motherhood, because those who have been blessed through it enjoy priceless spiritual treasures and are given the privilege of serving the Lord in His kingdom.

(The Lutheran Spokesman, May 2010. Used by permission. Rev. Gullerud is pastor at Redeemer Lutheran Church, Bowdle, South Dakota, CLC)

Give a Life Insurance Policy and Help LFL!

If you have a paid-up life insurance policy, you might be able to give that donation on a tax-favored basis.

Many of us purchased life insurance when we were young. Now that we're older, we may not need it. If this describes your situation, you can use that life insurance to make a significant charitable gift to LFL or another charitable organization of your choice. Here's how:

1. Name Lutherans For Life as the beneficiary of an existing policy—either sole beneficiary, or co-beneficiary, or a contingent beneficiary.
2. Donate an obsolete policy, one that you no longer need for its original intent.
3. Or buy a new policy and donate it to a charitable organization like ours, then continue to pay the premiums. The donations to Lutherans For Life for the premiums are generally deductible on your income tax return.
4. Replace a bequest with life insurance, so you can make a substantial contribution now without reducing your family's eventual inheritance.

Life insurance is an asset that allows a donor who doesn't have large estate assets to make a significant gift. To learn more contact Kay Meyer of Lutherans For Life at 515.441.6571.



LFL Mother's/Father's Day
inserts are available!
See page 16.

Semantics Don't Change Truth



by Elizabeth Mitchell

The FDA's controversial approval (August 2010) of "ulipristal acetate—an emergency contraceptive effective for up to five days" after exposure—made headline news in the September issue of *Ob.Gyn. News*. Like similar medications with an approved three-day window, the newer drug contains a hormone which not only delays ovulation but also alters the environment inside the uterus to prevent implantation of a fertilized egg. And, like the others, it claims to not cause abortion if the woman happens to already be pregnant.

But what does "being pregnant" really mean? Some clever sleight of hand has been underway for years to allow "guilt-free" abortions by redefining the words involved. In reality, the use of hormones "after-the-fact" has been going on since the 1970s, long before the specially approved drugs were available, by the creative dosing of prescription oral contraceptives with physician advice. The 1988 advent of RU486, freely acknowledged to cause abortion and approved in the United States since 2000, created a stir and prompted some medical and pharmaceutical personnel—people who were often not involved in the conventional "surgical" abortion industry—to face issues of conscience—asking

themselves, "am I willing to participate in abortion?" RU486 was obviously an abortifacient.

What about non-surgical termination of pregnancy *before* implantation—the so-called "morning-after pill"? *Stedman's Medical Dictionary* 27th edition, copyright 2000, offered a bandage for the conscience of the general medical community and the society they serve: it redefined *conception*. Once upon a time, *conception* was synonymous with *fertilization*; in the new millennium, *conception* became synonymous with *implantation*, which typically occurs 6-9 days later. Stedman's semantic alteration, like an earlier change by The American College

of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, reflected not medical science but sociological and political correctness.

The move to redefine *conception* actually started in 1959 when Dr. Bent Boving at a

Planned Parenthood symposium pointed out "the social advantage of [implantation preventatives] being considered to prevent conception rather than to destroy an established pregnancy."

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists followed Boving's advice in 1965 by adopting this definition: "conception is the implantation of an ovum." Since fertilization cannot be *detected* until the time of implantation—when the physical connection to the mother's body allows a hormone from the developing placenta to enter the mother's bloodstream—the reasoning was that the beginning of pregnancy



could be redefined to the time when we can medically detect it. This reasoning is tantamount to asking whether a man alone on a desert island really exists if no one knows he's there. Such reasoning amounts to philosophical meandering, not science.

Thus, those who cling to the idea that pregnancy begins at conception have been gradually derailed. And with the widespread adoption of these “socially advantageous” definitions having no genuine basis in science much less in biblical morality, people who wish to prescribe or take “emergency contraceptives” need no longer be afraid they might cause an abortion because now no pregnancy actually exists—even if it does.

Dr. Donna Harrison, president of the American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists, testified against approval, telling the FDA that “ulipristal worked as an abortifacient.” She has declared in a letter to members that the labeling of this drug is “deceptive and dangerous to women and their newly conceived baby.” She asserts that the FDA is “deliberately misleading women by mislabeling ella [the European name for the drug] only as contraception and not as an abortifacient.” We applaud her stand for the truth.

Semantics don't change truth. The FDA's recent decision continues to reinforce the worldview that a baby's life hasn't even started until man says it has. But God created human life. He, therefore, gets to set the rules. And no matter how many times man redefines human life, God's truth doesn't change. The Bible should be the foundation for our thinking in every area.

