

CITIZENS  
CONCERNED



BLAIR COUNTY  
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Citizens Concerned for Human Life

# Blair County Life News

Volume 13 Number 2

Presenting the Pro-Life Message to Blair County, Pennsylvania

Spring 2021

## Planned Parenthood's Consistent Message: Profits Over People

By Mary Szoch



On February 25, Planned Parenthood published their annual report. The front cover of the report reads, "No Matter What." Though the later message from leadership references Planned Parenthood unveiling a new tag line: "Care, no matter what," it seems that a better tag line for the organization would be "Profits, no matter what." The annual report makes it clear that Planned Parenthood neither cares for nor about people. Planned Parenthood simply cares about profits.

In their report, of which Family Research Council (FRC) has made a detailed analysis, Planned Parenthood highlighted that during the 2019-2020 fiscal year, they committed **354,871** abortions. This means that Planned Parenthood aborted 972 babies every single day in 2019. This is the highest number of abortions Planned Parenthood has ever committed in a year.

According to a November 2020 Centers for Disease Control (CDC) report, 619,691 abortions were reported to the CDC in 2018. In 2018, Planned Parenthood committed 345,672 abortions—which is 56 percent of all abortions reported to the federal government. Based on Planned Parenthood's yearly increase in the number of abortions they commit and the decrease in the number of abortions committed nationally, Planned Parenthood is becoming more and more of an abortion monopoly.

Incidentally, this seems to be completely in line with Planned Parenthood's goals. Over the past 10 years, the number of abortions committed by Planned Parenthood has increased by 7.7 percent. During that same time period, cancer screenings decreased by 68 percent, breast exams decreased by 68 percent, and prenatal services decreased by 80 percent. In September 2018, Dr. Leana Wen was hired as president of Planned Parenthood. In 2019, Dr. Leana Wen was fired. In her statement detailing the reasons for her departure, she noted, "Indeed, there was immediate criticism that I did not prioritize abortion enough...I began efforts to increase care for women before, during and after pregnancies...but the team I brought in...faced daily internal opposition from those who saw my goals as mission creep."

Dr. Leana Wen was fired for challenging Planned Parenthood's efforts to grow ONLY their abortion business. Since her firing, Planned Parenthood's annual report demonstrates that they have doubled down in their commitment to making abortion their dominant service—with one glaring exception.

The Planned Parenthood annual report also showed that in 2019, there were over 200 Planned Parenthood facilities in 31 states providing services for patients who identify as transgender. As it turns out, Planned Parenthood is the second largest provider of cross-sex hormones. In an interview with Abigail Shrier, a former Planned Parenthood employee, she described Planned Parenthood prescribing hormones to young clients with almost no examination of their underlying problems and practically no medical oversight.



*continued on page 13*

# Abortion Was the Leading Cause of Death Worldwide in 2020, Killing 42.6 Million People

By Steven Ertelt

More human beings died in abortions than any other cause of death in 2020, a new report indicates. A heartbreaking reminder about the prevalence of abortion, statistics compiled by Worldometers indicate that there were over 42.6 million abortions worldwide in 2020. The independent site collects data from governments and other reputable organizations and then reports the data, along with estimates and projections, based on those numbers. It reveals **42,655,372 people died from abortions in 2020.**

When contrasting the abortion numbers to other causes of death, including cancer, HIV/AIDS, traffic accidents and suicide, abortions far outnumbered every other cause. By contrast, 8.7 million people died from cancer in 2020, 5 million from smoking, 13 million from disease, and 1.7 million died of HIV/AIDS. Deaths by malaria and alcohol are also recorded.

And when compared to the coronavirus, the number of people dying from abortions dwarfs the number of coronavirus deaths. Worldometers indicates that 1,830,979 people died from the coronavirus worldwide in 2020. There is considerable question as to whether those figures are accurate, as the CDC and state figures in the United States indicate 40-50% of deaths from the coronavirus aren't actually directly resulted from the virus itself, but are of people who had the virus and died from some other cause.

But assuming the figures are accurate and not adjusting for overcounting, abortion is 23.2 times more deadly than the coronavirus. Worldometers estimates about 59.6 million deaths worldwide in 2020, but that number does not include unborn babies' abortion deaths. Unborn babies are not recognized as human beings even though biology indicates that they are unique, living human beings from the moment of conception and they die brutal, violent deaths in abortions.

The abortion number is incomprehensible, but each of those 42.6 million abortions worldwide in 2020 represents a living human being whose life was violently destroyed in their mother's womb. Each unborn baby already had their own unique DNA, making them distinct from their mother. That DNA indicated if the child was a boy or girl, their eye and hair color, their height, possible genetic disorders and other disabilities, and much more. In most cases, the unborn babies' hearts are beating when they are aborted, too.

In America, just under 1 million babies are aborted every year. Though abortion rates have been dropping in the past decade, abortion remains the leading cause of death in the United States as well. An estimated 62 million unborn babies have been killed in abortions in the U.S. since *Roe v. Wade* in 1973.

—LifeNews.com, January 1, 2021

## US legislators seek to honor tens of millions killed since *Roe* with 'Day of Tears'

By Bridget Handy

On January 22, 2021, the 48th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade*, Rep. Jody Hice (R-Ga.) and Sen. Mike Braun (R-Ind.) introduced companion resolutions in the U.S. House and Senate to proclaim January 22nd the "Day of Tears." House Resolution 58 and its Senate counterpart seek to memorialize the tens of millions of preborn children slaughtered in their mothers' wombs by lowering the flag to half-mast every January 22nd.

Since the Supreme Court's deadliest decision in 1973, approximately 62 million children have been ripped from the safety of their mothers' wombs and stripped of their right to life. As Rep. Hice noted in his press release announcing the "Day of Tears" resolution, the Constitution of the United States recognizes the God-given right to life of Americans, "Yet, for nearly half a century, a wildly irresponsible decision by the Supreme Court has legalized the killing of unborn children—the most vulnerable in our society."

In his last days in the White House, President Trump issued a proclamation declaring January 22, 2021, "National Sanctity of Human Life Day," noting, "Every human life is a gift to the world. Whether born or unborn, young or old, healthy or sick, every person is made in the holy image of God. The Almighty Creator gives unique talents, beautiful dreams, and a great purpose to every person."

The first US president to issue a National Sanctity of Human Life Day was Ronald Reagan in 1984. Tragically, President Biden used the 48th anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* to announce his promise to codify *Roe* into law and to appoint pro-abortion justices throughout his term.

