

## Cherishing Every Life from Beginning to End

### Reasons to Be Pro-Choice?

Recently, *NY Times* columnist & Catholic Ross Douthat wrote about 'abortion extremists' among his liberal friends. **Abortion supporters** responded in letters to the editor (*NYT*, 4/15/18). Some of their key points are paraphrased here together with a Catholic response by your editor.

- Pregnancy exacts a heavy price on women in the U.S. Many die in childbirth; if she keeps her baby and is single, she is more likely to be unemployed; giving up a baby for adoption is heart-wrenching; it is better to have the right to abort the baby. *Catholic Response: to reduce deaths during childbirth, pregnant women need better health care and services, not the killing of her baby. Single moms do face greater economic hardships. The Catholic Church provides much needed services to help such women including maternity homes, food banks, hospital services and more. And the Church promotes strong marriages through marriage preparation classes. Killing an unborn baby ("terminating a pregnancy"), like any killing, cannot be justified for economic reasons.*

- Government ban on abortion has its own real dangers. *Catholic Response: The notion that regulating abortion will cause women to seek an illegal "back-alley" procedure is a myth. A 2012 study, e.g., reveals that outlawing abortion in Chile not only saved children, but advanced women's health. Of course, pro-abortionists ignore the real danger to millions of pre-borns who have been "terminated" legally.*

- Pro-choice advocates want to choose reproductive outcomes for themselves & let others choose what they want. *Catholic Response: Using misleading terms like "reproductive outcomes" is not helpful. What is really happening is the destruction of a tiny developing human being. The time to choose one's reproductive outcomes is before one gets pregnant. Abortion destroys a separate living human being.*

[The remaining arguments will be covered in the next issue.]

### New Baby Names [Nat. Catholic Register, 4/15/18]

The year after Pope John Paul II visited Ireland in 1979, 10% of boys were named after him. In 2011, seven years after Gianna Beretta Molla's canonization, **Gianna** ranked 63 among girl's names. Most American children get names from relatives & saints as well as movie stars, book & film characters, etc. Canon Law states: "Parents, sponsors & the pastor are to take care that a name foreign to Christian sensibility is not given." The *Catholic Baby Name Book* has more than 10,000 names & background facts about them.

### Is Europe Still Christian?

Catholic sociologist Stephen Bullivant issued a report, *European Young Adults and Religion*. The most religious of 22 countries are Poland, Lithuania, Austria and Ireland. The rest of Europe is decidedly secular. In the UK, more young people identify as Catholic (10%) than Anglican (7%), with Muslims attaining 6%. Bullivant maintains that "Christianity as the norm is gone."

Douglas Murray, author of *The Strange Death of Europe*, points out that "Europe today has little desire to reproduce itself, fight for itself or even take its own side in an argument."

The **de-Christianization of the West** has yielded record high levels of abortion, out-of-wedlock births, homosexuality, divorce, sexually transmitted diseases, pornography, prostitution, drug abuse, depression, and suicide. This is the natural outcome of a civilization that has allowed moral relativism to triumph over Christianity. Years ago, Pope Benedict XVI saw the effects of multiculturalism as clearly as anyone, showing how a contempt for moral truths that adhere to the Judeo-Christian ethos has led to "a peculiar Western self-hatred that is nothing short of pathological." [Bill Donohue, *The Catholic League*, 3/22/18]

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"We must not be surprised when we hear of murders, of killings, of wars, of hatred. If a mother can kill her own child, what is left but for us to kill each other." **Blessed Mother Teresa of Calcutta**

### A Duty to Die?

The so-called "right" to take one's own life is heralded as a compassionate answer to disability, terminal illness, degenerating health condition, depression, or simply a desire to not want to go on any longer. We who oppose suicide for those most in need of real compassion are accused of trying to limit the rights of others. And so, showing love and true concern for the neighbor in need is now labeled as extremism. But who are the true extremists?

A few states and Canada have now codified assisted suicide as a legal "right." Who has benefitted from this new found "right?" Rather than increasing options for those facing illness or disability, the lower cost of assisted suicide seems to be **reducing the amount of medical care given to those in need**, especially those most dependent on government assistance.

