

Life Matters

The Newsletter of the St. Rose of Lima Pro-Life/Pro-Family Committee

Fall & Winter, 2005

Volume VI, Number II

St. Rose Pro-Life/Pro-Family Committee Officers

Editor of Life Matters – Fred Dwyer

Chairperson – Peter Cloonan

Secretary – Regina Hebert

Treasurer – Queta Donovan

Spiritual Director - Fr. John Inserra

Buyer Beware

By: Donald E. Wildmon

Founder and Chairman

American Family Association

I have fond memories of the Christmas many years past, when I gave the perfect doll to my daughter; one that was wholesome. You know, the kind that represented the Laura Ingalls Wilder in the classic, Little House on the Prairie. This doll was an all around American girl with an intriguing name, Samantha. My daughter and her friend, Alycia spent years playing with this doll and others of the same liking, collecting clothes, combing their hair and adding to their libraries a series of new adventures.

So, of course the following email was of interest to me.

Possibly some of you have daughters who play with the American Girl dolls or read their books. You may even be thinking about buying a doll or books for Christmas. Well, it turns out American Girl (owned by Mattel) is partnering with a group called Girls Inc. to sell a bracelet, the "I Can" band, which financially supports Girls Inc. Seventy cents of every purchase goes to Girls Inc. The band is sold on the American Girl webpage with a large ad and a link to the Girls Inc. webpage. In addition, the webpage says American Girl is giving \$50,000 to Girls, Inc.

The problem here is that Girls Inc. has on their webpage a statement saying they particularly support abortion and a girl's right to abort an unwanted baby. They were quite clear about their support for Roe, so there is no mistake or room for confusion on that count. Additionally, Girls Inc. supports contraceptives for girls.

They also support and offer resources encouraging lesbian and bi-sexual lifestyles, actually offering

resources One of their publications states, "The emergence of a lesbian identity is an ongoing process, rather than an event."

Of course, American Girl itself is a separate company, unrelated to Girls, Inc. except now for webpage and the seventy cents on every bracelet. I checked out the Girls, Inc. website, and it is exactly as I have told you. Below are some direct links, so that you can see them for yourself.

American Girl website offering "I Can" band to benefit Girls Inc.

<http://store.americangirl.com/shop/ican.php>

Girls Inc. homepage

<http://www.girlsinc.org/ic>

Girls Incorporated supports a woman's freedom of choice [and advocates] Convenient access to safe, effective methods of contraception

<http://www.girlsinc.org/ic/page.php?id=4.3.4>

Girls and Lesbian, Bisexual, and Questioning Identities

<http://www.girlsinc.org/ic/content/lesbianbisexualgirls.pdf>

Free your mind: The book for gay, lesbian, and bisexual youth and their allies

<http://www.girlsinc.org/ic/content/sexualityresourcesgirls.pdf>

Girls and Sexual Health (with sexual orientation on page 3)

<http://www.girlsinc.org/ic/content/GirlsandSexualHealth.pdf>

Please tell American Girl (owned by Mattel) you are disappointed that they are now aligning themselves with Girls Inc., a pro-abortion, pro-lesbian advocacy group.

Do Parents Have Any Rights?

By: Fred Dwyer.

The US 9th Circuit Court of Appeals has just dismissed the appeal filed by parents who had sued the Palmdale School District over a sex survey given to children in the 1st, 3rd and 5th grades. The survey, conducted in 2002, asked sexually oriented questions such as, the frequency of "having sex feelings in my body," "touching my private parts too much," and "washing myself because I feel dirty on the inside."

The court, ruled that "there is no fundamental right of parents to be the exclusive provider of information regarding sexual matters to their children." Additionally the court stated, **parents have no fundamental right to influence their children on sexual matters "in accordance with their personal and religious values and beliefs."**

It seems that our children's minds now belong to the state, a concept usually reserved for totalitarian regimes. I never thought such a ruling could be handed down in the United States of America. Our concept of human rights, the dignity of each and every individual, is being trampled upon. *Roe v. Wade* removed all rights from us for the first 9 months of our lives. We are no longer allowed to pray in public classrooms. Casual sex and child bearing by unmarried teens and adults is commonplace. TV programming relies more and more on sexual content to attract viewers. The "Pursuit of Happiness" is being interpreted as the pursuit of pleasure and self gratification.