Sen. Braun, who introduced the Senate companion "Day of Tears" resolution, said, "To mark National Sanctity of Human Life Day and to remember the millions of unborn children lost to abortion, I was proud to introduce the Senate resolution recognizing the 60+ million lost since the Supreme Court's 1973 decision and calling for flags to be flown at half-staff in their memory."

—Excerpted from LiveAction.org, January 27, 2021



# **17<sup>th</sup> Annual Pro-Life Dinner**

**Clear Ridge Independent Fellowship Church  
516 Stayer Rd, Everett on PA Route 26, South of Everett**

**Friday April 23, 2021**

**Dinner at 6:00 p.m. ~ Doors open at 5:00 p.m.  
Come early to check out our door prizes and Basket Raffle!**



## **Featured Speaker: Maria Gallagher**

*Legislative and Political Action Committee Director  
Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation  
State Affiliate of National Right to Life*

### ***"When Roe Goes - Life After Roe v. Wade."***

*Maria Gallagher will tell the history of Roe, how we can prepare Pennsylvania for an overturn of Roe, and what life after Roe will mean in Pennsylvania and beyond.*

Prior to her work with the Federation, Maria worked as a legislative associate with Ohio Right to Life. Before joining the pro-life cause, Maria served as Statehouse correspondent for a public radio and television network; as a producer for a CBS-TV News affiliate; and as a reporter for a public radio station. Her freelance radio reports have been heard on national news outlets including CBS Radio, AP Radio, and National Public Radio.

Her journalistic work has received awards from the Ohio Associated Press, the Press Club of Cleveland, and the Society of Professional Journalists. She has also been recognized with an award from Real Alternatives for her "dedication to women and children and the promotion of life." Maria was named 2020 Person of the Year by the Society of St. Sebastian for "tireless efforts to speak with authorities and community on behalf of the Culture of Life."

Maria earned her Bachelor's degree in journalism at Ohio State University and her Master's degree in journalism at Northwestern University. She is the author of an eBook, ***A Pro-Life Guide to the Media***, and has served as a freelance writer for numerous websites and publications, including ***LifeNews.com***, ***Our Sunday Visitor***, and ***CatholicMom.com***.

Maria is the proud mother of one vivacious and talented daughter, Gabriella. Maria also is an active member of her parish and of the worldwide Cursillo movement.

**Adults \$20 - Students \$10 - 4 & under free RSVP 276-3638 or 652-6755 by 4/18/21  
Checks should be made payable to Bedford County CCHL  
Mail checks to: Pam Lucas; 262 Zion Rd; Everett, PA 15537**

***Be a 2021 Sponsor of our "Save the Babies" Projects!***  
Platinum/\$250, Gold/\$100, Silver/\$50, Bronze/\$25

***Sponsored by Bedford County Citizens Concerned for Human Life***  
[www.BedfordCountyProLife.org](http://www.BedfordCountyProLife.org)

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#### **The Honorable Jim Gregory (R)**

**District 80**- Allegheny Twp. (part), Antis Twp., Bellwood Bor., Blair Twp., Catharine Twp., Duncansville Bor., Frankstown Twp., Freedom Twp., Greenfield Twp., Hollidaysburg Bor., Huston Twp., Juniata Twp., Martinsburg Bor., Newry Bor., North Woodbury Twp., Roaring Spring Bor., Snyder Twp. (part), Taylor Twp., Tyrone Bor. (part), Tyrone Twp. (part), Williamsburg Bor., Woodbury Twp.

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## Legislative Update

Pennsylvania Senate Bill 21, would amend the Commonwealth's long-standing Abortion Control Act to ban the abortion of a baby solely because of a Down syndrome diagnosis. In their co-sponsorship memo for the bill, Senators Martin and Ward said, "A test result should not be a death sentence..." Contact your state legislators to voice your

support for this life-saving legislation:

<https://www.legis.state.pa.us/cfdocs/legis/home/findyourlegislator/>

If you need additional information, please contact PA Pro-Life Federation Legislative Director, Maria Gallagher, at [gallagher@paprolife.org](mailto:gallagher@paprolife.org).

## U.S. House Democrats Pass "Equality Act"

By Steven Ertelt

House Democrats, [on February 25], passed the Equality Act, a misnamed bill that would create a so-called "right" to kill babies in abortions and force Americans to fund them. Voting 224-206, largely along party lines, the House of Representatives approved H.R. 5, the Equality Act, over the objections of pro-life groups. The Equality Act contains language that could be construed to create a right to demand abortion from health care providers, and likely would place at risk the authority of the government to prohibit taxpayer-funded abortions.

The Equality Act would amend the Civil Rights Act of 1964 by defining "sex" to include "pregnancy, childbirth, or a related medical condition."

"If enacted, H.R. 5 would open the door for widespread litigation wherein any attempt to restrict abortion, including the funding of abortion, would constitute discrimination," said Jennifer Popik, J.D., director of federal legislation for the National Right to Life Committee. The bill explicitly overrides the protections that are contained in the Religious Freedom Restoration Act.

—Excerpted from *LifeNews.com*, February 25, 2021

## Equal Rights Amendment

During the week of March 15, 2021, the U.S. House of Representatives will take up a measure that attempts to revive the long-expired Equal Rights Amendment. This unprecedented measure poses a dire threat to all pro-life laws and policies, state and federal.

The Equal Rights Amendment is a constitutional amendment that Congress proposed in 1972, before the Supreme Court legalized abortion in *Roe v. Wade* (January 1973). The ERA has a 7-year ratification deadline that expired 42 years ago. But now, the Democrat-controlled Congress will take up a measure (House Joint Resolution 17) that claims to retroactively remove the deadline, and to magically "air drop" the ERA instantly into the U.S. Constitution!

If this unprecedented scheme works, virtually all pro-life legislation nationwide might be permanently wiped out. The National Organization for Women says the ERA "could negate hundreds" of pro-life laws. The National Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (NARAL) says "the ERA would reinforce the constitutional right to abortion...[it] would require judges to strike down anti-abortion laws..." Leaders of numerous other pro-abortion organizations, including Planned Parenthood, have made similar statements.

**Please call your U.S. House member, to urge him or her to oppose this sweeping pro-abortion resolution (House Joint Resolution 17). Please do not delay—the House will act within the next week.**

If the House narrowly passes the measure, then the Senate will take it up—and only a filibuster by pro-life senators can stop it. A filibuster can only be ended by 60 votes. All pro-life senators must be strongly urged to vote to block the ERA-revival measure (House Joint Resolution 17, or the Senate companion measure, Senate Joint Resolution 1). The Senate Democratic leadership could take up the ERA as early as the week of March 22.

