

CITIZENS
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BLAIR COUNTY
CHAPTER

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Citizens Concerned for Human Life

Blair County Life News

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Together, baby; forever, baby

Pregnancy is a cooperative venture between mother and baby, medical discoveries show.

Note: The science of pregnancy gets more and more fascinating. To think of the mother simply 'hosting' her baby is so, well, 1973. What's going on in the womb is really a marvelous co-operative venture that may last a lifetime, as Dr. Kristin Collier, an Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Michigan Medical School, explains in the following interview with MercatorNet.

MercatorNet: For most of us, Pregnancy 101 means there's a baby developing inside the mother, attached to the placenta by the umbilical cord. And, thanks to ultrasound and the photographs of Lennart Nilsson, we know what that looks like. But there's a lot more to this inside story, isn't there—could we start with the placenta?

Dr. Kristin Collier: Yes! There is so much more to the "inside story." Since you asked about the placenta, let's spend some time exploring this organ, as part of the "inside story." The placenta is amazing. Why you might ask? Well, for one, it is the only organ made in cooperation by two people. It is made from the growing baby's tissue and the mother's tissue together. Therefore, the placenta is known as a "feto-maternal" organ. It is the first time that mother and baby come together to do something in cooperation.

The placenta, as many of your readers know, is the organ through which the baby and mother interface. This name "placenta" is derived from the Latin word for a type of cake, as it is a flat organ and averages about a pound in weight. It is attached to the wall of the mother's uterus and is connected to the growing baby by his or her umbilical cord. The placenta is the only purposely transient organ in human beings.

It also is amazing because it functions as many organs in one. The placenta helps the prenatal child get rid of

waste, helps provide nutrition and also produces hormones and protects the baby against infection. The placenta is acting like a lung, kidney, gastrointestinal tract and the endocrine and immune system. Pretty amazing for this one organ to have so many important functions.

In New Zealand, the indigenous Maori people have treated the placenta with reverence, traditionally burying it in ancestral land, which reinforces a link between people and land.

Their intuitions seem to prefigure the importance of "the afterbirth" that science has discovered...

This information is beautiful to hear. It sounds like these indigenous people recognized the importance of the placenta even before modern science started to take a deeper interest. As you mentioned, the placenta has long been called the "afterbirth" as it is delivered after the baby. This "afterbirth" often got short-shrifted in attention as an "afterthought." But no longer.

In fact, the placenta is so important, that the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in the United States has a research arm dedicated to the placenta called the Human Placenta Project (HPP), and on its website says, "The placenta is arguably one of the most important organs in the body." A healthy placenta is not only crucial for healthy development of the prenatal child, but also affects the health of the child and mother for years to come.



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Foetus 18 weeks, by Lennart Nilsson. Photograph: Lennart Nilsson Photography

On a side note, it sounds like the Maori people were into the field of human ecology even before the field had its formal name. This is unsurprising as these fields of study are often just a way to give a formal name to something that has been there the entire time, often practiced authentically by indigenous peoples and only recently fractured by modern life and technology.

MercatorNet: Is there more to discover about this “transient organ”?

Dr. Kristin Collier: Yes, there is always more to discover. One goal of the human placenta project is to better understand the placenta with the ultimate goal of improving maternal and child health. One interesting thing we know now about the placenta, although the full extent of this knowledge is not fully understood, is that along with functioning as many organs as one, there is a unique transfer of cellular material that happens across the placenta.

In science, microchimerism refers to the presence of a small population of genetically distinct and separately derived cells within an individual. In pregnancy, small amounts

of cells travel across the placenta. Some of these cells are the prenatal child’s cells that travel from the baby into her mother, and some cells also pass from the mother into her child. The cells from the prenatal child into her mother are pluripotent, which means they haven’t yet differentiated into the type of cell specific for one organ or tissue in particular. These cells find their way into mother’s tissue and start acting like the tissue in which they find themselves. This process is known as feto-maternal microchimerism.

MercatorNet: That is fascinating! In what ways can these fetal cells protect the mother in later life—or put her at risk?

Dr. Kristin Collier: Their full impact is still being understood, but some of these cells have been hypothesized to help mom in the time after birth and also for years to come. For example, these cells have been found in Caesarean section incisions helping to make collagen to help mom heal after a surgical delivery. **These cells have also been found in the maternal breast and have been hypothesized to help reduce mom’s risk of**

breast cancer in her later years. (Editor’s emphasis)

The “gift” of these cells from the baby, entering into mom’s body and helping her heal and protecting her from cancer, is amazing to think of and really challenges our ideas of people as autonomous beings. In reality, many human beings carry remnants of other human beings in their body. These cells may even play a part in how future siblings are spaced.