(Answers in Genesis, 11/10/10. To see the article with complete footnotes go to: www.answersingenesis.org/articles/aid/v5/n1/semantics-and-truth.)

The Annunciation of our Lord Friday, March 25, 2011



The Ascension of our Lord Thursday, June 2, 2011



Find LFL resources to observe these days with the For Life message at www.cph.org.

Away from the Body—At Home with the Lord

by Kay L. Meyer



Every person who has ever lived has wondered about the place beyond mortality—Shakespeare called it “the undiscovered country.” God’s Word tells us about our bodies, souls, and heaven. What happens at the moment of death for Christians? Will we recognize and know our loved ones in heaven? What is heaven like?

Christians go to heaven because of their faith in Christ. I look forward to meeting my Savior and Lord someday. I hope you do too. When people ask me about my family I say, “I have my family here on earth and my family in heaven.” My

family in heaven continues to grow. My grown sons, Kevin (40) and Jeff (32), have passed from death to life. Kevin in the fall of 2009 and Jeff in June of 2010. They were wonderful sons that my husband, myself, our daughter, and our entire extended family dearly miss.

We are thankful that our sons had faith in Christ and are now with the Lord in heaven. Yet, we still mourn their loss. The Lord walks with us as we grieve. He gives us daily comfort and strength. We remember that the Lord called them

both by name in their baptism and walked with them all of their lives (Isaiah 43:1b-3a).

So you can see why I want to learn more about heaven from God’s Word. I want to share a few things that Dr. Ron Rhodes (author of *Heaven—The Undiscovered Country*) and I discussed on my *Family Shield* radio program. I hope these words will comfort you as they strengthened and comforted me.

“What happens at the moment of death?” Although our bodies die, our souls do not die. At the moment of death

our soul/spirit departs the body which God’s word calls the tent. Our souls go immediately to be with the Lord in heaven (2 Corinthians 5:1-9).

The Bible tells us God is the God of the living, not of the dead (Mark 12:27 and Luke 20:38). Our bodies die, but our souls never



die.

“Jesus said to her [Mary], ‘I am the resurrection and the life. Whoever believes in me, though he die, yet shall he live, and everyone who lives and believes in me shall never die’” (John 11:25-26). I believe this and put this verse on many sympathy cards. I pray you believe this too.

Another verse I like is when Stephen was being stoned to death for preaching Christ. As he was stoned, he looked up to heaven and prayed, “Lord Jesus, receive

my spirit.” (Acts 7:59) Minutes later his body was lying dead on the ground, but his soul was with the Lord. It’s interesting to note that Saul (later to become the Apostle Paul) heard this prayer and witnessed Stephen’s death.

“Will we recognize our loved ones in heaven?” Based on Luke 16:19-31, Dr. Rhodes believes we will know our loved ones in heaven and will even retain memories of our family. The story in Luke is a story (or parable) that Jesus shared. In it the man who died remembers his family. He talks about his five brothers and is concerned about them.

Another example related to recognizing loved ones is King David of the Old Testament. When his young son died, King David said that someday he would be reunited with his son who had died. We also discussed Moses and Elijah. They appeared and spoke with Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration (Matthew 17:1-3). How could Moses and Elijah be talking to Jesus if they were dead and in the grave?

We also discussed a book I had recently read entitled *Ninety Minutes in Heaven* by Don Piper. In the story, Don wrote that he was pronounced dead after being in a serious car accident. During the 90 minutes that he was thought to be dead, he remembers finding himself at the gates of heaven. There he saw and talked to those who had died before him. Everyone was happy and excited to see him. He recognized his grandmother and others he had known and cared about on earth. (I don’t know if Piper had a dream while he was unconscious and thought he was dead or if he had really died during those 90 minutes. Piper believes he really was dead.) I told Dr. Rhodes that I hope that is what happens when we get to heaven. I look forward to seeing Jesus face to face. I also want

to see my two sons, my mother and father, and others I love who have passed from death to life.

What are the benefits of heaven?

- No death
- No mourning or tears
- Intimate fellowship with God
- See the Lord face-to-face
- Reunion with our loved ones
- Eventually receive our resurrected bodies
- Reign with Christ.

What are we to make about near death experiences? I asked Dr. Rhodes about near death experiences. Some have said they saw a bright light or went through a tunnel. Dr. Rhodes warned us that we need to examine everything carefully. Who is the being of light? Some people who are not Christians have said the bright light they saw was Buddha or another false god. He warned us that we must test all experiences against the Word of God. Remember that Satan disguises himself as an angel of light.