—Excerpt from *National Right to Life Legislative Alert*, March 11, 2021

## **\$1.9 Trillion Reconciliation Package = Taxpayer Funding of Abortion**

“Abortion is not health care and forcing taxpayers to prop up the abortion industry during a pandemic does not help the millions of Americans deeply impacted by COVID. Pro-abortion Democrats are more interested in funding Planned Parenthood and abortion providers than in providing real solutions for the American people,” said Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life upon passage of the COVID-19 relief plan (H.R. 1319). The bill passed 220-211 with no Republican support and one Democrat voting against it.

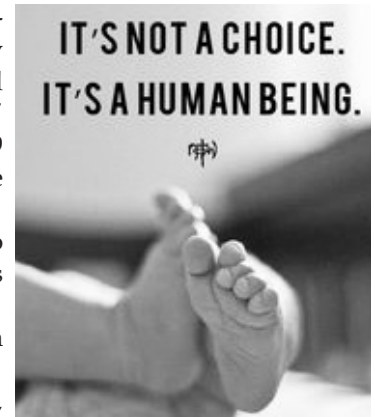
Continued Tobias, “The vast majority of Americans do not want their tax dollars to pay for abortions, yet the COVID relief reconciliation bill passed by House Democrats betrays their constituents and provides for taxpayer funding of abortion.”

The reconciliation bill does not include any Hyde Amendment provisions which would have prevented these funds from being used for abortion.

“The COVID-relief reconciliation bill is a Democrat wish-list,” said Jennifer Popik, J.D., director of Federal Legislation for National Right to Life. “Without Hyde Amendment protections, this legislation has the potential to put millions of dollars into the pockets of abortion providers.”

“This legislation does very little to benefit the American people and will do great harm to unborn children and their mothers both here and around the world,” said Tobias. “But pro-abortion Democrats don’t care. This bill is a thinly-disguised attempt to gut protective provisions like the Hyde Amendment and the Helms Amendment and line the pockets of abortion providers.”

—Excerpted from National Right to Life Press Release, March 10, 2021



## **A Letter from Senator Bob Casey (see also President's Letter, page 15)**

February 26, 2021

Dear Mr. Forr:

**T**hank you for taking the time to contact me about prohibitions on federal funding of abortion. I appreciate hearing from you about this issue. I am a pro-life public official. I believe that life begins at conception, and that the role of government is to protect, enrich and value life for everyone, at every moment, from beginning to end. I recognize that these are complicated and contentious issues for our country, and people have principled and deeply held views on both sides. I respect the views of those who disagree with me, and I have worked to find common ground on policies that promote basic human dignity and economic independence at all stages of life.

Because I am pro-life, I believe we must continue the status quo of the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits the use of federal funds to pay for abortion. Since 1976, this country has kept these funding restrictions in place in the Labor-Health and Human Services-Education appropriations bill and in other appropriations, such as the Financial Services bill, which covers the Federal Employee Health Benefits Program. Consistent with this belief, I have also supported legislation to “codify” the Hyde Amendment. Such legislation would make the Hyde Amendment permanent, rather than continuing to deal with this matter every year through the appropriations process.

Being a pro-life public official means that I also strongly support women and children before and after birth. I authored legislation that, in 2010, served as the basis for a program that became law known as the Pregnancy Assistance Fund. This program provides important support to pregnant and parenting teens and young women. I have also pushed to increase Title X funding so that more women have access to family planning services, and I have voted against attempts to cut off funding for Planned Parenthood. Planned Parenthood provides many basic health services, like cervical and breast cancer screening, as well as primary care and family planning. Under the Hyde Amendment, federal funding already cannot be used to terminate a pregnancy. It is critical to protect the other essential health services that would be curtailed by eliminating federal funding to organizations like Planned Parenthood.

We cannot say we are pro-life without providing support to women who choose to carry their pregnancies to term. I believe that all public officials have an enduring obligation to stand up for the needs of vulnerable, pregnant women and for their children after they are born. To me, being a pro-life public official means opposing massive cuts to Medicaid, which pays for approximately half of all births in the country. It also means opposing devastating cuts to food assistance to vulnerable children, the Women and Infant Children (WIC) program and early learning programs like Head Start. In addition to supporting these programs, I have also introduced legislation to make the Adoption Tax Credit fully refundable. What undergirds my support for all of these policies is the belief that being pro-life means having a consistent ethic of support for life from conception to birth and beyond and that all children have a right to dignity, safety, support and opportunity.

Again, thank you for sharing your thoughts with me. Please do not hesitate to contact me in the future about this or any other matter of importance to you. For more information on this or other issues, I encourage you to visit my website, <http://casey.senate.gov>. I hope you will find this online office a comprehensive resource to stay up-to-date on my work in Washington, request assistance from my office or share with me your thoughts on the issues that matter most to you and to Pennsylvania.

*Sincerely, Bob Casey, United States Senator*

# Planned Parenthood is now advocating for assisted suicide in New York

By *Cassy Fiano-Chesser*

*Editor's Note: Planned Parenthood Goes Womb to Tomb*

The state of New York is one of the latest to consider embracing assisted suicide. Senate Bill S3151A, or the Medical Aid in Dying Act, was originally introduced in 2017, but died in committee in March of 2018. Another version failed in 2019, yet Assemblyman Kevin Cahill has announced his intentions to resubmit the bill for consideration in 2021—and one Planned Parenthood political action affiliate is showing its support.

Planned Parenthood Empire State Acts (PPESA) released its 2021 legislative priorities, which largely consisted of expanding abortion—but buried at the bottom was a passage linking abortion and assisted suicide under the “bodily autonomy” umbrella.

The right to bodily autonomy and self-determination is not constrained to one aspect of being, but rather the spectrum of life. PPESA supports passage of the Medical Aid in Dying Act, to provide adults with the agency to make end-of-life decisions for themselves, with dignity and compassion.

The notion of the “spectrum of life” adopted in Planned Parenthood’s wording bears a striking similarity to language used by the pro-life movement, which advocates for protecting human beings from womb to tomb. The difference, however, is that Planned Parenthood is arguing for the right to kill human beings at any age, from womb to tomb.

Cahill is looking to have the New York legislature approve a bill that would mandate the state Department of Health to study assisted suicide, the first step towards legalizing doctor-facilitated death. Yet doctors and even the New York Alliance Against Assisted Suicide have been protesting the assisted suicide bills in New York. Speaking before the Senate last year, these groups noted the myriad issues with allowing doctors to kill their patients.