What can we do about it? Certainly we must be politically aware and active, that's the long term fix, but the immediate need is to save our children from these distorted values. Don't let the state, or our permissive society, steal their minds and hearts. Talk to them about values, talk to them now and show them by your actions. It's a race, whoever gets there first wins. We began teaching simple rights and wrongs when they were toddlers. We must keep it up with the more complex and difficult aspects of life. What's the right age at which to teach children about sex, its wrongs and rights, abortion, and homosexuality? (Remember the court has said *you have no fundamental right to do so.*) I doubt that we can set a specific age that applies universally, but I'll bet the right age is younger than our commonly held wisdom might suggest. We as parents have to decide. That "quality time" we often hear about need not be just fun and games. It should also be comprised of frank discussions of, and solid reasons for, our Catholic Christian values, even though the court has said *we have no such fundamental right.* Children learn all day long, day in and day out. We have to consciously work at it, to compete successfully with the wrong messages that are so abundant in our world. If we do succeed in transmitting good values, our children stand the best chance of accomplishing that happiness which they pursue, a sound spiritually based happiness, and isn't that what we wish for them?

The US 9th Circuit Court of Appeals, is located in San Francisco, and is the same court that ruled the

Pledge of Allegiance cannot be recited in school because the words "under God" violate the concept of church/state separation.

Duties of Parents Toward Children, Canon 1136
Parents have the most grave obligation and the primary right to do all in their power to ensure their children's physical, social, moral and religious upbringing

Supreme Court to Hear Parental Notification Case

By: Dave Andrusko

As published in The National Right To Life News

When the Supreme Court, under its new Chief Justice John Roberts, hears *Ayotte v. Planned Parenthood of Northern New England*, the justices will not only be hearing their first abortion case in five years but also will find themselves in the unusual position of having a member on the bench who has already announced her retirement.

To the surprise of almost everyone, Associate Justice Sandra Day O'Connor, a tried and true supporter of abortion, announced on July 31 that she was stepping down after 24 years on the High Court.

President Bush first selected John Roberts to replace O'Connor, but when Chief Justice William Rehnquist died, Mr. Bush nominated Roberts to take Rehnquist's place. The Senate subsequently confirmed Roberts as the nation's 17th Chief Justice by a vote of 78-22.

Harriet Miers, the president's next choice to replace O'Connor, stepped down October 27, citing the requests from senators for documents from her service in the White House. "I have steadfastly maintained that the independence of the Executive Branch be preserved and its confidential documents and information not be released to further a confirmation process."

Four days later President Bush nominated U.S. Appeals Court Judge Samuel Alito, Jr. However, if confirmed, Judge Alito would not assume his position until late 2005 or early 2006.

Whether Justice O'Connor's vote factors in on any case depends on timing. Her vote counts only if the decision is publicly disclosed while she is on the Court. Under Court rules, if she departs before the decision in the case is announced--and her absence leaves the vote at 4-4--the justices have the option of rehearing oral arguments.

O'Connor has already heard arguments in *Gonzales v. Oregon*. This case asks the justices to decide whether legalized assisted suicide in Oregon must be facilitated by allowing federally controlled drugs to be used to kill people if such killing is not prohibited by state law.

The High Court will hear Ayotte on November 30. There are two important questions raised by Ayotte. First, must a parental notice law include a "health" exception, which Citizens for Life executive director Roger Stenson calls a "truck-sized loophole."

Second, essentially, is how easy should it be for pro-abortionists to halt a newly enacted abortion statute before it ever goes into effect (this is called a "facial challenge")?

With respect to the latter question, New Hampshire Attorney General Kelly Ayotte argues the law should go into effect unless "no set of circumstances exists under which the act would be valid." This was the standard the Supreme Court applied in the 1987 case of *United States v. Salerno*, which did not involve abortion. At least one appeals court--the 5th Circuit Court of Appeals--has used the "no set of circumstances" standard being argued by Ayotte.

By contrast, pro-abortionists want to be able to stop a law in its tracks by using the Supreme Court's standard in the 2000 *Stenberg v. Carhart* case--essentially, that a law is unconstitutional on its face if virtually any woman is affected.

The law in Ayotte was closely modeled on the Minnesota law upheld by the Supreme Court in *Hodgson v. Minnesota* (1990). The law has saved many lives.

The New Hampshire law, which enjoyed widespread bipartisan support, requires that abortionists may not perform an abortion on an unemancipated minor until "at least 48 hours after written notice of the pending abortion" has been delivered to one of her parents. This requirement is waived if the "attending abortion provider certifies in the pregnant minor's medical record that the abortion is necessary to prevent the minor's death and there is insufficient time to provide required notice."