What is also interesting, these cells that enter the mother are allowed to survive and are not attacked by the mother’s immune system, even though they are somewhat “foreign.” This again speaks to a cooperation, at the cellular level, between mother and child. And it would be one thing if these cells were inert and existed as a gift of sorts, from the child in the mother, but to think of these cells in some ways benefiting the health of the mother really speaks to a radical mutuality at the cellular level between two people that only serves to enhance our understanding of the maternal-child bond.

MercatorNet: And what are the implications for involuntary pregnancy loss?

Dr. Kristin Collier: Miscarriage can be a devastating event in the life of both the expectant mother and father. I’ve heard from many women that they felt, even after they lost their baby, that their baby was somehow always still with them in a way. And now, through the knowledge of the science of microchimerism, we know that this is true. Many women do have the presence, in their bodies, of a biological piece of their child and this cellular material may be aiding and assisting her not only now but in the future in ways we are only beginning to understand.

MercatorNet: Obviously this science throws new light on the abortion debate, in particular on a woman’s autonomy when it comes to ending a pregnancy. She would be ending an irreducibly cooperative venture

rather than a “kidnap” (as Judith Jarvis styled it) and harming herself as well, would she not?

Dr. Kristin Collier: Every dehumanizing ideology succumbs to the same temptation—to see the undesirable other as a non-person. In the abortion debate, as in similar debates around marginalized vulnerable populations, language is used when describing the undesirable other that is dehumanizing. In the abortion debate, the prenatal child is referred to as a ‘clump of cells’ or even as a “parasite.”

As my friend, Charlie Camosy, writes in his book, we must resist appeals to individual autonomy that detach us from our duty to aid others, and resist language, practices and social structures that detach us from the full reality and dignity of the marginalized. A radical view of autonomy that leads to the end of another human life is one that is anti-life and oppresses the rights of another in the name of “freedom.”

So yes, the language that should be used to highlight the beautiful cooperation that exists in the dyad of the mother-prenatal child relationship instead has been perverted to one that brings to mind a cancer, an infection or a crime (like a kidnapping or hostage situation). Those of us who feel called to stand up for the vulnerable and marginalized among us, should call out such language not only in the abortion discourse but also in the discourse involving other marginalized vulnerable populations.

MercatorNet: In a world focused on avoiding pregnancy, it’s not surprising that we have heard little or nothing about these amazing pregnancy facts. Are there other reasons?

Dr. Kristin Collier: That is an interesting question. I don’t know why this information isn’t more widely known. One reason is that there are so many other “practical” things to know when you are pregnant that these other details of awe and wonder get marginalized.

Having had four pregnancies myself, I remember getting inundated with information around things to expect in pregnancy regarding my body—physical changes, symptoms etc. I remember reading in a book about what my baby was doing and looking like at each week of gestation, but I don’t remember getting information that exceeded the “practical” domain.

Pregnancy and childbirth are wondrous, miraculous events! In my opinion, using language that reflects awe and wonder doesn’t discredit us in medicine, but only legitimizes the emotions and feelings the pregnant mother is likely already feeling.

MercatorNet: What are the theological implications of these scientific insights, in your view?

Dr. Kristin Collier: I am not a theologian, however in talking with those who are, I’ve come to think of biology

now, more generally, in a relational sense that mirrors the nature of God. The scriptures speak of a God who is in relationship with his people. We then would only expect that God, being the author of biology, would create our bodily nature in a way that was also relational—even down to the level of the cell.

And in particular, when I think of the science of fetomaternal microchimerism, I think of the theological implications of cells from the incarnate word of God, Jesus Christ, in his mother, the Virgin Mary. We can say that Mary not only carried the Son of God in her body when he was in her womb, but that she likely carried his cells in her body throughout her life in a way that further magnifies her position as the glorious *Theotokos*. This highlights Mary’s glorious position as the Mother of God in a way I had never thought of before.

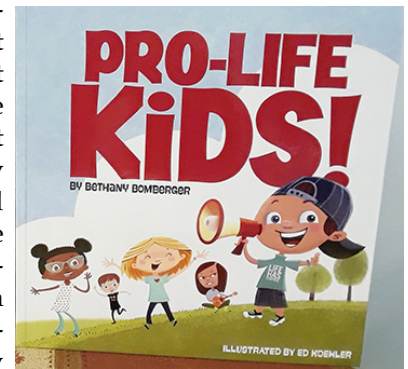
Kristin Marguerite Collier is an Assistant Professor of Internal Medicine at the University of Michigan Medical School where she practices general Internal Medicine. She serves as an Associate Program Director of the Internal Medicine Residency Program and is the Director of the Program’s Primary Care Track. In addition, she is the Director of the University of Michigan Medical School Program on Health, Spirituality and Religion. She was interviewed by Carolyn Moynihan, Deputy Editor of MercatorNet.

—National Right to Life News, February 5, 2020

PRO-LIFE KIDS!