Dr. Matthew Lynch, a neurologist, criticized the lack of safeguards in the bill, as well as the lack of training required for doctors to participate. “Just because a person is unimpaired when consenting to a script doesn’t mean they won’t be when they decide to take it,” he said before the Senate. “If I want to prescribe opioids in New York, I have to take a three-hour course every three years; if I want to prescribe medical marijuana, I have to take a course and register with the Health Department. But if I want to prescribe death under this bill, I don’t need any specific training.”

Palliative care specialist Dr. Mary-ellen Edmiston asked lawmakers why they aren’t providing better options for sick and dying New Yorkers, and instead are simply focusing on death. “Hospice and palliative care as a medical specialty exists to help patients with life-limiting illness, experience the best quality of life possible as they face the reality of their own impending death,” she said. “There are alternatives to unwilling suffering. We hope to provide more aid in living rather than more aid in dying.”

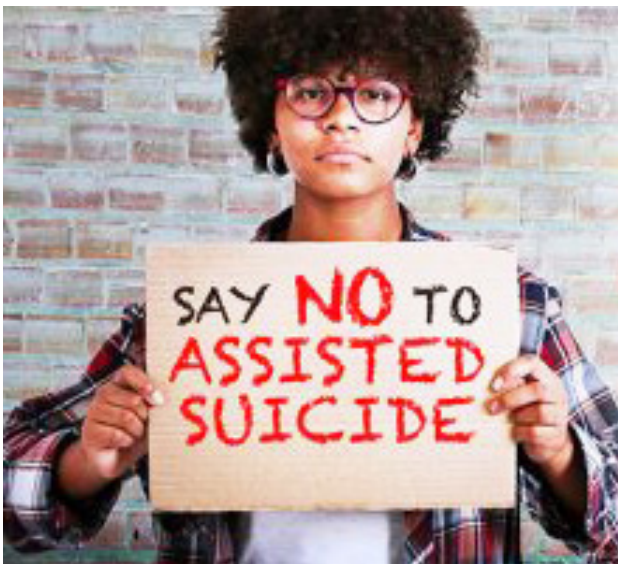
Also criticizing the bill was Dr. Gregory Weston, an infectious disease specialist who argued that this would give insurance companies incentive to refuse payment for expensive treatments. “Doctor-assisted suicide is especially dangerous for those who are socioeconomically disadvantaged, isolated, the elderly, and living with disabilities,” he said. “They are already marginalized and discriminated against by our health care system.”

Kristen Hanson, whose husband J.J. Hanson publicly opposed assisted suicide during his fight with brain cancer, organized the rally, and spoke on his behalf. “Thankfully J.J. did not end his own life, but he said if he had those pills

with him he might have taken them, and you cannot undo that,” she said, explaining that her husband lived over three years longer than doctors had originally predicted. Hanson, a former Marine, suffered from the same form of brain cancer as assisted suicide advocate Brittany Maynard, and openly spoke about the pressure legal assisted suicide places on people like him. He also criticized Maynard for using her illness as a means to legalize doctor-facilitated death, calling it “a bad example for others who had this form of brain cancer, explaining that “fewer people going into clinical trials” actually “removes a large part of the ability to fight against disease.”

Yet Hanson fought bravely, and never stopped speaking out about how people who choose not to die are still living full lives. His wife now carries on his legacy for him. “I was told you don’t have an option,” he said in an interview. “You can die dignified if you commit suicide. . . . To me it just doesn’t make sense. It’s kind of a reflection of where our society is.”

—*LiveAction.org, January 13, 2021*



# He refused assisted suicide after brain cancer Now he's running triathlons

By *Cassy Fiano-Chesser*

Colin Clark, a 57-year-old who lives in Hawaii, has always been athletic. But after receiving a diagnosis of brain cancer, he considered assisted suicide, scared he would be a burden on his family. Instead, though, he chose to live—and now he's made an incredible recovery.

In November of 2019, Clark began noticing that his left hand was twitching, or that it would slip off the table. He thought it was just due to his busy schedule, which included competing in triathlons. But after one race, he began having seizures. After being referred to Cedars-Sinai in Los Angeles and undergoing a biopsy, he was given a devastating diagnosis: stage 4 glioblastoma.

"We had to tell Colin, his wife and their daughter, Nadja, the unfortunate news that yes, he did indeed have brain cancer, and surgical removal of the tumor was not an option," Dr. Jeremy Rudnick said in a Cedars-Sinai press release. "But, as we do for all our patients, we assured Colin we would pull out all of our heavy artillery and focus on preserving his quality of life. In his case, our goal was getting him back in his running shoes, into the ocean to swim and onto his bicycle for long rides."

Clark's condition was already difficult for him to bear: the formerly athletic man found himself bedbound and reliant on a wheelchair, so his thoughts turned dark. "His main concern was for his wife and daughter," neurosurgeon Keith Black told KHON2. "He was actually contemplating physician-assisted suicide, so as not to be a burden on his family."

He thought it would be too much of a hardship for his wife and daughter to care for him. "When I first learned I had terminal cancer, I contemplated forgoing treatment and opting-in to end-of-life options," Clark said in the Cedars-Sinai release. "The last thing I wanted was for my wife of 26 years or my 25-year-old daughter to take care of me while I lay in bed sick and dying."

This fear is common among people who seek out assisted suicide. Data from Oregon found that the majority of people who wished to die cited a loss of autonomy as the reason why. Multiple studies in well-respected medical journals likewise found that people seek assisted suicide because they are hopeless, afraid of being a burden, have little to no support, and are depressed—not because they are afraid of a painful death.

His medical team, however, urged him to fight and not give up. And their support helped. "I made a choice to use what time I had left to exploit boundaries and build communities," Clark said. "For me, this means en-



couraging and inspiring other patients to give life everything they have."

Clark underwent six weeks of chemotherapy and radiation, and the treatment miraculously worked. His tumor began to shrink, and surgeries relieved the pressure on his brain. Though he still needed a wheelchair, his wife helped him to regain his strength. "I was wheeled into rehabilitation, but when I left three weeks later, I walked out of the facility. Slowly, but I walked out on my own. This diagnosis has taught me that it's better to start small and do something at 70%, than never try because you cannot do 100% right away," he said. "Natascha and I set goals each night for the following day. Even if it's something small—like getting my T-shirt or socks on by myself—we put our energy and effort behind it."