Yet, there are many stories of those who are near death who have seen loved ones who have died. He believes some of these stories are true. One he mentioned is Billy Graham’s grandmother. Shortly before she died, she sat up in bed and said, “Ben!” Ben was her husband who was dead. Minutes later she died.

Take time to read Revelation 21 and 22. They describe the new heaven and new earth we all look forward to seeing. **“And the city has no need of sun or moon to shine on it, for the glory of the God gives it light and its lamp is the Lamb”** (21:23). Revelation ends with these words, **“Surely, I am coming soon. Amen. Come, Lord Jesus! The grace of the Lord Jesus be with us all. Amen”** (20b-21).

A Father's Heart is our most recent bulletin insert for Father's Day!

"God loves fathers. He is one! He is the Father of Jesus Christ and His love for fathers flows through His Son. Through Jesus, fathers understand they live in grace.

"This is where they find the love, motivation, and strength to turn their hearts to their children.

This is where they find forgiveness when they fail and the courage they need to try again."

Item LFL1112BI. **\$0.01 ea.**



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*"As a mother comforts
her child, so will I
comfort you."*

Isaiah 66:13a

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Our **A Mother's Comfort** Mother's Day bulletin insert says, "It is good to honor mothers and the vocation of motherhood as God does. We thank God for our mothers, and we thank our mothers for being God's "knitting room" and giving us life (Psalm 139:13)." A Mother's Day prayer is included. To read the complete bulletin insert text and to order go to www.cph.org. Item LFL1110BI. **\$0.01 ea.**

A study released by the *British Medical Journal* reveals nearly half of the euthanasia deaths that took place in the Flanders region of Belgium were never reported. The government requires mandatory reporting of such deaths. Of note is a separate study published by the *Canadian Medical Association Journal* (CMAJ) last May, finding close to one-third of euthanasia deaths (32%) in the Flemish region occurred without the request or consent of the patient. Pro-life advocates point out that although proposed laws to legalize assisted suicide and euthanasia claim to allow sufficient safeguards to protect patients, those acts of individual “choice” do not protect patients in which consent is not obtained. (*Wisconsin Right to Life’s “News You Can Use,”* 12/13/10; *CLR Life News*, 12/14/10)

The group, Final Exit Network, began its pro-suicide campaign in January on more than 4000 commercial airline flights and in 48 American airports, as well as airports in Europe. This latest marketing expands a U.S. billboard advertising effort that began last year. Spot announcements will also run on television monitors in the airport locations. (*Californians Against Assisted Suicide*, 1/3/11; *CLR Life News*, 1/6/11)

A bill to allow euthanasia in France was defeated January 25 in the French Parliament’s Senate on a 170-142 vote. The measure would have allowed euthanasia for individuals with disabilities and patients in either chronic or terminal conditions. A poll recently conducted in the country revealed 52 percent felt legalization of euthanasia could lead to elder abuse, and 60 percent agreed that the French government needs to improve palliative care rather than legalize

the killing of its citizens by euthanasia. (*Alex Schadenberg Blog*, 1/26/11; *CLR Life News*, 1/27/11)

A Belgian court has ruled a disabled child was denied his “right” to be aborted. A recently-published ruling, made in September, by Belgium’s court of appeal held that a child born following an erroneous prenatal diagnosis was legally “injured” by being born with disabilities. The court argued that the law, by allowing abortion, considered both the interests of the mother and of the unborn child. (*Genethique*, 12/3/10; *SPUC*, 12/13/10)

The Open Hearts Foundation reports a flourishing pro-life movement in the former Soviet republic of Belarus:

“During the long years of Soviet power we were instilled [with] a strange fear of pregnancy and childbirth, so women and men today simply do not know what to do with children, and do not want for themselves this ‘burden,’ and selfishness more and more captures young people. Fear of childbirth, negative attitude[s] of medical staff and many other [things] stop modern moms and dads [from child-bearing].” The newsletter also details pro-life activity in Belarus’ main cities: conferences, vigils, and pilgrimages. (*John Smeaton*, 1/2/11)

Possible victims of the Nazi-era euthanasia program may have been found in a hospital graveyard in Austria. The graveyard was due to be dug up to make way for a construction project, but the project has been halted while an investigation into the bodies takes place. The Nazi regime had a policy of systematically killing the physically and mentally disabled. (*Wexfor People*, 1/3/11; *SPUC*, 1/4/11)



March for Life 2011

By Dennis Di Mauro



“What’s so valuable about an old clump of thread? ... Well, we found this clump of thread on a little table next to grandma’s rocking chair after grandma died and went to heaven. So, you see, the value is not in what it looks like or how useful it is. The value lies in who made it. So it is with every human being.”