By Bethany Bomberger, Illustrated by Ed Koehler, book editing, design and layout by Ryan Scott Bomberger

Children are naturally pro-life. But they don’t stay that way unless they are educated about what it means to value every human life—planned or unplanned, able or disabled. The Radiance Foundation exists to creatively illuminate that every



human life has purpose. And they’re so excited about this brand new initiative—PRO-LIFE KIDS! They want to empower parents, teachers, faith leaders, and any teen or adult who would like to convey an age-appropriate pro-life worldview to children. As a pro-life mama and co-founder of The Radiance Foundation, Bethany Bomberger authored this one-of-a-kind children’s book to help shift culture. It is a beautifully illustrated journey (thanks to an incredible illustrator, Ed Koehler) that helps anyone teach an age-appropriate pro-life worldview to children. This project provides fun and informative Truth Gear and will feature more content in 2020. As a mom of biological and adopted children, Bethany believes every child—regardless of circumstances—has equal and irrevocable worth. There’s no such thing as unwanted. We’re all wanted by someone.

Congratulations, Oratory Contest Winners!

A tie for Second-Place Varsity Division in Citizens Concerned for Human Life 2020 Oratory Contest was shared by **Lydia Cidor**, of Altoona, and **Alyssa Stonebraker**, of Hollidaysburg. They were awarded \$150 each. The first-place presentations in both Varsity and Junior Varsity Divisions were reprinted in our Spring 2020 newsletter. To read those winning presentations, go to: www.blaircountyprolife.com. Printed below is Lydia's entry, "Incompatible with Life." Alyssa's entry, "A Voice for the Voiceless," appears on the following page. The third and fourth-place winning entries will be reprinted in a future newsletter.

Incompatible with Life

By Lydia Cidor, 2nd-Place Tie Varsity Winner



"Incompatible with Life," the words no mother wants to hear. And yet, they've become so common. Some doctors have begun the habit of diagnosing babies as "incompatible with life." They believe some children have no hope for survival and that continuing the pregnancy could harm both the child and the mother. However, this so-called diagnosis is more of a judgment and the doctors are not

always right. Children are a gift from God and should be protected.

In the book, *Letters to Gabriel*, Karen Santorum shares the letters she wrote to her unborn son, Gabriel, while she was pregnant. In her letters, Karen reveals that Gabriel has a severe and life-threatening abnormality. The doctors tell Karen and her husband, Rick, that Gabriel won't survive and their best option is to terminate the pregnancy. Rather than ending the life of their child, the Santorums chose to trust in God and pray for a miracle. By choosing life and attempting to save her baby, Karen subjected herself to painful and risky surgery. However, she knew that if Gabriel died it would be God's will, not hers, that would ultimately end Gabriel's life.

In today's society, many people believe the lie that their only option is to terminate. So what can we do? By examining the causes and effects of abortion in our nation, we can look to create viable solutions. First and foremost, is it the truth? There are many stories just like Karen and Rick's where doctors told parents that their baby was incompatible with life and would not survive. However, the parents chose to trust God's plan and some now have healthy children.

Hannah and Craig Sudlow, a couple just like Karen and Rick, have a similar story. Hannah was pregnant with her baby, Evelyn, when she was told that Evelyn had Trisomy 18 and she would surely die. The Sudlow's doctors told them to abort, but they were committed to carrying out the pregnancy. Their medical provider dropped them, and Hannah and Craig went five weeks without an overseeing physician. Now, Evelyn is over three years old and Hannah and Craig can't imagine their life without her.

Now, secondly, is it fair to all concerned? *The Cambridge Dictionary* defines fair as "treating someone in a

way that is right or reasonable, or treating people equally and not allowing personal opinions to influence your judgment." Babies are innocent and have done nothing wrong. We cannot choose one person's convenience over another person's life.

Now, thirdly, will it build goodwill and better friendships? The pain, loss and emotional need felt by women who have abortions are profound. If you visit the Planned Parenthood website, it says that most women are relieved and don't regret their decision to get an abortion. It also says that serious, long-term emotional effects are rare. However, this is not true. A study done by the Medical Science Monitor found that women whose first pregnancies ended in abortion were 65% more likely to score in the "high-risk" range for clinical depression. The American Pregnancy Association found depression, anxiety, anger, regret and guilt as common emotional and psychological effects following an abortion.

Finally, will it be beneficial to all concerned? After becoming pregnant at age seventeen, Pattie Mallette was encouraged by her family and doctors to get an abortion. However, she decided instead to carry out her pregnancy and she later gave birth to her son, Justin Beiber, who is now one of the world's best-selling music artists. Jack Nicholson, Tim Tebow, Celine Dion and Sean Lennon are just a few of the many celebrities who were almost aborted. Imagine how many babies were killed that had the talents and skills that could have impacted the world. By ending a child's life, we are not giving them the opportunity to live out their full potential.