Though it took time, a year later, Clark was back to competing in triathlons. And he hopes his story will inspire other people struggling with diagnoses like his. "I still have the tumor. One day, it will take me out. But it could be months. It could be years. It could be seven years, or one year," he told KHON2. "What we've decided to do is just have as much quality of life as we can and just keep going. Doing new things. I'm gardening right now. I've never gardened before. I'm trying to cook and bake, this banana bread is getting ready, I can smell it. Whatever you haven't done in the past that you want to do, do those things! Have each other's backs and staying in touch because some people go quiet and you think they're okay, well they may not be okay. Just keep in touch with friends and colleagues."

—*National Right to Life News Today, February 24, 2021*  
*This article first appeared at LiveAction.org*

# Congratulations, 2021 Oratory Contest Winners!

**J**ohn Sicree, a junior who is homeschooled, is the First-Place Varsity Winner of the Citizens Concerned for Human Life 2021 Oratory Contest. He is the son of Andrew and Rebecca Sicree, of Boalsburg. John was awarded a \$200 prize.

**Helena Sicree**, Grade 9, and **Susan Steltzer**, Grade 10, tied for First-Place in the Junior Varsity category. Helena is homeschooled and is the daughter of Andrew and Rebecca Sicree, of Boalsburg. Susan Steltzer is a sophomore and attends North Star High School. Susan is the daughter of Scott and Anna Steltzer, of Boswell. She and Helena were each awarded \$150. **Matthew Levri**, of Altoona, Grade 9, is homeschooled. Matthew was awarded \$100 for his Second-Place entry in the Junior Varsity contest.

The judges for the Oratory Contest held March 7, were: **Joseph Hurd**, a former basketball coach and head of the Blair County Chamber of Commerce; **Nancy Head**, teacher at Great Commission High School, who instructs her students in the life issues, and **Pat Forr**, pro-life activist for over 40 years. We are grateful for their involvement in pro-life events. Many thanks also to **Marita Forr**, timekeeper for the speeches, and for her assistance with arrangements for the Contest.

Printed below is John Sicree's First-Place Varsity entry, entitled, **Choosing Life Over Death**. The presentations of Helena Sicree, Susan Steltzer and Matthew Levri will be reprinted in the Summer issue of this newsletter.



## Choosing Life over Death

*By John Sicree, First-Place Varsity Winner*



**I**n the story *Me Before You*, by Jojo Moyes, Will Traynor is an extreme sports enthusiast whose life is changed after a motorcycle accident leaves him paralyzed. Lou Clark comes into his life as a caretaker for him, and slowly gets accustomed to his bitterness. They become friends and grow closer until Lou learns what his plans are. Will plans on going to an assisted suicide facility to end his life. He has to go through long tedious operations and constantly has to keep returning to the hospital, and he tired of it all. Even as Lou frantically tries to talk him out of it and takes him on trips to show him life is worth living, she even confesses her love for him, but Will won't be stopped. He does, in the end, carry out his plans and leaves heart-

broken Lou behind.

Physician Assisted Suicide or Voluntary Euthanasia (shortened to PAS or VE) is a treatment where the patient, under guidance of a physician, self-inflicts a lethal drug dose to kill themselves. When someone is put in the unfortunate situation where the possibility of PAS is considered, whether it be some terminal illness or immobilizing disease, they are in a dreadful situation and need to be respected. However, PAS is not the solution and its logic and reasoning fall short.

First of all, no matter the circumstances, you are a human person and that needs to be respected. Secondly, there is help for you. There are lots of modern pain-relieving techniques that allow for a more bearable life. Thirdly, the act in itself goes against the point of a physician, which is to help people. And lastly, allowing PAS starts a domino effect justifying more appalling deeds.

When it comes to human lives, all upstanding people agree that people have unique value. But people will argue that it's their life and that they can do what they want with it. This is true to a point, but we have always had laws and regulations set in place to protect the value of life, whether it be from themselves or from another. This is because humans have an inherent and immeasurable value that the act of killing goes against. You can't say you value life then go and kill someone or yourself. Your value as a human does not waver no matter the circumstances, no matter how you are feeling. Which is why people considering PAS should have their situation reassessed, because they have options and deserve them.

Modern pain relief is one these options. People will often argue that they are doing this out of compassion for the patient, as their treatments and way of life have become painful. The same people often argue that you are better off dead. Since most people alive right now have never been dead, I don't think it's fair to argue that they will be better off. Especially when we have widely available end of life care in the form of hospice care. Even so, an Oregon Death with Dignity Act Annual Report found that inadequate pain control or other concerns were not the main reason for choosing PAS, it was ranked 6th at 31.4% while the top reasons were losing autonomy (91.4%) and inability to engage in fun activities (86.7%). Showing that people are in a tough situation and just want it over with. Another thing to think about is how up to 77% of terminally ill patients have some sort of depression. Depression is commonly a factor included in whether or not someone's judgment could be clouded, but an Oregon Assisted Suicide report stated that less than 4% of their patients are referred to counseling. Should someone who is depressed be assisted in suicide? Why are these terminally ill suicidal patients not treated with the same urgency as other suicidal people?

Another problem with PAS is how it goes against everything a physician stands for. The Hippocratic Oath, a guiding standard for physicians, states, "I will not give a lethal drug to anyone if I am asked, nor will I advise such a plan;



and similarly, I will not give a woman a pessary to cause an abortion." A physician's objective is to protect life not to end it. PAS destroys the physician's integrity and trust with the patient. Notably, the physician has all the power and knowledge in this trust, a patient might feel pressured to do so if their physician brings it up. Especially with those who might have mental issues, they are putting a lot of trust in the physician, who could easily recommend that the patient choose PAS. We can see examples of distrust in places like the Netherlands. There euthanasia, hardly far off from PAS, is legal. Patients will sign papers and carry cards with them stating that they do not want to be euthanized.

As I mentioned just before, involuntary euthanasia, is another problem with physician assisted suicide. Decreeing that a terminally ill patient isn't as valuable as another life, opens up arguments for worse practices, which in turn get worse and worse. The Netherlands is again a prime example; they decided to not prosecute voluntary euthanasia. This led to euthanasia being legalized, then three years later, children were allowed to be euthanized. Now they are considering the idea of broadening their scope. They thought of including social factors into euthanasia cases, meaning that those who were poor or had bad social skills could be euthanized. This shows how one justification leads to another, which then leads to a full decline in respect for life.