As I listened to Dr. James Lamb, executive director of Lutherans for Life, deliver this message at our local service, I remembered why we had all come—to protect the unborn, those innocent children who were created and are deeply loved by God. Our service was hosted by Immanuel Lutheran Church in Alexandria, Virginia—the church which has sponsored the event for many years.

The service began at 9:00 a.m., and the sermon was delivered to the 160 attendees who had traveled from around the nation (Pennsylvania, Maryland, Michigan, Minnesota, Wisconsin, Missouri, Iowa), and of course, from Metropolitan Washington, DC, to stand up for life. The marchers carpooled to the National Mall to march under the Lutherans for Life banner.

Lutherans have attended the March for Life since it began in 1974. Since 1998, Lutherans For Life has maintained an organized presence at the march.

Participants at this year’s march included student groups from Concor-

dia University in Mequon, Wisconsin, and Lutheran High School South in St. Louis, Missouri, as well as local students from Trinity Christian School in Fairfax, Virginia.

The marchers were encouraged by the good weather, the large participation of young people, and the support of so many members of Congress, including the Speaker of the House, John Boehner, who encouraged the crowd in a pre-march speech and promised that the No Taxpayer Funding for Abortion bill would be a top legislative priority for the new Congress. All these events energized the marchers to do more in their churches and communities to defend the unborn and to bring the gospel of Jesus Christ to their parents and grandparents.

By marching, they followed a proud tradition of Lutheran pro-life awareness started by the reformer Dr. Martin Luther in the 16th Century. He wrote, “He [God]

is not hostile to children, as we are. But God emphasizes His word to such an extent that He sometimes gives offspring even to those who do not desire it, yes even hate it ... How great, therefore, the wickedness of human nature is! How many girls there are who prevent conception and kill and expel tender fetuses, although procreation is the work of God.” (Source: Dennis Di Mauro. *A Love for Life: Christianity’s Consistent Protection for the Unborn*; Eugene, OR: Wipf and Stock Publishers, Inc., 2008, p. 25.)

The march is also about sharing of the gospel of Jesus’ forgiveness to all, including those men and women who have lost hope through their involvement in an abortion.



Special to Him



by Rev. Dr. James I. Lamb

I've told people of all ages they are special because God created them and redeemed them through Jesus. But I'm not sure that goes far enough. I believe it is more complete and more comforting not just to say they are special, but that they are special *to Him*, to Jesus. Why? Because He bought them with a price.

In fifth grade, our son wanted a computer. I kind of knew what they were, so I said he could have one if he could pay for it. A few hundred acres of lawns later, he did. I thought it special to have a computer, a Commodore 64, in the house. I was proud when Chris programmed "hello" to move across the screen over and over and over and over. Yes, that 64 was special, but because Chris paid for it with his own money, it was particularly special *to him*.

Every human life is not just special; it's special *to Him*. He paid for each one. The price was exceedingly high.

"[Y]ou were ransomed from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot" (1 Peter 1:18-19).

"[A]bout the ninth hour Jesus cried out with a loud voice, saying, 'Eli, Eli, lema sabachthanie?' that is, 'My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?'" (Matthew 27:46)

Contemplate the high and dreadful price paid by our forsaken Savior. It goes beyond, "He died for me." Jesus was both the sacrificial Lamb who died for me and the scapegoat who bore my sins and my sins' well deserved punishment.

"Surely he has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows; yet we esteemed him stricken, smitten by God, and afflicted" (Isaiah 53:4).

The price: "Not with gold or silver, but with His holy, precious blood and with His innocent suffering and death." He was "stricken" with the sins of the entire world, "smitten" by the holy wrath of God, and "afflicted" with hell's forsakenness and torment for every sin for every sinner for all time.

The reason: "That I may be His own." That I might be special *to Him*, that you might be special *to Him*, that every human life might be special *to Him*.

I cannot find a calculator or even a super computer that could calculate the value this gives to human life. We often address the life issues based on the Fifth Commandment's prohibition of murder or on the First Article and God's creation of life. But the Second Article raises the value of my life and the reasons I should value other lives to an incomprehensible level. Mistreat human life and you mistreat something very special to Jesus Christ. He paid for it. Mistreat life and you mistreat Jesus. He owns it.

Now I realize that I just turned the Good News of Jesus into what homiletics professors would call a "Gospel club." "When you mess with life you mess with Jesus" is pure law. But it is needed law



for those in our pews who insist on the church's silence on life issues because they are political. It is needed law for those who hide behind the rhetoric, "A woman has a right to choose." Of course the phrase is never finished. Finish it with "to belittle our Savior's sacrifice and destroy that which He bought with a price" and see if it remains an acceptable hiding place. It is needed law for pastors who do not want to upset their congregations with "life issues" but never seem to consider if Jesus might be upset if they fail to speak for and defend His blood-bought "least of these."