Pro-choice advocates believe that since it is their body, it should be their right to decide what they do with their body. Women do have the right to manage their own health. However, maintaining that right does not give the mother permission to kill her baby. The mother passed the right to life to her baby when she conceived. Other women see abortion as their only way to be truly equal to men. However, pregnancy isn't a hindrance to equality, it is something that makes women special. The ability to conceive is a wonderful gift that women should use to honor and glorify God.

So, how can we prevent abortions? We must start with knowledge, education and responsibility. Stopping unwanted pregnancies is key to truly stopping abortions. We also need to make adoption the first option instead of abortion, by cleaning up the foster-care system and making it easier for loving and caring families to be able to adopt. We must show love and kindness to women going through crisis pregnancies. We shouldn't just be pro-life

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A Voice for the Voiceless

By Alyssa Stonebraker, 2nd-Place Tie Varsity Winner



When did “reproductive rights” expand to include the right to take another person’s life? People have several responses to this—excuses as to why they think they should be allowed the option to take their child’s life, why that is the right solution. I have news for you, abortion is never the answer. Taking another person’s life, especially that of an innocent human being that hasn’t even come into the world yet, is never the answer.

The fetus is part of the woman’s body. That is what women say. A reason why they believe they should be allowed to take their child’s life. The body inside your body is not your body. Women do not have male genitalia, four eyes, ears, arms, legs, or two pairs of feet. The baby has different DNA, brain waves, blood type (typically), organs, and a different nervous system than the mother.

Another argument made is that the fetus is just a clump of cells. So are you. So am I. Does that mean that we should be allowed to put one another to death? I mean, we are, after all, just a clump of cells. This objection is merely a tactic for dehumanizing that which is clearly human so that the conscience is less moved and bothered when you murder the child.

Rape is one of the better arguments that women have for abortion, one that is a bit hard to debate unless you have been in a situation like that. However, my statement does not change. Abortion is not, and never will be, the answer. In some parts of India, when a woman is raped, she is seen as unclean. The family is so ashamed that she may be sold into prostitution, or male family members may even try to kill her—an innocent victim—to get rid of the embarrassment. We recoil in horror from that practice, and then we turn around in the U.S. and do the same thing to the other innocent victim—the baby. Don’t speak about human beings conceived in rape as though they have no purpose and ought to have been murdered in the womb. The answer to evil is never more evil.

A living entity is defined as a creature that can survive alone without outside aid. A two-year-old child also fits this description. Is it okay to kill a two-year-old whenever I want? Many elderly people need outside aid to go on living, like medication or oxygen. Does that mean they can be killed too, no problem? Should we go ahead and never call 911 or an ambulance? After all, they’re outside aid. An unborn child is not the only thing—the only living, breathing human thing that fits this description.

What about a baby who is horribly deformed? Isn’t it better to spare that child a life of suffering? My question is, what kind of society are we creating by killing off sick or disabled human beings? People with limitations have a right to life just like so-called “normal” or healthy peo-

ple. Prenatal tests cannot predict defects with certainty, nor can they determine the severity of the disability. Why not let these children be born and have a chance to grow and accomplish what they can? Do those of us who will die later have a right to kill those who will die sooner? No, we don’t. Many people have a special burden for special-needs children. Instead of violently ending the child’s life, place it up for adoption.

The last argument that I hear a lot is “keep your laws off my body.” The thing is, though, is that it’s not just the woman’s body—the body inside your body is not your body. Shouldn’t you keep your choice off your baby’s body? He or she is the one who gets dismembered and sucked into a jar. Sure, you certainly have the right to control your body before you become pregnant, however, once you become pregnant, another body has come into existence—that of the child. Once the woman becomes pregnant, she has participated in bringing human life into being and needs to take responsibility for her actions.

Statistics show that too many people have chosen abortion instead of life. Every year in the world there are an estimated 40-50 million abortions. This corresponds to approximately 125,000 abortions per day—that is 5,208 abortions every hour, 87 abortions every minute, and a little more than one abortion every single second. Let this sink in for a moment. For every second, an abortion has happened somewhere in the world. A murder of a life none of us will ever get to know. Abortion was named the leading cause of death in 2019 with 42 million killed. One last thing that you can let chew on your soul is that one out of every three women in America has had an abortion—this corresponds to 55,333,333 women and countless abortions.

Gianna Jesson is a woman who has gone through abortion, who was meant to be aborted. Her biological parents were just seventeen and her mother decided to go to Planned Parenthood. They told her she was “too young” to have a kid. They told her to have a saline abortion. This was late term—seven and a half months in. Saline salt solution was then injected into the womb. The baby was to gulp this solution, and then it would burn the baby from the inside and out. The baby would then be suffocated and she would deliver the baby dead. Because they were having a lot of babies living through this procedure, they decided to add a drug which would stop the baby’s heartbeat. Gianna was burning for more than eighteen hours in her mother’s womb. She was to be born dead. She was born alive and in an abortion clinic.