*Me Before You* tries to show how PAS is a good thing. I think it shows quite the opposite, it shows how selfish PAS really is. Will betrayed Lou by leaving her behind. He could have kept on living a happy life; there are places he could have stayed to relieve his pain. Besides, he would have had Lou by his side. *Me Before You* shows how PAS tries to dehumanize people, it tries to show that life is disposable and doesn't really matter. This is why we must stand up to physician assisted suicide and euthanasia, and not allow it to spread. ♦



### Unborn Babies Feel Pain

*continued from page 12*

While some people would argue that pain (or absence of it), no matter its definition, does not make killing a human any more or less ethical, other people believe the pain involved in killing a human is very important. The fact that a human fetus could feel the pain of an abortion procedure would absolutely be relevant to their stance on abortion. The growing body of evidence for nociception in very young humans seems to point strongly to the fact that a 12-week-old human would, indeed, feel pain. Consider the fact that according to the latest CDC abortion estimates, over 40,000 humans were killed in 2018 who were pain-capable.

As a bit of a parting shot, the ACPeds ends their press statement by saying, "Medicine's double standard of acknowledging pain capability in wanted premature babies while denying it in unwanted unborn babies of the same gestational age is unconscionable." Whether we like it or not, whether the ACPeds wants to wade into politics or not—the pain capability of human fetuses does have a place in the abortion debate for many people.

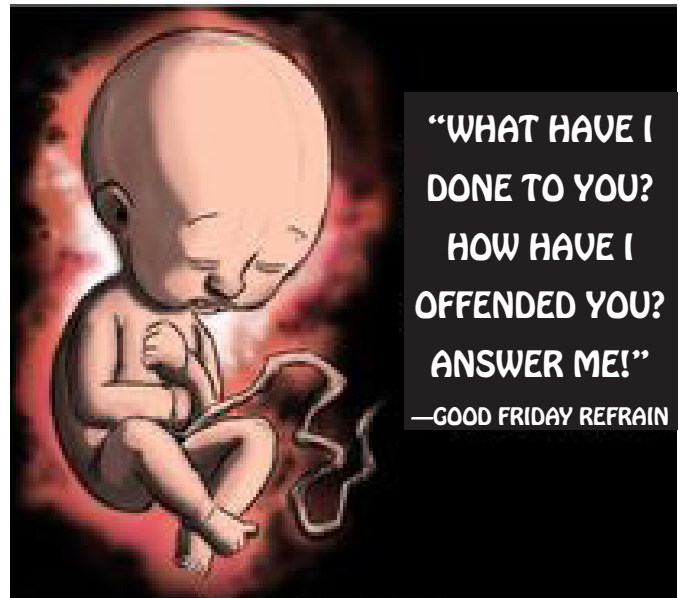
—*LifeNews.com, March 8, 2021*



### Another must-see pro-life movie!

#### *I Lived on Parker Avenue*

It is filled with love and confirms the phrase, "Adoption—the Loving Option." It's on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/8pxu6DEPQkw>. A college student, David Scotton, meets his birth mother and father, who gave him up for adoption instead of going through with an abortion. It is actually a documentary; there are no actors. The son, the birth parents and their families, and the adoptive parents play themselves! More information, as well as a trailer of *I Lived on Parker Avenue* can be found on Facebook and [ILivedOnParkerAve.com](http://ILivedOnParkerAve.com).



## ABORTION

*Out of the depths I cry to you, O Lord;*

*Lord, hear my voice!*

*May your ears be attentive  
to my cry for mercy.*

*If you, Lord, keep account of sins,*

*Lord, who can stand?*

*But with you is forgiveness...*

*With the Lord there is mercy  
and fullness of redemption.*

~ *Psalms 130:1-2, 7*

drive  
**16**

**3.65**  
grade  
point average

vision  
**20/20**

**LifeFacts**

**120/60**  
blood pressure

adult  
**18**

**just the stats!**

**98.6**  
temperature

batting  
average **.350**

**13**  
teenager

**9**  
lives?

**8.5**  
shoe  
size

only / life



## LIFE IS ALL ABOUT NUMBERS.

Your grade point average...the number of days left until school lets out...your batting average. Numbers are also important when we talk about life inside the womb.

*Here are some memorable numbers in the lives of unborn children:*

**3** — the number of weeks when **unborn child's eyes develop and heart starts beating**

**6** — the number of weeks an **unborn baby's skeleton is complete and brain waves develop**

**9** — the number of weeks when an **unborn baby begins to swallow**

**11** — the number of weeks when an **unborn baby begins to suck his thumb**

**16** — the number of weeks when an **unborn baby begins kicking**

**18** — the number of weeks when an **unborn baby can cry**

**20** — the number of weeks when **hair appears on an unborn baby's head**

**1 MILLION** — the number of **unborn children killed by abortion each year**

**62 MILLION+** — the number of **unborn children killed since Roe v. Wade**, the U.S. Supreme Court decision which legalized abortion

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# just the stats!

# LifeFacts

## HUMAN DEVELOPMENT WEEKS FROM CONCEPTION



Now that you know the numbers,  
it's time for you to **do something**  
to put an end to abortion:

- ✓ **Join your high school pro-life club.** Don't have one? E-mail us at [lifelines@paprolife.org](mailto:lifelines@paprolife.org) and we'll tell you how to start one.
- ✓ **Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper** about how abortion is affecting your generation.
- ✓ **Wear a pro-life t-shirt.**
- ✓ **Put a pro-life bumper sticker on your car.**
- ✓ **Encourage your youth group to volunteer at your local pregnancy support center.**
- ✓ **Have a friend who's thinking about abortion? Have her call 1-888-LifeAid** to find the nearest pregnancy support center.
- ✓ **Attend a meeting of your local chapter of the Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation.** You can find your nearest chapter by visiting our website at [www.paprolife.org](http://www.paprolife.org).
- ✓ **Educate yourself!** Find the latest facts and figures about abortion by logging onto our website and visit [www.teenbreaks.com](http://www.teenbreaks.com).
- ✓ **Enter our pro-life essay and oratory contests!** For contest rules, e-mail us at [lifelines@paprolife.org](mailto:lifelines@paprolife.org).

**Remember — You're never too young to be a lifesaver.**

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Photography of Stages of Human Development Courtesy of Life Issues Institute

# Doctors' Group Says Unborn Babies Can Feel Pain as Early as 12 Weeks

By Petra Phn

The American College of Pediatricians (ACPeds) recently released a press statement summarizing their new position statement concerning fetal pain. While the ACPeds acknowledges this issue is sometimes relevant to legal and moral discussions about abortion, the point of their statement is not to focus on whether abortion should be legal or if it is moral. Instead, the focus of the group, "a national medical association of licensed physicians and healthcare professionals who specialize in the care of infants, children and adolescents," is generally on how young humans are treated medically with regard to pain management.