The law, signed by then Gov. Craig Benson in June 2003, was to take effect that December. However, in November Planned Parenthood of Northern New England, Concord Feminist Health Center, Feminist Health Center of Portsmouth, and a private physician successfully filed a complaint with the United States District Court for the District of New Hampshire for a declaratory judgment that the act was

unconstitutional and an injunction to prevent its enforcement once it was to become effective.

A year ago this month, the First U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Boston agreed with the lower court. Both cited the absence of an explicit exception to protect the mother's health. As required by prior Supreme Court decisions, the law also contains a judicial bypass by which minors can avoid telling their parents by going to a judge.

Editorial Comment: Once again the courts display little respect for parental rights, or the will of the people as represented by their elected officials.

Also: Connecticut has no parental notification requirement. Your child can legally have an abortion without you ever knowing about it.

Orphaned Embryos: Humans or Spare Parts?

By: Wendy Wright

September/October 2001 *Family Voice*

Jon and Marlene Strege adopted Hannah, now 28 months old, before she was born. Created by in vitro fertilization, Hannah was one of the tens of thousands of embryos considered "excess." Rather than have her destroyed or used for experimentation, her biological parents lovingly decided to find a couple who would welcome her into their family. So, while still an embryo, Hannah was implanted in her adopted mother's womb.

Editorial Note: In vitro fertilization is a grave and mortal sin (see Catechism of the Catholic Church #s 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379.)

On July 17, Marlene testified before a congressional subcommittee on whether tax dollars should pay for research that destroys children like Hannah.

"Jon and I never intended to disclose Hannah's origin to people other than our immediate family and friends," Marlene stated. "We adopted her long before we knew about any public controversy involving embryo stem-cell research. Mary Tyler Moore and Sen. Tom Harkin (D-Iowa) changed our plans. The most difficult two days that my husband and I have endured involved watching Ms. Moore compare my daughter to a goldfish, and Sen. Harkin liken her to a dot on a piece of paper and refer to her as expendable. Obviously, she is none of these.

"No mere 'dot,'" Marlene continued, "she contained within her the entire blueprint for human life, including all of her human organs and tissues. She

required a place to grow, nutrients and love—*her same basic needs today*—but Hannah did the rest [emphasis added].”

These tiniest humans, the ones forming before they are in their mother’s wombs, are at the center of one of the most contentious political, scientific and human-rights dilemmas in our country.

No Matter How Small

When a sperm unites with an egg, the genetic code for a new human being is complete. Immediately, the spark of life at conception causes cells to develop into various parts of the body. Once conceived, every new life shares the same needs—nutrition and shelter. An embryo, which, according to the American Medical Association *Encyclopedia* is a developing baby from conception, receives nutrition and shelter by implanting in the womb. Implantation does not create life. Rather, it sustains life.

“Looking into Hannah’s eyes, I weep for the roughly 188,000 frozen human embryos like her placed in frozen embryo orphanages, who could be adopted, rather than terminated with assistance from *my* federal tax dollars,” said Marlene. “We plead with Congress not to force millions of Americans like me to violate our consciences and participate in another form of genocide, especially when the advances possible with other [adult] stem cells are not nearly exhausted.”

Heal Thyself

From stem cells, every tissue in the body—muscle, heart, brain, etc.—originates. Since many diseases result when tissues die or function improperly, scientists believe healthy stem cells can be used to replace the disabled tissue. Diabetes, heart disease, Alzheimer’s and Parkinson’s patients are among many who may benefit from stem-cell research.

Stem cells are obtainable from “adults” (which actually means newborns and anyone older), umbilical cord blood or embryos. While extracting stem cells from adults or cord blood does not harm the donor, taking stem cells from embryos kills the little person.

Stem cells from adults and umbilical-cord blood are already being successfully used to treat cancer, rheumatoid arthritis, systemic lupus, cartilage defects, and to restore sight to the blind. Stem cells from bone marrow can regenerate muscle tissue, and have been directed to form cartilage, bone tissue and fat. One immense benefit is that these methods

enable a patient to use his or her own stem cells, avoiding the serious risk of donor rejection.

On the other hand, embryonic stem cells are unstable and may not become the kinds of tissue that scientists expect. No humans have been treated or even experimented upon with embryonic stem cells. While adult stem-cell treatment is successful, embryonic stem-cell treatment is merely a hope.