Gianna says, “I believe in those eighteen hours when these wicked people were trying to take me out, God was just holding me as a mother and father would because the Bible says when your mother and father forsake you, the Lord himself will take you up.” She believes that God was instilling in her a fire different than what they had intended—“they intended to snuff me out and he intended to rescue me and set in me a fire that cannot be van-

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TUESDAY, OCTOBER 6, 2020 • RADISSON HOTEL HARRISBURG

Celebrate Life!

Banquet FEATURING

Frank, Fearless, Funny
Talk Radio Host for
WHP Radio Harrisburg,
iHeartRadio App and
Guest Host for *Rush Limbaugh,*
outspoken in Defending
the *Right to Life* from Conception
to Natural Death!

Ken Matthews

Individual Banquet Tickets: \$60 each

Table Sponsorships are available and encouraged.

Call **717-541-0034** or go online at
www.paprolife.org

for more information and to register today.

Check-in begins at 5 p.m. Doors open at 5:30 p.m.,
and the banquet begins at 6 p.m.

PENNSYLVANIA
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There's always a reason to choose life.™

TO BENEFIT THE LIFESAVING WORK OF THE PA PRO-LIFE FEDERATION EDUCATION FUND

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Health, Hormones and Contraception

The following is an excerpt from a new book, entitled *Health, Hormones and Contraception*, being published by Dr. Angela Lanfranchi, MD, FACS, President of the Breast Cancer Prevention Institute.

Did You Know?

- 1) That the Pill has a 9% failure rate according to the Center for Disease Control which means with over 9 million women a year taking the Pill, there are 872,910 “unplanned pregnancies” that end in 366,622 abortions a year? Both the Pill and induced abortion increase breast cancer risk in young women.
- 2) That the “mini pill” is a progestin-only hormonal contraceptive that allows a woman to ovulate about 50-60% of her cycles causing a failure rate of 13% resulting in many more “unplanned pregnancies” and abortions. Both the mini-pill and abortions increase breast cancer risk.
- 3) That hormonal contraceptives are synthetic steroid drugs which can attach to a woman’s natural estrogen and progesterone receptors which are located in our brain, bones, breasts, liver, digestive tract, heart, blood vessels, bladder, immune system and skin as well as our uterus and ovaries. That is why there are sooooooooooooooooooooo many “adverse” and life-threatening effects of the Pill and all of the hormonal contraceptives.
- 4) That hormonal contraceptives are abortifacients that keep the blastocyst (5-6 day embryo) from implanting. (With permission, the book includes the seminal work by John Wilks, B.Pharm. MPS MACPP, which was published 20 years ago and shows the biochemistry of the abortifacient effect.)
- 5) That the embryo and fetus produce two hormones that protect their mother from breast cancer. One of those hormones cause breast cancers already formed to get smaller.

BREAST CANCER *Prevention* INSTITUTE **FACT SHEET** Factors Which Increase & Decrease Breast Cancer Risk

Factors Which INCREASE Breast Cancer Risk	
Factor	Mechanism
Alcohol	Increases estrogen exposure by impairing liver function
Benign proliferative breast disease	Result of increased estrogen exposure
BRCA genes	Inherited defects in cancer defense genes
Cigarette smoking	Benzopyrenes damage DNA
Contraceptive steroids (in pills, patches, vaginal rings, IUDs or injectable forms)	Increases estrogen exposure
Early menarche (age at which menstruation starts)	Increases estrogen exposure
Female sex	Increased estrogen exposure
High socio-economic group	Delayed childbearing
Higher education	Delayed childbearing
Hormone replacement therapy (HRT)	Increases estrogen exposure
Increasing age	Premenopausal: Increases estrogen exposure Postmenopausal: Impairs immune function
Induced abortion	Leaves increased number of immature breast lobules and increases risk of premature births Increases estrogen exposure
Late childbirth (over 30 years old)	Increases exposure of Type 1 & 2 lobules to estrogen before first birth; long susceptibility window
Late menopause	Increases estrogen exposure
Nulliparity (never bearing children)	Maturity of breast lobules does not occur
Premature birth before 32 weeks	Leaves increased number of immature breast lobules Increases estrogen exposure
Postmenopausal obesity	Increases estrogen exposure
Radiation	Damages DNA
2nd trimester miscarriage	Leaves increased number of immature breast lobules

Factors Which DECREASE Breast Cancer Risk	
Factor	Mechanism
Breast feeding	Decreases estrogen by decreasing number of menstrual cycles and/or ovulation
Cruciferous vegetables (e.g., broccoli, Brussels sprouts or DIM supplements)	Indole-3-carbinol decreases estrogen exposure by causing estrogen to be changed to an inactive metabolite of estrogen
Early menopause	Decreases estrogen exposure
Exercise	Decreases estrogen exposure
Having children (especially starting at a young age)	Decreases number of immature breast lobules
Late menarche	Decreases estrogen exposure
Omega-3 fatty acids (e.g., olive, flax seed, walnut oils)	Unknown
Oophorectomy (removal of ovaries) before menopause	Decreases estrogen production
Soy isoflavonoids (phytoestrogens)	May block estrogen receptors