They state: "While it is obviously unethical to harm innocent human beings irrespective of their ability to perceive pain, because of the resulting acute stress responses and subsequent potential long-term negative effects, the ACPeds holds that avoiding, mitigating, and directly treating fetal, neonatal, and pediatric pain is a medical and ethical obligation."

The full position statement reviews the growing body of evidence which points to "nociception (which refers to the anatomical and physiological responses to hurtful stimuli)" being possible even in very young humans, perhaps as young as 12 weeks old as a review from researchers Stuart W.G. Derbyshire and John C. Bockmann points out. From how they write in their paper, this age seems to be based on normal gestational age, which is counted from the first day of a woman's last menstrual period (LMP). In reality, age post-fertilization could reasonably be about 1-3 weeks shorter than the age based on the standard LMP measurement.

This is incredible. It means humans as young as 9-11 weeks old have developed sufficiently to display nociception.

The ACPeds reviews other evidence which has been pushing back the timeline of infant and fetal pain. Many studies on premature infants' pain responses and even fetal pain responses have all contributed to the growing consensus that humans can feel pain from a very early age, and that painful stimuli are actually more painful prior to about 43-44 weeks' gestation.

This is important to ACPeds because that means very young humans can have their entire lives altered based on how their pain was managed. Human development can be drastically affected by the experience of painful stimuli early in life. Because of this, the ACPeds "advocates the need for in-utero, neonatal, and pediatric pain prevention, mitigation, and treatment."

The ACPeds also pushes back against the International Association for the Study of Pain's (IASP) claim that pain must have two components to be regarded as actual pain, or pain of moral and ethical significance, which are biological/sensory and emotional.

The IASP tries to separate the idea of pain from nociception, insisting pain must also have the aspect of a conscious experience or perception. However, this runs into ethical dilemmas quite quickly.

Pain is therefore purely subjective and never truly knowable. And for people who cannot communicate their perception of pain to others, how are we to know if they truly are feeling pain, and how then does that lack of knowledge inform how we may treat that person? How does that affect fields like medicine, then, where professionals must take ethics into account when developing treatments?

The ACPeds maintains that nociception, whether or not the human receiving the stimuli is aware of it or not, is alone enough to define pain. At least, it is enough for doctors and medical professionals, who must be able to use measurable characteristics to determine courses of action when treating a patient.

It is well-known that for any human, mitigating the body's response to painful stimuli helps improve outcomes for treatments such as surgery.

In fact, the ACPeds covers a study done on infants undergoing heart surgery who received either lighter or deeper anesthesia. The outcome of the study was so stark that the authors decided they could not ethically try to repeat it. Not only did the babies receiving deeper anesthesia score better on markers of biological stress than the babies who received lighter anesthesia; but no babies receiving the deep anesthesia died before hospital discharge, while 4 out of 15 of the babies receiving light anesthesia did.

*continued on page 9*



—Human Coalition

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author, and mother of 9,  
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powerful defense of  
the right to life!*

# Rachel Campos-Duffy

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## Planned Parenthood—Profits Over People

*continued from front page*

Planned Parenthood's foray into providing cross-sex hormones is not shocking. For years, this organization has rejected basic truths about human beings, putting profits over people daily. During the 100 years of their existence, Planned Parenthood has denied the humanity and the right to life of the unborn child. Now, Planned Parenthood is denying the reality that XX chromosomes make a person a girl and XY chromosomes make a person a boy.

While Planned Parenthood acknowledges that transitioning from a girl to a boy can be dangerous, they argue that "expert care is needed to avoid problems," and position themselves as the ones able to provide "expert care." Their statement completely ignores the reality that taking hormones in an effort to transition comes with serious dangers, including: interference with brain development; inhibition of normal bone-density development; and sterilization. Planned Parenthood's indifference to the truth that cross-sex hormones can leave a person incapable of having children is completely in line with their racist, eugenicist founder Margaret Sanger's words: "But for my view, I believe that there should be no more babies."

Planned Parenthood's annual report demonstrates that their mission has not changed since their founding. Let's pray for everyone involved in the organization to have a Saul-like conversion and for next year's report to tell a different story.

—Family Research Council, February 25, 2021

Mary Szoch serves as the Director of the Center for Human Dignity at Family Research Council.

## Donations have been made—

### In Honor of:

**Donald and Loretta Zeth**  
Requested by: Deborah Boland

### *The Unborn*

Requested by: Anonymous

### In Memory of:

**Deceased Family Members  
of McNelis All Stars**  
Requested by: Chris McNelis

**SSGT James M. Seidel**  
Requested by: James R. & Helen F. Seidel

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!

## 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**

**Post-abortion counseling**  
**Project Rachel**  
814-884-8000  
email: [ProjectRachel@dioceseaj.org](mailto:ProjectRachel@dioceseaj.org)

**Rachel's Vineyard**  
877 HOPE 4 ME (877-467-3463)  
**www.rachelsvineyard.org/**

**Family Life, Diocese of Altoona/Johnstown**  
**Pastoral Guidance**  
814-886-5551  
email: [familylife@dioceseaj.org](mailto:familylife@dioceseaj.org)

## Abraham's Test

*continued from back page*

any of us for thinking that it could be killed. We really know that it is a child because loving mothers have answered that question for generations. You all know that I come from a very large family. I have seen my sisters, sisters-in-law and dozens of nieces with child. I learned from them very early on that there comes a moment in a pregnancy when a woman first feels life. It is called the quickening. It is an exciting moment for a couple expecting a child. I have never once heard any of them say, "I just felt my fetus kick." What I have always heard them say is, "I just felt my baby." With modern ultrasound technology, young couples expecting a child can get very excited when they see the first pictures of their infant in the womb. Have you ever heard any of them say, "Oh, look at our fetus." Of course not! What they say is natural. "Look at my baby."

As things stand today, confronting this issue is still critical for a believing people. Since *Roe v. Wade*, sixty-two million infants in the womb have been murdered. Once again, I ask. Has our society given up human sacrifice? Understand this. God Himself is paying close attention to the choices each of us makes.