Of course the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is also, well, Good News! This message of human life being special *to Him* is tailor-made Good News for those caught up by their bad choices or someone else's bad choices, Good News for those struggling with illness over which they had no choice, Good News for those facing end-of-life choices and questions that seem complex and blurred. This Good News says to the pregnant teen, to post-abortive women and men, to the chronically ill, to people with disabilities, to the terminally ill, and to families dealing with any of the above—you are not just special, you are special *to Him*! He paid for you!

Son Chris took care of that Commodore 64 for he had never paid such a price for anything before. Jesus takes care of those He bought with the ultimate and highest price, a price that bestows sacred value to human life. So we live "purchased and won" "under Him and His kingdom." We know we can trust in Him to care for us and be at work in every life circumstance. We know we can trust in Him to never leave or forsake. We know we can trust in Him because we are not just special; we are special *to Him*!

How Can You Provide For Your Family, Loved Ones, and LFL?

Lutherans For Life has a Christian estate planner, Jim Schroeder, who can offer comprehensive, charitable expertise and services to help you provide for your family, loved ones, and ministries like Lutherans For Life.

Annually, thousands of faithful Christians just like you support a variety of Lutheran ministries through:

- Gift Annuities
- Direct Gifts
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- Endowments and Trusts

Contact Jim Schroeder at 877.913.2221 or jschroeder@lutheransforlife.org.

☐ I would like more information about how I can bless my family and my favorite ministries for generations to come.

☐ I would like more information about how I can support Lutherans For Life.

☐ I would like to have someone review my current will or estate plan.

☐ Send information on: ☐ gift annuities ☐ family gift funds ☐ endowment fund ☐ charitable trusts ☐ Christian will preambles ☐ bequests

Name

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Send to LFL (see address on page 2).

Giving to LFL Even After You Die

*by Jim Schroeder,
Christian Estate
Planning Counselor*



Would you like to be able to support the mission of Lutherans for Life even after you die? You can—and here's how. Simply take the total dollar amount of your annual gifts to Lutherans For Life and multiply it by 25. Then include a gift for this amount in your Christian Estate Plan and designate it to Lutherans For Life for the Lutherans For Life Endowment Fund. This could be a gift in your will, beneficiary designation, or other estate planning tools. That's all there is too it.

The Lutherans For Life Endowment Fund will provide an annual gift to Lutherans for Life at roughly the same dollar value you are giving now. Long after you have gone to be with the Lord in Heaven, Lutherans For Life will continue to receive your annual gift.

The Lutherans For Life Endowment Fund Committee invests the principal of the Lutherans For Life Endowment Fund to produce income. Since the principal of the endowment fund is kept intact, the endowment fund goes on perpetually. Your giving to Lutherans For Life goes on and on into the future.

Here's an example of how this works: Mary gives Lutherans For Life \$500 every year. She may give it in smaller chunks or as one annual gift. She knows that Lutherans For Life depends on her

giving and she wants to make sure that her support for the mission of Lutherans For Life continues even after she dies. Mary contacted me to learn more about the Lutherans For Life Endowment Fund. She and I discussed the best way for her to make her gift in her Christian Estate Plan. Mary decided to include a gift to the Lutherans For Life Endowment Fund through a beneficiary designation on her IRA. This is a tax-wise gift because Lutherans For Life as a qualified charity will not have to pay any federal or state income taxes on the receipt of the gift from her IRA. To replace her annual giving Mary includes a gift from her IRA through the beneficiary designation in the amount of \$12,500 (\$500 x 25). As

her giving to Lutherans For Life increases over the years, Mary will want to increase the amount of the gift in her Christian Estate Plan.

Mary is pleased because she knows she now has in place a plan

that will continue her support for the mission of Lutherans For Life even after her death. At this time, her gift to the Lutherans For Life Endowment Fund is an unrestricted gift. She may change her mind in the future and leave a written letter of direction to Board of Directors of Lutherans for Life as to how the income from her gift to the endowment fund would be directed.

As Lutherans For Life's Christian Estate Planning Counselor, I am available to provide you with personal assistance in working with your attorney and your other financial advisors in planning your estate. To arrange for assistance contact me at jschroeder@lutheransforlife.org or 877.913.2221.



Your Congregation and RFL

by Jerilyn Richard,
RFL Coordinator



“Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love”
Ephesians 4:15-16.



“We love life because God loves life.”

This speaks of the value every life has because every life is created by God. It is an important message—vital for the Church!