Factors Which HAVE NO EFFECT on Breast Cancer Risk	
Factor	Reason
Saturated fat	Saturated fat intake not related to obesity
Spontaneous abortions (miscarriages) in the first trimester	No increased levels of estrogen as found in healthy pregnancies

This information is taken from *Breast Cancer Risks and Prevention*, 4th Edition, (Chapter 15), by Angela Lanfranchi, MD.FACS & Joel Brind, PhD. (©2007 Breast Cancer Prevention Institute)

The Breast Cancer Prevention, Risks and Prevention 4th Edition booklet and this Fact Sheet are available to view online: www.bcpinstitute.org

For booklet ordering information, please visit the Breast Cancer Prevention Institute website or call toll-free 1-866-622-6237 (1-86 NO CANCER).

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Incompatible With Life

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but pro-love too. Through friendship and love, we can show God's power and the true gift of life.

In her blog titled *How Incompatible is Incompatible with Life, Really*, Nancy Head said, "Doctors are not the authors of life and death. God gives us people to love for as long as they and we are here to give love and receive love."

We must speak up for those who cannot speak for themselves. The Santorums allowed Gabriel to live out the life God gave him, no matter how long. Even though Gabriel only lived a few hours, the Santorums trusted that God would use their tragedy for his glory. One choice, the choice to choose life, forever changed Karen and Rick's lives. Will you allow it to change yours? ♦

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A Voice for the Voiceless

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quished." The abortionist was not on duty at six o'clock in the morning when she arrived alive. This gave the nurse time to call an ambulance and get her out of there. She was placed in an incubator weighing two pounds. After a few months, she was then placed into foster care. She was taken out of that home because she wasn't treated well, and then she was placed in another foster home. By this time she was seventeen months old and thirty-two pounds of deadweight—in other words, unable to move. And so, they concluded, Gianna will never be able to function. She was never to be able to even as much as raise her head. Today she is able to speak, sing, move without help, run marathons—everything that you and I are able to do, she is able to do too. They said there was no way for her to live...she is still living.

So, why is abortion wrong you might ask? It's wrong because those children that women say are "just a clump of cells," "a part of the woman's body," "unable to survive alone"—yeah, them—they are living beings. They have hearts and lungs and organs and fingers and toes and arms and legs—they have everything that you and I have. The definition of a cell is the smallest structural and

functional unit of an organism. What's an organism? I'll give you a hint, it's a living thing. We all start out in the mother's womb, we all start out unable to survive alone, but we learn how to, if we are given the chance to live.

By six weeks, your baby's heart—now beating at 110 times a minute—has four hollow chambers, each with an entrance and an exit to allow blood to flow in and out of each chamber. In just two more weeks, the beat will rise to 150-170 beats per minute. Again, the baby has a heart, brain, nervous system, DNA—everything that you and I have. The body inside your body is not your body! A baby is a human being, created in God's image, just as the mother is. Both lives must be upheld as equally valuable.

Another painful factor is that it's scientifically proven that a baby feels pain as early as thirteen weeks of gestation. Abortion advocates have long argued that young children in the womb are incapable of feeling pain because of the immaturity of the nervous system. However, this was proven wrong. "The cortex appears not to be necessary for the perception of pain but rather the modulation and interpretation. Pain probably enters awareness at the subcortical levels, which are well-developed in early fetal life. The neurosurgical treatment of chronic pain often involves cortical stimulation, which seems to suppress the experience of pain. What this means is that an unborn child with an immature brain most likely experiences pain more intensely than an individual with a mature cortex." More intensely than you and I. It would hurt more for the baby to get sucked into a jar than it would if it would be you or I.

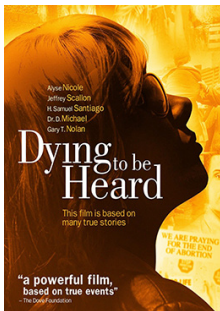
If raising a child isn't for you, whatever reason you may have for this, there are alternatives rather than just killing the child. There are a few different types of adoption that you could choose. There is closed adoption, where there is no contact with your child. However, there is also open adoption where you are still able to have contact if you would wish to do that. Then, lastly, there is direct placement adoption which is where you choose the adoptive family.

Pros to choosing adoption are that you give someone who can't have children the chance to raise a child, you give the child the opportunity to have a lifestyle or family you can't provide, and you can focus on school, work, or other needs if you aren't ready to be a parent. There are some cons as well. You permanently give up parenting rights and you may disagree with how the adoptive parents raise the child.