In a carefully controlled study published in the *New England Journal of Medicine*, fetal tissue taken from aborted babies (more developed than embryos), was implanted in the brains of Parkinson’s patients. The cells grew too well, producing a chemical that controls movement and causing the patients to writhe, jerk their heads, and fling their arms. The results were “absolutely devastating,” Dr. Paul Greene, a neurologist and researcher, reported in the *Omaha World-Herald*. “It was tragic, catastrophic. It’s a real nightmare. And we can’t selectively turn it off.” The cells cannot be removed.

When are Humans Not Human?

Throughout history, societies have relegated some people as less than human, to be used to benefit the higher classes. Slaves in early America were treated as “property.” Jews, Christians, the handicapped and other political outcasts were subjects for Nazi experiments. To observe the effects of syphilis, government-sponsored research used Black Americans as guinea pigs in Tuskegee, Alabama. Today, as testified by a Chinese doctor before a congressional committee, political prisoners in China are shot and their organs harvested—sometimes while the prisoner is still alive—and sold to people who need kidneys, corneas, skin or other tissue.

Adding to these horrors is the realization that many people in those cultures went along. The arguments are familiar: they don’t look or act like us; it’s for the greater good of all people; they’re going to die anyway.

The principle that all people are created equal, and there are no partial humans, originated in the Biblical understanding that God created us in His image. Science substantiates this, confirming that all humans are in the same biological class. Yet researchers protest that their subjects are something other than you and I, devising euphemisms to lessen their humanity.

In response, ethical standards have been established to protect the vulnerable. After World War II ended and Nazi experiments came to light, authorities

established the Nuremberg Code to govern research that uses humans.

The first principle of the Nuremberg Code states that “voluntary consent is absolutely essential.” To consent to research, the individual must first be fully informed about the expected risks and hazards, which necessitates that he is capable of understanding and agreeing. It is understood that children and the mentally disabled are not capable of giving informed consent. The Nuremberg Code also prohibits human experimentation that causes injury, disability or a person’s death.

Embryonic stem-cell research violates the Nuremberg Code. Regrettably, it seems that when these standards are most relevant is the very time they are ignored.

Our Challenge

As scientists unravel the mysteries of how God formed man, each discovery validates the uniqueness of every human. Even clones, it turns out, have genes that act differently than their “parents.” Fearfully and wonderfully made, each human deserves to be treated with respect.

Therein lies our challenge. Most of us believe we would not have mistreated Blacks or Jews if we had lived in the days of slavery or in the Nazi terror. Will we, then, treat embryos—like Hannah—as an act of God, or as a source of spare parts?

Wendy Wright, Director of Communications, serves as CWA’s* spokesman to broadcast and print media, and recently testified before the congressional human rights caucus against the movement to “legitimize” prostitution. She has worked in pro-life activism for nearly 11 years.

*Concerned Women for America
1015 Fifteenth St. N.W., Suite 1100
Washington, D.C. 20005
Phone: (202) 488-7000
Fax: (202) 488-0806

Connecticut, by the Numbers

As published on LifeDynamics.com

Statistics compiled from Alan Guttmacher Institute’s “Contraceptive Counts”, “Teen Pregnancy: Overall Trends and State by State information” & Center for Disease Control’s Abortion Surveillance statistics. Alan Guttmacher Institute is the research branch of Planned Parenthood Federation of America. “Contraceptive Counts” and “Teen Pregnancy:

Overall Trends and State by State information” are available on the web at www.agi-usa.org. Abortion Surveillance statistics are available at www.cdc.gov.

Connecticut

- Each year approximately 8,220 teenagers become pregnant in Connecticut.
- In 1996, the pregnancy rate in Connecticut for teen girls 15-17 years old was 58 per 1,000.
- In 1999, the CDC reported 656 abortions performed on girls 16 and under in Connecticut.
- 23.8% of Connecticut abortions are performed on girls 16 and under.
- 22,850 teenagers are seen each year at Connecticut family planning clinics.
- Each year, 12,150 Connecticut teenagers receive birth control or other services from Title X clinics.
- In Connecticut, approx. 12,340 teenagers receive birth control or other services from Planned Parenthood every year.

Now and at the Hour of our Death

By: Fr. Chris Walsh, St. Joseph’s, Shelton, CT.
As Published in an October Sunday Bulletin
Submitted by: Ann Marie Mitchell

During this *Respect Life Month* there are so many fronts where we as Christians are called to stand fast in defense of the rights and dignity of every human being, "made in the image and likeness of God," especially the weakest and most vulnerable. Given the present unjust legal situation in our country, it is natural that much of our efforts are directed to protecting the right to life of the unborn. But we should not forget that many other marginalized persons in our culture need our care as well.