Recently, I Googled a talk by Senator Langford of Oklahoma defending the value of life on the Senate floor. He had three pictures of a 26-week-old child in the womb. His question was simple. "Is this a baby? Is this a child? She has a face. She has two eyes, a nose, lips, a beating heart and a functioning nervous system." Again, he asked, "Is this a baby? Is this a child?" I ask all of you. Is it a baby? Is it a child? I encourage all of you, especially those of you who may be pro-choice, as a Lenten penance, to Google this piece. It will take twenty minutes out of your day. God will smile if you do.

Today's Gospel tells us to travel another road, to climb another mountain. We are invited to join Jesus on the summit of Mt. Tabor. There, if we allow it, we can be transfigured and transformed with Him.

We pray today, as we make life choices in our society, that God will give us the courage to choose rightly.

May God also give us the Grace.

—Rev. Msgr. Anthony Tocco is Pastor at St. Hugo of the Hills, Bloomfield Hills, Michigan.

**Every Life Matters Pregnancy Support Services** will be hosting its **Annual Yellow Umbrella Walk**, date to be determined. The **Baby Bottle Campaign** will begin on Mother's Day and end on Father's Day and will be done using an on-line donation button on ELM's website: **www.elmcenters.org**. ELM's mailing address has changed to: **1351 Logan Avenue, Tyrone, PA 16686**. For details on these events and/or more information about ELM's services, please call **814-650-7899**.



# From the President's Desk

## Profiles in Courage

As a teenager, I was a fan of President John F. Kennedy. He was young, Catholic, a Democrat and a war hero—all attributes that I admired.

He authored *Profiles in Courage*, a book about eight politicians, three of whom are household names: John Q. Adams, Daniel Webster and Sam Houston, who took unpopular stands opposed by their party or constituents which caused them to lose favor with those in power.

Kennedy himself was a profile in courage as his exploits were recorded in the book and movie "PT 109."

As I matured and became active in the Pro-Life movement, another charismatic Catholic Democrat displayed remarkable courage in opposing the official position of his Party. Of course, I am recalling the actions of our beloved late Governor Robert Casey who not only supported the Abortion Control Act of 1989 which helped to limit the number of abortions but also attempted to address the 1992 Democratic Convention to deliver a speech defending the sanctity of life from the moment of conception.

The powers to be, including some of President Kennedy's family members, refused to let him voice his opposition to the path the Democrat Party had chosen in favor of abortion.

The Kennedy family in 1989 established an annual award to be given to politicians who followed their conscience despite opposition. Gov. Casey was never given this honor although he fit the "profile."

Senator Bob Casey, Jr.'s reply to my request that he oppose the so-called COVID relief bill (American Rescue Plan) indicated that he is pro-life. Somewhat skeptical, I noted his support for Planned Parenthood in the same letter (see page 5). He originally voted to include the Hyde Amendment in the legislation when there was no chance of success, when the final vote came and he had a chance to stand up for life, he caved to his Party's dictates.

I did, however, hold out hope that he would be the one who would prevent our money from being spent for abortions, as only one vote would have been needed to force the Democrats to compromise on this issue and keep the Hyde protections in the bill. If he had done this, he indeed would have deserved a nomination for the "Profile in Courage" award and the gratitude of millions of pro-life Americans. More importantly, some day he would have had the opportunity to meet a child who would have been alive because of his vote.

Sadly, he missed the chance and so will the child. What would his father have done?


—R. Thomas Forr, Jr., President

Blair County Chapter, Citizens Concerned for Human Life

## Roe v. Wade movie is out...it is incredible!

Help spread the word—be sure to watch it and direct friends to the PA Pro-Life Federation *Roe v. Wade* movie webpage at:

<https://www.watchroevwade.com/paprolifefederation>  
Highly acclaimed, fact-checked, compelling and available to view in your home with your entire family for a reasonable price. When you go to the website to register, click on the play button for an important message from Bonnie Finnerty, Education Director. Then scroll down and click on "Unlock now." After unlocking, you'll have one month to start watching. Once you begin, you'll have one month to finish watching! Don't miss *Roe v. Wade* and the opportunity to support a movie that aims to tell the world the truth!



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

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 Website: [www.blaircountyprolife.com](http://www.blaircountyprolife.com)

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## God Put Abraham to the Test

*Readings for Second Sunday in Lent, Genesis 22:1-2, 9, 10-13, 15-18*

*Fr. Tony Tocco*

**I**t seems cruel that God would promise Abraham a son in his old age only to ask him to offer Isaac in sacrifice. Strange for us, yes, but not so strange in Abraham's time. In Abraham's day, the practice of human sacrifice was not unusual. People in that pagan society believed that if they were to protect themselves from the wrath of the god Moloch, they would have to offer a first-born child in fire in order to appease him and they did just that.

Do you remember the word Jesus used when He spoke about hell? It was "Gehenna." Understand that Gehenna was not just a concept or a symbol. It was a real place on the outskirts of the city of Jerusalem. It was that place where, in the past, the killing of all those newborn infants had taken place. Later, when the Israelites began to inhabit the land, they were so appalled at the notion that this had been done, they refused to build dwellings in that area. They made the place a garbage dump and, in that place, at the time of Jesus, garbage fires were always burning. The look and the smell and smoke were atrocious. Thus, when Jesus wanted to let people know about hell, He used Gehenna as an example.

If Abraham sacrificed Isaac, it would have surprised very few people. The story was put in the Book of Genesis at this time in history to make it clear to people that the One, True God did not require human sacrifice. He was looking for self-sacrifice. He did not want us to sacrifice others in service to Him. He wanted us to sacrifice ourselves in service to others.

On the Second Sunday of Lent, the question is clear to us individually and as a society. Have we really given up human sacrifice? To my mind the answer is clearly no.

Abortion, my friends, is human sacrifice. It is human sacrifice offered at the altar of choice. The issue is even more clearly understood when during the last election, we heard prominent politicians, some of whom call themselves Catholic, debating once again whether abortion, partial birth abortion or the killing of a child as it is brought to birth, and even infanticide, the killing of a child born alive in a botched abortion, whether that should be allowed in this country. We now know that from top to bottom, they said yes. You might forgive me for asking whether or not we have really given up human sacrifice.

I will remind all of you that until *Roe v. Wade*, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, 1973, abortion was, for almost 2,000 years only a moral issue. It was never politicized. Until that time, most politicians and virtually all of the Catholic politicians would have been pro-life. Until then, a part of the Hippocratic Oath taken by every doctor, included a pledge never to participate in or perform abortions. Since *Roe v. Wade*, the pledge has been removed from the oath.

The basic question for all of us today is whether the fetus in the womb is a thing that can be discarded, or a child. If we clearly think that it is a child, shame on

*continued on page 14*