Another alternative to abortion is legal guardianship. Like adoption, guardianship involves placing your child with another person or family and allowing them to raise the child. By choosing a guardian instead of an adoptive family, you keep some of your parental rights. This option may be a good choice for you if you can't raise a child right now but see your circumstances changing in a few years, or if you know you want to stay closely involved in your child's life. It may also involve monthly child support payments.

Pros to choosing legal guardianship are that you can still see the child, you may have a say in some decisions, like religion or healthcare, guardianship can be temporary, and typically you choose the child's guardian. However, there are some cons. For example, you might disagree with the guardian's parenting approach, you might have a hard time seeing someone else raise the child, and, lastly, it might be painful for the child and guardian when you are able to take back custody of the child.

Hopefully you are able to see that abortion is not the answer. There are many different alternatives that you can choose rather than violently ending a child's life—someone who is, in fact, alive. The science community has for decades misrepresented the straightforward science of conception and fetal development for ideological reasons. Children in the womb are the obvious victims of this scientific fraud and we need to fight and be the voice for the voiceless. ♦



Pro-Life Movie to Consider
Dying to Be Heard

Rachel is a high-powered executive striving to climb the corporate ladder, however, she suddenly finds herself thrown into an emotional crisis when she discovers she is pregnant. Having to choose between her blossoming career, versus a life on unexpected sacrifice, her world seems to be closing in around her, as her spiritual perspectives start to become challenged as well. This riveting and heart-wrenching film underscores the reality of God's compassion for every human life, from the disabled, to the autistic, to those who perished in the Holocaust, and especially the unborn, and motivates us all to be a voice for Love, Life and for all those "dying to be heard!"

Dying to Be Heard is a powerful film, based on true events. There are three stories that tie in together as the movie progresses. One story is about a dying man named Jordan, who was a fantastic accordion player and has struggled with autism. The other plot that ties in is about Jordan's father, a Jew who survived the Holocaust, and it should be noted that death camp scenes are featured in the film. The third subplot is about Rachel, a business-woman who works hard and has just been promoted. She goes to a bar to celebrate her promotion with her girlfriends and ends up getting drunk, having sex (not shown) and winds up pregnant. The father of the child wants nothing to do with her. The voice of the unborn child becomes one of the voices, dying to be heard. The viewer will have to watch the film to learn how it all ties in together, but rest assured, it does. There is a strong theme of redemption in the movie. Those who have ever felt betrayed or forsaken will greatly appreciate this film.



Crisis Numbers

If you, or someone you know, is experiencing a crisis pregnancy, help is available; contact:

Precious Life, Inc.

1716 12th Ave., Altoona
814-944-2669

Every Life Matters (ELM)

1351 Logan Ave., Tyrone
814-650-7899

The.ELM.PSS@gmail.com

Real Alternatives, Inc.

1-888-LIFE-AID

www.realalternatives.org

For post-abortion counseling:

Project Rachel

814-884-8000

ProjectRachel@dioceseaj.org

Rachel's Vineyard

877 HOPE 4 ME (877-467-3463)

www.rachelsvineyard.org/

Family Life

Diocese of Altoona/Johnstown

Offers pastoral guidance:

814-886-5551

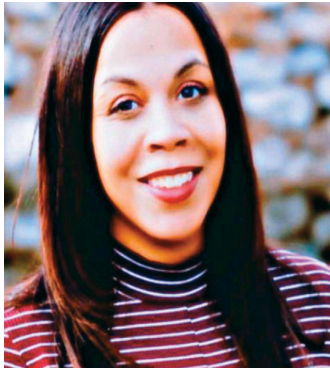
familylife@dioceseaj.org



When someone sympathized with Helen Keller on her blindness, she replied, "How much worse to have eyes and refuse to see."

16th Annual Pro-Life Dinner has been converted to an online event!

Check Our Website For When Available



Featuring: Marlene Downing Director of The HOPE Pregnancy Center

Marlene Downing is a mother of two, author of several books, public speaker and Director of the HOPE Pregnancy Center in Philadelphia. She is a dedicated community leader who brings awareness to tough issues facing society. Her desire is to create opportunity for organic conversations, wholeness and healing. Her wisdom in these areas is based on her own personal experience. She is no stranger to hardship or the power that Jesus Christ has to turn it all around.

After working nearly a decade at a corporate organization, Marlene yielded to the call of God to work at the non-profit HOPE Pregnancy Center.

Since then her love for the work has given her zeal to be divinely creative through the leading of the Holy Spirit. She hosts grass roots community

outreach events such as: Annual Ride for Hope, Purity and Abstinence Youth Conference, and "On Earth As It Is In Heaven" Healing Conference.

Marlene views her work at the HOPE Center as a beautiful golden opportunity to mentor women while helping to save the lives of the unborn.

There are 15 abortion facilities within a 3-mile radius of the Hope Center!