One key group is the elderly. In a society that values human beings by their utility and productivity, it follows that the sick and elderly will often be dismissed as "burdens" to be grudgingly endured. In a sense their situation is more complex than that of the unborn: whereas abortion always ends the life of a new human being whose potential and dynamism is entirely directed to growing and thriving, the Christian challenge in caring for our elderly brothers and sisters is to help them prepare with dignity and love to accept their decreasing physical abilities and approaching death now at the end of their lives.

The great surprise for many of us "younger" people (a very relative term!) is that the elderly are eager to talk about these things. One of my personal treats every month is to say Mass at Hewitt and Shelton Lakes nursing homes. In my homilies I will often speak very openly with the residents about the meaning of suffering and pain, the Christian view of death, etc. After all, for us Christians the moment of death is not something to be feared but rather the event we have been anticipating daily when reciting the "Hail, Mary": ". . . pray for us sinners now and at the hour of our death. "

The Church does not teach that we are obligated to use extraordinary medical means to prolong life and delay death: for example, a terminally ill patient may morally decline a risky, invasive operation or a painful, debilitating treatment. On the other hand, we may never do anything directly intended to hasten or cause death, just as we may never deny ordinary medical care to a person because we have decided, according to some arbitrary utilitarian calculus, that the patient's poor "quality of life" has diminished their inalienable rights and dignity as a human being.

St. Paul sums it up well with his typically direct, vibrant faith: *"None of us lives as his own master, and none of us dies as his own master. While we live we are responsible to the Lord. And when we die, we die as His servants. Both in life and in death we are the Lord's!" (Romans 14, 7-8).*

33rd March for Life, January 23, 2006

By: Queta Donovan

There is an appointed time for everything *Ecclesiastes 3-1*

In this time of Thanksgiving, and the beginning of our Church year, we are filled with much LOVE and Expectation for the coming of Jesus as a man. How tender and beautiful it is to think of Jesus as a baby, Almighty God so small, all His splendor so little. All His Majesty made so humble! How much LOVE and Patience He showed for us!

In this period of JOY and Mercy we also find the Feast of the Holy Innocents, whom Herod murdered at that time. This act was and still is a horrible act of violence, unacceptable in the eyes of our civilization. But the Church celebrates their martyrdom with compassion.

Today we have no Herod killing the babies; we have Parents who kill their own babies, with the help of doctors, nurses, even Christians! These educated

people belong to this Culture of Death, so named by our beloved Pope John Paul II. The light that Jesus brought to us as Life becomes darkness for all the millions of babies who are slaughtered without mercy, without love, without justice in this season when Jesus is born among us. Let's do something for JUSTICE, for LOVE, in this Christmas season. Let's make a difference in the WORLD by talking about the March for Life to our families and inviting them to join us to go peacefully to Washington with St. Rose of Lima Parish as a present for baby Jesus. By our presence in the March we will try to end the violence that surrounds us ... because there is an appointed time for everything... Please don't remain silent about this terrible tragedy. Let's do something positive with our Love to promote the law of God. Prayers are good, but we must also act because there is an appointed time for everything.

On Christmas day, when we have the LOVING and defenseless baby Jesus in our hearts and souls, let's pray and with LOVE encounter Jesus and ask Him to give us the strength to STAND FOR LIFE: Life in us and Life in the unborn which comes from Him.

There is an appointed time for everything! The innocent unborn cry out in silence to Heaven for mercy. We need to make the effort to go to the MARCH FOR LIFE as a family, as a teen, adult, with a friend... but go! It is a beautiful experience that we can repeat year after year until this killing ends.

We always have tons of things to do, including work, school, commitments. What happens when Christmas comes every year? WE CELEBRATE with great joy! So, please, I invite you to do a beautiful thing for God If this means to make a sacrifice ... our redemptive suffering will be united with the REDEMPTIVE SUFFERING OF OUR LORD ON THE CROSS.

Think of baby Jesus again at this time He is so small that can't walk. He needs you at this time. So you take His cross with you and walk in this MARCH FOR LIFE for HIM. He will not leave you alone. He will be with you and me in the Capitol!

There is an appointed time for everything.

What will we not do for HIM?

May you have a Merry, Holy and Blessed Christmas with baby Jesus in your heart!

We will go by bus from St. Rose parking lot Monday, January 23. Call Queta Donovan, 426-2153 if you want to reserve tickets as a Christmas present for your family.