How can you effectively get this message into your congregation? A good place to start is through LFL’s Renewal For Life® initiative. The mission of Renewal For Life® is to “Equip congregations to be Gospel-motivated voices for life.” With the improved RFL website and Forum, we have the opportunity to better equip our pastors and Life Team leaders within local congregations. One way to do that is through user-friendly, life-focused PowerPoint™ presentations. Available through www.rflonline.org, these teaching tools are an effective and easy way to share a particular For Life message. Here is one example of available presentations:

Cherish the Children: This presentation is based on Matthew 18:1-10 where Jesus says that “chil-

dren” are greatest in the kingdom of heaven. It can be used as a sermon or a Bible study presentation or an opening devotion for a meeting or gathering. It would make a great topic for a women’s or men’s group. It focuses on the fact that when Jesus refers to “children” He has in mind all who are vulnerable and in need. That is how children were viewed in the Bible. A quote from the presentation: “A child is pictured as being unwise, unable, unequipped, and completely dependent on the actions of others to survive and thrive. A child is anyone who is vulnerable and in need.

A child is anyone who needs to be cherished. A child is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven.”

Renewal For Life

PowerPoint® presentations like

this are a great opportunity to show that “life issues” are not confined to “just” the unborn and abortion. *Cherish the Children* certainly addresses this, but it also deals with an unplanned pregnancy, those burdened with the guilt of a past abortion, people with disabilities, and the elderly. The overall point it makes is that we do not reach out and help these “children” just because they are precious. We do so because they are precious to God.

We are here to help you implement God’s truth on the value of human life through RFL’s For Life resources. If your congregation would like to be connected and equipped to share this vital message, contact me at Lutherans For Life for more information.

Thank you for your ongoing and often sacrificial support of Lutherans For Life during 2010. Your prayers, volunteer efforts, and financial support allow Lutherans For Life to continue to equip Gospel-motivated voices For Life! You are examples of Christ's love in action. Your partnership with Lutherans For Life is needed today more than ever before!

2010 Memorials and Honorariums can be found on the *LifeDate* and *Give* pages at www.lutheransforlife.org.

2010 Abundant Life Giving Society

"A thief comes to steal, kill, and destroy. But I came so that my sheep will have life and so that they will have it abundantly"

(John 10:10).



In 2010 Lutherans For Life introduced our new Abundant Life Giving Society (ALGS). We are pleased to announce that the following LFL supporters (individuals, families, LFL state federations and chapters, and congregations) donated \$1,000 or more last year. Thank you for your gifts!

Terry & Amy Abernathy, Edmond, OK; Tracy and Rochelle Ahrens, Jerome, ID; Mike & Diane Albers, Saint Louis, MO; Michael & Donna Aldinger, Iowa Falls, IA; David & Cathy Allen, Arthur, IL; Mark Armbrrecht, Clemons, IA; Ascension Lutheran Church, Cleburne, TX; Stephen & Susan Asp, Moorhead, MN; Douglas & Lynette Auch, Lesterville, SD; Dean & Jo Ann Aulick, Silver Spring, MD; Baby Blue Laces, Colorado Springs, CO; Rev. Thomas & Patricia Baker, Plainview, TX; Louise Ballmann, Hico, TX; Jonathon & Angie Bartlett, Iowa Falls, IA; Paul & Linda Bartlett, Iowa Falls, IA; Raymond & Myra Bauch, Palm Coast, FL; Mr. & Mrs. Robert Bauer, Winnie, TX; Ronald & Wanda Beck, Eastpointe, MI; John & Ann Behrendt, Davenport, IA; Richard Beitz, Niagara Falls, NY; Michael & Susan Benton, Bammel, TX; Adelyn Berg, Bloomington, MN; Thomas & Beth Bessinger, Muskegon, MI; Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Parma, OH; Rev. Herbert Bier-

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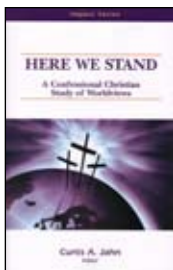


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Booknote! Several LFL Speakers Bureau members have contributed to an excellent book published by Northwestern Publishing House. It's called *Here We Stand – Confessional Christian Study of Worldviews*, edited by Curtis A. Jahn. Contributors include John Eidsmoe, Ryan Cameron MacPherson, Allan Quist, and Alvin J. Schmidt.



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Color the picture above.

Even before your mom and dad could hold you, God knew who you were! He knew all about you, He loved you, and He cared for you!

