

Family & ProLife News Briefs

August 2024

National Policies Take Center Stage

Deaths from Guns, Drugs, Abortion

A letter to the editor of the *National Catholic Register* (7/14/24) by Deacon Keith Kondrich argued for controlling high capacity guns used to kill people in mass shootings. Your editor sent him a response email.

According to a JAMA report, there were 12 mass shootings in 2022, reflecting an exponential rise. In 2023 alone, 75 people were killed in mass shootings, a tragic and worrisome issue. Studies cited by the deacon say that restrictions on high-capacity magazines and bump stocks can reduce the people killed in mass shootings by as much as 38%. Applying that figure to the 75 people cited for 2023, such **gun restrictions would have saved the lives of 28 people**. Yet, reports indicate that about 100,000 deaths occur yearly due to fentanyl and other drug overdoses. If 38% of those lives could be saved, that would be 38,000 lives saved yearly.

Also, abortions nationwide cause a loss of nearly 900,000 people yearly. Saving 38% of them would mean 342,000 more people would be alive each year, not just 28. Deacon Kondrich, many put priority on saving lives from abortion (and from assisted suicide), **if only from considering the number of lives saved.**

*Eighteen major **medical organizations** in the USA including the Catholic Medical Association have petitioned for an immediate end to “social affirmation, puberty blockers, cross-sex hormones and surgeries for children and adolescents who experience distress over their biological sex.” [Our Sunday Visitor, 7/14/24]*

Abortion-by-Pill is Dangerous

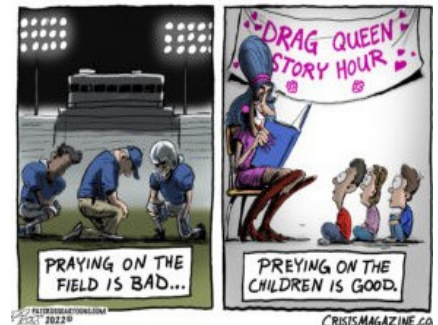
Rachel Roth Aldhizer’s article *The Case Against the Abortion Pill* in *First Things* cites many facts:

- According to the FDA, a woman need not confirm the date of her last menstrual period to get a prescription for mifepristone and misoprostol.
- An **ultrasound** isn’t required to determine the baby’s gestational age or to rule out an ectopic pregnancy.
- No final ultrasound exam is performed to confirm that all the tissue has passed, to ensure that retained tissue doesn’t cause a life-threatening septic infection.
- Abortion providers are not **required** to have admitting privileges at local hospitals.
- Some women are encouraged to hide the fact that took drugs to induce an abortion.
- Franz Theard, one of the most prolific abortionists in the U.S., instructs women to go to your favorite hospital and tell them the cramps are because you’re having a miscarriage; just **don’t tell them** about the pill.
- The most common pill abortion complication, incomplete abortion, is often **excluded** from studies of abortion complications.

[Read the full article at <https://www.firstthings.com/article/2024/05/the-case-against-the-abortion-pill>]

Two Presidential Nominees on Life Issues

- Trump supported changes in the GOP platform by deleting support for a national abortion ban.
- He also supported deletion of this previous platform statement: “The unborn child has a fundamental, individual right to life which cannot be infringed.”
- Trump supports the platform statement that **opposes late-term abortion**, but the same sentence supports birth control and IVF.
- He has only condemned the states that are passing strong pro-life laws like Florida, which has a six-week ban, but not those that enshrine abortion “rights.” [LifeSiteNews.com, 7/24/24]
- As President, Trump nominated pro-life judges to the Supreme Court.
- There is no record of Kamala Harris opposing abortion at any time during gestation or for any reason whatsoever.
- As California AG, she authorized a raid on the home of David Daleiden who used undercover videos to expose how abortion operatives harvest and sell aborted fetal organs. They seized his camera equipment and copies of revealing videos that implicated many of those who work in the abortion industry.
- As California AG, she supported a bill **forcing crisis pregnancy centers** to inform clients where they could obtain an abortion. She was sued and lost in the Supreme Court three years later.
- In a 2018 hearing she badgered Brian Buescher, a Catholic nominee for federal district judge, simply because he was a member of the Knights of Columbus.
- In 2020, Sen. Harris voted against the Born-Alive Abortion Survivors Protection Act, a bill that would “prohibit a health care practitioner from failing to exercise the proper degree of care in the case of a child who survives an abortion or attempted abortion.” That’s called infanticide.
- She opposed a Florida bill prohibiting efforts to undermine **parental rights** for school kids.
- Harris supports allowing females to claim to be men to join the military and males who claim to be female to compete against girls and women in sports.
- She co-sponsored the Equality Act that would coerce Catholic doctors and hospitals to perform abortions and to mutilate the genitals of young people seeking to transition to the opposite sex. [Bill Donohue, Kamala Harris Is Not Religion-Friendly, *Catholic League*, 6/24/24]



Uniting Our Nation

What unifying principles or ideas still bind us together as Americans? It starts with the words. “We hold these truths.” If there is to be unity, there must be **things that we agree are true**. Beginning with the idea that there is such a thing as truth. What are these truths?