During the last 8 years, as an outreach and in thanksgiving that we do not have an abortion facility in our 10 county region, we have helped the HOPE Pregnancy Center in Philadelphia open its doors. Nearly half of all abortions performed in Pennsylvania are done in Philadelphia and the surrounding counties. Thanks to the 30 plus churches who have participated in our baby bottle fundraisers and our sponsors, BCCCHL has been able to help the HOPE Pregnancy Center in the "front line" war against abortion by:

- remodeling the front of their building
- providing a sign that lights up automatically at sunset
- paying printing costs and HOPE ads on the Internet
- contributing to the purchase of an ultrasound machine
- extending the availability of their ultrasound for over 200 hours
- renovating the basement to store needed baby supplies, and restocked their Blessing Room last year
- paying for bus ads for the HOPE Center that were displayed on 16 center city buses



Sponsored by Bedford County Citizens Concerned for Human Life

Go to our website to get the link:

www.BedfordCountyProLife.org

From the President's Desk

My parents were married for 51 years when my dad died on June 15, 1993. My daughter recently discovered a poem my mother wrote about their marriage. It is titled "Red Roses for Mary."

Red Roses for Mary

"To Mary, with love, Pete."
 Many times, in years gone by,
 A dozen red roses, a note that read,
"To Mary, with love, Pete,"
 from a young man, no reason,
 but for the happiness he felt —
 Mary said yes, a date had been set.
 The red roses kept coming, year after year,
 with the same note, "To Mary, with love, Pete."
 No reason needed.
 Hard times fell, as did the number of red roses,
 six, four, two, one.
 Always the note, "To Mary, with love, Pete."
 Always red roses, always the note,
"To Mary, with love, Pete."
 Years have gone by —
 Now, up over a hill, a hand on a cold stone,
 eyes full of tears, a red rose on the ground,
 a note that reads, "To Pete, with love, Mary." —MAF
 —Mary Alice Forr

This poem is dedicated to all of those parents who gave us life and loved each other through thick or thin.



—R. Thomas Forr, Jr., President
 Blair County Chapter, Citizens Concerned for Human Life

A donation has been made—

In Honor of:

Anne Zelnosky

Requested by: Anonymous

In Memory of:

Richard Zelnosky

Requested by: Anonymous

Deceased Members of the McNelis All Stars


Requested by: Chris McNelis

Deceased Members of the Costlow Family

Requested by: Marlene Brown

Donations may be made in memory of loved ones who have died or to honor someone special, and near and dear to you, for a particular occasion, or just because...

Blair County *Life News* will publish your name as well as the names of those you are honoring and/or remembering. Send donations to **Blair Co. CCHL, 2715 Third St., Altoona, PA 16601**. Thank you. God bless you!



Blair County Life News
Blair County Chapter
Citizens Concerned for Human Life, Inc.

Summer 2020; Vol. 12, No. 3
 President & Publisher: R. Thomas Forr, Jr.
 Secretary/Editor: Marge Bradley

Citizens Concerned for Human Life, Inc. is a non-profit, non-partisan, non-denominational organization dedicated to educating and upholding the truth about abortion, infanticide, euthanasia and embryonic stem cell research. CCHL is composed of chapters made up of persons of all ages, sexes, races and cultural backgrounds. CCHL, Inc. is an affiliate of the PA Pro-Life Federation and the National Right to Life Committee. Donations are not tax-deductible.

2715 Third St., Altoona, PA 16601; phone: 814-946-0681
 email: blair@centralpaprolife.org
 website: www.blaircountyprolife.com

◆ ◆ ◆
*The moment a child is born, the mother is also born.
 She never existed before. The woman existed, but the mother never.
 A mother is something absolutely new.*
 ~ Rajneesh ~

Blair County Chapter, Citizens Concerned for Human Life, Inc.

Blair County CCHL believes that human life has value in all stages of development from conception until natural death, and is committed to speaking on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves — the unborn, the aged, the incapacitated. Won't you please help in our struggle to preserve respect for human life? A contribution brings you our quarterly newsletter.

<input type="checkbox"/> Annual Membership	\$10.00	<input type="checkbox"/> In Memory of: _____	
<input type="checkbox"/> Student/Senior Member	\$ 5.00	<input type="checkbox"/> In Honor of: _____	
Name _____		Phone _____	
Address _____		City _____	Zip _____

Please complete this form and return with your donation to: **Blair County Chapter, CCHL, 2715 Third St., Altoona PA 16601**. For more information, call **814-946-0681**. Sorry, donations are not tax-deductible.



BLAIR COUNTY CHAPTER
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Altoona, PA 16601

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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

**SHE SAID HE WAS A MISTAKE,
I SAID HE WAS MY SON.**



*NFL star Benjamin Watson has been very vocal about his pro-life views.
He recently challenged dads to think deeper about their role.
Delivering a touching speech in the heart of New York City's Times Square,
Watson implored dads to remember that "fatherhood begins in the womb."*