

Family & ProLife News Briefs

March 2022

Springtime: Hope and Determination

40 Days for Life

40 Days for Life is an internationally coordinated 40-day campaign that aims to end abortion locally through prayer and fasting, community outreach, and a peaceful all-day vigil in front of abortion businesses. **This year it begins on March 2nd.** Since the first coordinated 40 Days for Life campaign took place in 2007, it has reached over 1000 cities in 63 countries.

For those of us concerned about the dignity of each created life, participation would be an excellent **Lenten commitment**, even for just an hour or two per week.

For locations near you, visit their website at:



<https://www.40daysforlife.com/en/vigil-search.aspx>

“40 Days for Life brings 2 Chronicles 7:14 into twenty-first century focus. As one human race, we become united in prayer. Glory to God.” Dr. Alveda King, niece of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

March 17 Feast of St. Patrick

Dying on March 17, 461, St. Patrick is credited with bringing Christianity to Ireland. After being kidnaped and taken as a slave to Gaelic Ireland, he declared that God told him to flee and return to Roman Britain. He became a priest and returned to Ireland to convert the pagan Irish to Christianity, converting thousands.

March 19 Feast of St. Joseph

Joseph was the earthly father of Jesus, the man entrusted to raise the Son of God. A carpenter, he obeyed God in the face of severe humiliation, marrying his pregnant wife, Mary. Doing the right thing before God, Joseph was a man of strong conviction who lived out his beliefs in his actions.

Those of us who promote the cause of respect for life find inspiration from these two great men of faith and determination.

Couples, Awaken Your Love!

Helen Alvare, Law Professor (George Mason U.) said of this new book: “Cardinal Sarah, one of the world’s most important religious voices, tells us, in clearheaded and inspiring prose, what is required for believers’ marriages to thrive in the 21st century, against daunting odds.” It is meant for all couples, including those who are struggling, who want to rediscover their path to renewal. Couples in every situation can find again the preciousness of the **love that binds them**, no matter how hidden it may be. (Ignatius Press, 2022)

This free monthly newsletter is used by dozens of churches as a bulletin insert, and has had over 30,000 readers. To receive a copy in your inbox, email Frank Tinari, Ph.D. at tinarifr@shu.edu

TikTok Harming Teen Girls

Sudden TikTok fame is catching teens off guard, leaving many girls unprepared for the attention they thought they wanted, according to parents, therapists and teens. In some cases, predators target girls who make sexually suggestive videos; less-dangerous interactions can also **harm girls’ self-esteem** and leave them feeling exploited.

Mental-health professionals are growing increasingly concerned about the effects on teen girls of posting sexualized TikTok videos. Therapists say teens who lack a group of close friends, and teens with underlying mental-health issues—especially girls who struggle with disordered eating and **body-image issues**—are at particular risk.

“When teen girls are rewarded for their sexuality, they come to **believe that their value** is in how they look.” said Paul Sunseri, director of New Horizons Child and Family Institute. A growing number of teens being treated at various institutes report their self-esteem is dependent on the quantity of TikTok likes they get. Teens’ dependence on TikTok for social validation has risen as the app has become their favored platform.

Parents can take steps to protect their teens.

TikTok allows parents to link their own account to their teens’, to enable content and privacy settings. Through Family Pairing, parents can also turn off messaging, or restrict who can send direct messages to their teen.

Therapists recommend parents watch TikTok together with their teen. A quick look will give them an idea of the kind of content their teen is seeing. If you discover your teen is creating inappropriate videos, don’t overreact. Ask why they chose to create those types of videos and if that is the version of themselves they want to share with the world. [Julie Jargon, *Wall St. Jnl.*, 2/8/22]

Is Abortion “Normal”?

The most significant measurement of a society’s values is how it **cares for its weakest members**. For example, how are the poor being treated? The sick and suffering? The range of metrics extends from the dying to the unborn, when those who are unable to advocate for themselves must rely on others to speak for them.

Yet, the act of taking the life of an unborn child, once seen as sorrowful despite its legality, is now celebrated as a fundamental right, regardless of motivation. (We think of the shocking and distressing “Shout Your Abortion” social media campaign that encouraged women to revel in their abortions.) In the desperate and self-serving need of abortion advocates to normalize a mother taking the life of her child, they reject affirming women when they carry an unplanned pregnancy to term.