That our dignity and worth -- and liberty -- come from a Creator God, who endowed us with rights that no government can take away, **beginning with the right to life**, and by extension, the right to worship the Creator God who gave us our life.

That freedom is not doing what we wish, but to do what we ought. That freedom doesn't work if everyone does whatever they want. Real liberty is ordered liberty.

That without religion and morality, freedom (and democracy!) don't work.

These are the basic propositions put forward by our Founders. They are **universal truths**, time-honored ideals that inspired our fellow citizens to sacrifice their lives. Real unity requires real talk about defending basic truths -- and persuading our fellow citizens that these truths are worth fighting for. [Brian Burch, CatholicVote.org, 7/16/24]

Addressing Youth Despair

The recent actions of Thomas Matthew Crooks, a young man and recent high school graduate who attempted to assassinate President Trump, have left me profoundly saddened and disturbed. As an educator, the notion that any student I might have taught or seen daily in my theology classroom could go on to commit such an act forces me to confront the question: How can we guide our youth away from despair and toward a more hopeful and purposeful life?

The case of Crooks is a stark reminder of the broader mental health crisis exacerbated by a lack of spiritual grounding. In an age dominated by social media and **digital distractions**, many young people find themselves isolated and ill-equipped to manage their emotions healthily. Without a view of heaven as our ultimate destination, young people tend to view the world's events as overwhelming crises, leading to actions born out of **profound disillusionment and existential despair**.

Critics may argue that mental health issues are separate from spiritual education, but in reality, they are deeply intertwined. Spiritual well-being can significantly influence mental health by providing a sense of purpose, community, and moral guidance. Catholic education offers a necessary antidote to this malaise. By orienting students towards the ultimate goal of heaven, such education helps them contextualize their earthly struggles within a larger, meaningful narrative. This eternal perspective, coupled with the grace available through the sacraments, provides them with the tools to face life's adversities with faith & resilience. [Ryan Bilodeau, *Catholic Exchange*, excerpt, 7/24/24]

Med Student Had No Clue

Dr. Marguerite Duane first learned about NFP as a first-year family medicine resident in Lancaster, PA. “One night, as I was required to write birth control prescriptions, my supervising resident, Dr. Pearl Huang, discussed the importance of **considering the side effects** of conventional birth control methods. To my surprise, she then told me about evidence-based natural methods that equip women to manage their fertility without any medical side effects. I was stunned. As a physician, a cradle Catholic, how had I graduated from med school having never learned this?”

I learned the Family of the Americas method to monitor my own cycle and address **menstrual health concerns**. Then, when I married, we used the Sympto-Thermal Method to plan our family. Later exposure to the Creighton Model opened my eyes to the possibilities of charting not only for family planning, but also to address women's health issues.



Our nonprofit organization, FACTS About Fertility, educates both current and future medical professionals about the effectiveness of natural and fertility awareness-based methods for family planning and women's health conditions. Due to the lack of side effects, synthetic hormones (the Pill), and environmental effects, this is empowering, attracting people from various backgrounds. In 2016, the American College of OB-GYNs recognized the menstrual cycle as a vital sign of health and recommended young women track their cycles beginning in adolescence.

A study in 2010 revealed that under 6% of family physicians and OBGYNs were familiar with modern NFP methods such as the Billings Ovulation Method. In a 2015 FACTS study, we found fewer than 600 physicians in the U.S. and Canada had such basic knowledge. Since 2018, FACTS has educated nearly a thousand medical, nursing, and health professional students on evidence-based methods. We also need legislation to bring more resources to this important field of medicine. The RESTORE Act (introduced in June 2024) aims to promote access to information, resources and medical training to ensure that patients & doctors can receive and provide the care that they desire for women and couples struggling with reproductive health conditions & **infertility**. This is an exciting step toward proactive, authentic women's health care. [[*Our Sunday Visitor*, 7/24/24]

This monthly newsletter is used by dozens of churches as a bulletin insert and as a handout. Since 2013 it has had over 30,000 readers and is now posted on three diocesan websites. To receive each month's free issue in your inbox, email Frank Tinari, Ph.D. at tinarifr@shu.edu