With increasing frequency, we hear stories of patients being refused treatment or help with daily living, while being offered assisted suicide instead. Just last month, a terminally ill Canadian man brought suit claiming that he was

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**Duty to Die** [continued from page 1]

denied proper medical care, but instead offered assisted suicide. In the U.S., some patients are told their insurance won't cover life-sustaining treatments, but the insurance companies are happy to mention that assisted suicide is indeed fully covered. And if death is a cheaper option than good pain control, there will be much less incentive to provide or improve palliative or hospice care, to keep people comfortable and cared for as they near the end of their lives.

The "right" to die can quickly become an expectation to die or even a "duty" to die. Once deemed a burden on society or a waste of limited medical resources, those most in need will be offered the fewest options, with **death sadly portrayed as the best bargain** of all.

Efforts to legalize assisted suicide continue in other states. Volunteer with your diocesan respect life office or your parish's outreach to those who are homebound. Assist your state Catholic conference in fending off attempts to legalize assisted suicide. Demonstrate through your words and actions toward those around you how much you treasure them. And pray hard that our world will value and uphold the dignity of every human life. [Tom Grenchik, *US Conference of Catholic Bishops*, 4/6/18]

**Why Aren't Young People Dating?**

Boston College philosophy prof. & Catholic Kerry Cronin says that the struggle to go on a date -- let alone start a meaningful relationship -- is pervasive. "Around the late '80s and the early '90s, on college and university campuses, the dating script sort of fell off the radar, and the **hook-up culture** took hold in the party scene," Cronin said.

"Dating dissolved because the **hypersexualization** of culture moved sexual intimacy to the forefront and moved courtship to the background." According to a Pew Research report, 61% of Americans under age 35 are living alone without spouse or partner. "What has society come to that it has made it **so difficult for us to connect to someone** on an emotional, spiritual level, to actually embrace the meaning of love?" a young man asks in Dr. Cronin's film documentary, *The Dating Project*.



Cronin says that young adults want to date but they don't know how to start dating, or they're afraid to initiate a relationship because experience tells them it will become intense too quickly. "Dating is high stakes partly because of the way our sexualized culture has hijacked dating. That means courtship falls by the wayside; sexual assertiveness becomes central to dating. For people who don't want to

have sex outside of marriage in order to adhere to the Church's teachings on chastity, that sometimes means relationships end before they even begin because the other person is unwilling to have a relationship without sex.

Others avoid relationships altogether because they're afraid of getting hurt when things get too intense. Cronin says that many couples jump into serious relationships without laying a foundation because they introduce physical intimacy too early, to the **detriment of hearts and souls**.

Modern culture doesn't support dating, so it's harder for men to ask women out on a date. "Men don't have a lot of cultural support on how to be a courageous man, so women and men need to bear the burden of courage together." [Ella Hadacek, *Restoring Courtship in a Hook-Up Culture*, *Nat. Catholic Register*, 4/15/18]

**Radical Pro-abortion Culture War Failing**

Outgoing Planned Parenthood (PP) President Cecile Richards just published a book detailing her lifetime of pro-choice activism. The book claims pro-abortionists are "transforming the culture" so they can "quit apologizing for abortion." 3,547,123 is the number of abortions committed at PP since 2006 when Richards became its president.

Ten years of public opinion research shows that **Americans consistently support significant restrictions** on abortion. This year's Marist poll on abortion found that more than 75% of Americans would limit abortion to — at most — the first three months of pregnancy. A majority of Americans (56%) said they believe abortion is morally wrong. **Love is winning!**

52% of respondents, and 52% of women, said having an abortion will more likely cause harm to a woman's life than good. Likewise, **78% said that our laws can protect both the well-being of women and the lives of the unborn rather than choose between them.**

The poll makes clear that much of what Planned Parenthood advocates falls far out of the mainstream. For example, 63% of Americans support banning abortion after 20 weeks of pregnancy unless the mother's life is at risk, while just 33% oppose such a ban. Most Americans also oppose the use of taxpayer dollars to pay for elective abortion procedures — another position PP embraces that places them in a minority.

In truth, there is a consensus in our culture on abortion: Americans support major rollbacks on abortion. That's because the pro-life movement is winning hearts and minds on this issue. [March for Life President Jeanne Mancini on *Fox News*, 4/3/18]

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