In the Bible, in the book of Psalms, chapter 139, verses 15-17a, David said to God, “**My bones were not hidden from you when I was being made in secret, when I was being skillfully woven ... Your eyes saw me when I was only a fetus [unborn baby]. Every day of my life was recorded in your book before one of them had taken place. How precious are your thoughts concerning me, O God!**” *GOD’S WORD*

Life Thoughts in the Church Year are designed to help pastors and congregations see the church year through the lens of the sanctity of human life. **Life Thoughts** are based on the appointed readings from *Lutheran Service Book*.

April 3 – The Fourth Sunday in Lent

Why would someone be born blind? (John 9:2) Jesus' answer then answers many of our "whys" today. "That the works of God might be displayed in him" (9:3). Perhaps we could learn to change our question from "Why?" to "Where?" Where is God at work? Our disabilities do not disable His power to give meaning and purpose to every life.

April 10 – The Fifth Sunday in Lent

The very many and very dry disassembled bones scattered about the valley in Ezekiel 37 portray a vivid picture of absolute spiritual hopelessness. Can such bones live? Yes! In the cross and empty tomb of Jesus Christ we see portrayed a vivid picture of absolute spiritual hope. "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1). No condemnation means certain hope no matter what the sin.

April 17 – Palm Sunday/Sunday of the Passion

Palm Sunday marks the beginning of holy week and we follow Jesus as He makes His journey to the cross. Of course, His journey to the cross started long before this. Based on the Epistle common to either emphasis this Sunday, one can argue that Jesus' journey to the cross began in Mary's womb. "But made himself nothing, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men"

(Philippians 2:7). It was a fallopian tube, not the streets of Jerusalem that first welcomed the Savior on His way to the cross.

April 24 – The Resurrection of our Lord

The resurrected Jesus first appeared to a very sinful, formerly demon possessed woman, Mary Magdalene. The hope of the resurrection is for those hopelessly lost in their sins. In one sense, we could say that this hope is *especially* for those hopelessly lost in their sins! Thanks be to God!

May 1 – Second Sunday of Easter

When "grieved by various trials" (1 Peter 1:6b), the world points us to the god of death—abortion, embryo-destroying research, assisted suicide—as a source of hope. Hope in death, what a morbid way to live. The Word of God points us to "a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead" (1:3). Hope in a living Savior, what a joyous way to live!

May 8 - Third Sunday of Easter

Jesus knew of the necessity of suffering to enter into glory (Luke 24:24). The glory of the resurrection flowed from the glory of the cross. Faith in a God who brings glory out of suffering brings hope to every situation in life

May 15 – Fourth Sunday of Easter

Everyone can testify that the abundant life the Good Shepherd came to bring (John 10:10) is not necessarily a life of abundance. To understand the abundant life the Shepherd talks about, you have to ask, "What was the abundant life for a sheep?" The answer—following the shepherd! It was not



always easy, but the shepherd knew exactly what the sheep needed and he always got them just where he wanted them to be. Our abundant life comes from trusting and following the “Shepherd and Overseer of our souls” (1 Peter 2:25).

May 22 – Fifth Sunday of Easter

The life issues can cause troubled hearts in a variety of ways. The world offers nothing that can truly speak to such hearts. Jesus does. “Let not your heart be troubled. Believe in God; believe also in me” (John 14:1).

May 29 – Sixth Sunday of Easter

Paul’s message to the Athenians (Acts 17:16-31) provides a good example for how Christians should share the biblical For Life message in the world. He did not scream and yell and condemn. He did not “thump” them with Bible passages. He started where they were, appealed to their reason, shared biblical truths, and eventually ended up proclaiming the resurrected Jesus.

June 5 – Seventh Sunday of Easter

We usually do not equate suffering persecu-

tion because we share a For Life message with being “insulted for the name of Christ” (1 Peter 4:14). But when that For Life message comes from God’s holy Word, then they do equate. Sharing the truth of life is proclaiming the name of the Lord of Life.

June 12 – The Day of Pentecost

Some will always mock even when the Holy Spirit is at work right in front of their eyes (Acts 2:13). You can mock God’s truth but it will not change its reality or its power.

June 19 – The Holy Trinity

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit—at work in Creation (Genesis 1:1-2:4a), at work in new creation (Matthew 28:19). Both actions give inestimable value to human life.

June 26 – Second Sunday after Pentecost

We serve others, not in the old way of the law; rather “we serve in the new way of the Spirit” (Romans 7:6b). We serve others, especially the vulnerable and needy, because they are Christ to us; and we in serving are Christ to them.



**Here’s how you can
keep life issues before
your congregation!**



Life News bulletin inserts help keep your congregation informed on life issues every month! **To subscribe or to find out more, call 888.364.LIFE.**

For Life – Reaching Out with God’s Love

by Diane E. Schroeder



A pastor recently asked me a provocative question: “What are we for?”