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Is Abortion “Normal”? (continued from p. 1)

Wouldn't it be refreshing to celebrate the heroic women who opt to put the **well-being of their child** before themselves and choose to carry a pregnancy to term, even one conceived in unimaginably painful circumstances? Shouldn't we be **inspiring** other women to make the same choice by holding up the selfless example of their peers?

If a society is measured by how it cares for its weakest members, it follows that women in crisis pregnancies and their babies should be supported and nurtured to sustain the physical, emotional and psychological well-being of each. This is achieved through a promotion of the culture of life, not of giving into — much less being grateful for — a culture that defaults to death. [Editorial Board, *Our Sunday Visitor*, 2/20/22]

Some believe that parts of our human family ... can be readily sacrificed for the sake of others considered worthy of a carefree existence. Ultimately, persons are no longer seen as a paramount value to be cared for and respected, especially when they are poor and disabled, “not yet useful” like the unborn, or “no longer needed” like the elderly.

Pope Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, No. 18.

Cunningham Meets Justice Blackmun

Harry Blackmun, Supreme Court Justice who wrote the majority opinion in *Roe*, delivered the main address at the dedication of the new law school building my first year of law school. As editor of the school paper, I stood just a few feet away from the jurist as he spoke. I sensed the presence of a great evil and I don't recall him ever really smiling. As the architect of the greatest atrocity in human history, his grim manner was apt. He may have also been self-conscious about the fact that legal scholars on both sides of the abortion controversy had begun to criticize his incoherent written opinion. No wonder he wasn't smiling. I had met a key actor in the drama which legalized unlimited child sacrifice in America. [Gregg Cunningham, Center for bio-Ethical Reform *Communique*, Jan. 2022]

“Health Care” Task Force Created

The administration's U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) announced a “Task Force on Reproductive Healthcare Access,” labeling abortion access as essential health care and attempting to “eliminate barriers” to it across government agencies. HHS is looking for every administrative lever they can to promote abortion through programs, policies, regulations, and any other creative interpretation of long-standing federal law and definitions of health. [Lauretta Brown, *Nat. Catholic Register*, 2/13/22]

Has Legalized Abortion Erased Poverty?

While a multitude of inspiring stories were recounted in February (Black History Month), there were countless others whose stories remain unspoken. That's because so many Black voices have been silenced. They are Black children who were aborted.

Tragically, it is estimated that the majority of pregnancies (52%) in the Black community end in abortion. More Black children are being killed in the womb than brought into the world. (see Blackgenocide.org) This racial disparity stems from the very founding of the abortion industry that originated in **eugenics**. Planned Parenthood's founder, Margaret Sanger, referred to the Black community and other minorities as “human weeds,” warning that “We do not want word to go out that **we want to exterminate** the Negro population.” But that was exactly the underlying agenda of the American Birth Control League, the precursor to Planned Parenthood. Today, the vast majority (79%) of its surgical abortion facilities are deliberately planted within walking distance of minority neighborhoods. In a faint effort to be politically correct, Planned Parenthood took Sanger's name off a building in New York. Yet, every single day they continue to target for extermination the very people she saw as less desirable.

Legalized abortion has not eradicated poverty, racial disparity, or domestic abuse. It has simply eradicated children who committed no offense. While the abortion of any child of any race is tragic, the current decimation of Black children is alarming in its demographic impact.

Rather than promote abortion, we could address the root causes of why abortion is sought. We could empower young women with the resources needed to bring life into the world, and **support them** in ways that will lift them out of their difficult circumstances. That is what thousands of **maternity homes** and **pregnancy resource centers** across our country do every day. Just imagine if we amplify that effort, giving it much more attention & funding, rerouting taxpayer money given to the abortion industry and using it instead to actually give life and hope. [Bonnie Finnerty, *LifeNews.com*, 2/4/22]

Outstanding Colleges Pro-Life All Year

Thousands of college students went to January's March for Life in D.C. But attending the March isn't the only activity for some colleges that remain thoroughly pro-life and faithfully Catholic year-round. Colleges such as Benedictine, Ave Maria University, the Univ. of Mary, all featured in *The Newman Guide*, strive to be pro-life all year long. [Patrick J. Reilly, pres., Cardinal Newman Society]