For Life people are often depicted as “anti-people.” Anti-homosexuals, anti-abortion; people filled with hate and judgment. To many youth the words “pro-life” are a negative—people picketing, holding pictures of aborted babies, yelling at women going into abortion clinics. At Lutherans For Life we know what we are For. We are For Life in its entirety and without exception. We are for the lives of the unborn, the embryo, the handicapped, the elderly, the people wounded through bad decisions—everyone. So, if we know what we’re For, why don’t other people know it?

Matthew 5:16 says that we are to let our light so shine before men that they may see our good works and give God the glory. The early Church was known for its love for each other and those less fortunate. These early Christians demonstrated their love by going to the hills outside of Rome and rescuing the abandoned infants who were left to the elements and animals. These babies were unwanted and were left to die. The Christians brought these children into their homes and raised them as their own.

We are For Life. How do we demonstrate that?

We speak truth into a culture that likes to disguise reality. Last year, an MTV reality show entitled *No Easy Decision* praised some young women for making a “good parenting decision” and having an abortion. Since when does good parenting include killing your child? If

that child had been born, it would be called child abuse and murder.

We encourage congregations to address life issues and equip their people to make God pleasing life decisions.

For women and men who have an abortion in their past we share the truth of God’s forgiveness. (He has forgiven all of us!)

For women considering abortion, we speak the truth nonjudgmentally and in love of what God says about abortion and the possible consequences of an abortion decision. We work to build an atmosphere in our homes and congregations where young women who may be in an unplanned pregnancy would feel safe and not so afraid that they would be compelled to choose abortion.

We need to be Christ’s hand reaching out to that person in need. In the MTV situation, where was this woman’s family, her friends—her church? Did she seek the help of a pregnancy resource center? (If abortion is the best we can offer a woman in need, we are indeed a society that should be pitied.)

We need to work within our churches, reaching out to those struggling with life issues: collect diapers, provide resources to struggling young moms and dads, offer respite care for families in need of help—or just a break.

For those who have had abortions, we listen to them and acknowledge and share their grief—and offer the help of ministries such as **Word of Hope** (www.word-of-hope.org; 888.271.8679) that will lead them to a deeper healing through Bible Study.

If you personally know someone thinking about abortion, be there for them. Encourage them to seek the assistance of a pregnancy resource center that can help her with accurate information, resources, referrals, and ultrasound. You

could even work with your pregnancy resource center through volunteering, providing baby supplies, and prayer support.

Through our words and actions we can be considered safe and approachable. That simple fact will open doors for people in need of help to come to us.

Visit the elderly, care for those who are ill, bring food to a grieving family. There are a thousand and one ways to demonstrate your love!

Could it be that many judge Christians so negatively because they see too much of the speaking truth to the world and not enough of compassion for those people so affected by these decisions of life? Compassion is what opens doors for the acceptance of the truth. Don't be stingy with it!

We have been called by God to be members of His kingdom. He has bought us with a price—the blood of Christ. He has called us to speak truth and show compassion on the greatest issue of our time, the fight for the sanctity of human life.

What a blessing! Get up and get going and let's show our world what God's people can do!

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them” Ephesians 2:10.



Our Mission ... Equipping Lutherans to be Gospel-motivated voices For Life.

Our Vision ... Every Lutheran congregation upholding the God-given value of human life and influencing society to do the same.

Our Philosophy ... Lutherans For Life believes that the Church is compelled by God's Word to speak and act on behalf of those who are vulnerable and defenseless. The crisis of our times is the repudiation of biblical truth manifested in the wanton destruction of innocent human life through legalized abortion-on-demand and the growing threat to the lives of others through legalized assisted suicide and euthanasia. Therefore, as Lutherans For Life, we will strive to give witness, from a biblical perspective, to the Church and society on these and other related issues such as chastity, post-abortion healing, and family living.

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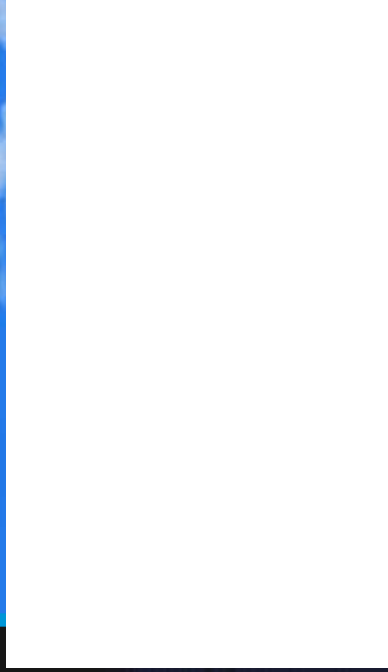
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