



A Pro-Life Religious Outreach Newspaper

Economy Overwhelms Life Issues But Pro-Life Effort Aids Candidates

The pro-life increment was not absent in this year's election, but exit polls indicated that the troubled economy was the top issue for many voters. Among the 5% of voters for whom abortion was the most important issue, 90% voted for McCain and 78% voted for Republican congressional candidates. This gave McCain a 4% advantage on abortion.

However, 34% were "single issue economy voters," and of these 69% voted for Obama and 68% voted for Democratic congressional candidates. This gave Obama a 14% advantage due to the economy and was decisive for the election, but does not indicate a voter approval of the pro-abortion policies of Obama or Democrats in Congress.

According to David O'Steen, Executive Director of National Right to Life Committee, "As in past years, the pro-life increment provided a margin of victory for several pro-life congressional candidates in very close races, who almost certainly would have lost without right to life help. These victories may well prove crucial in the challenges the right to life movement will face in the next Congress."

Two post-election polls indicate that a majority of voters oppose the current policy of abortion on demand. The Polling Company reports that 53% held a pro-life position of opposing abortion either in all cases or in cases of rape, incest or life of the mother. Only 41% believed abortion should be allowed for any reason, including 28% who would restrict abortion to the first three months of pregnancy. A poll conducted by Heart and Mind Strategies found almost identical results. **The Polling Company also found that 63% would oppose FOCA when informed of its pro-abortion mandates.**

The most radically pro-abortion team in our nation's history will enter the White House on January 20. Barack Obama and Joe Biden have promised sweeping pro-abortion mandates for our country and for developing countries abroad. (See article on page 4 and FOCA article on the right.) **The challenge to defend the lives of unborn children and the health of their mothers will be enormous in the years ahead of us.** This will take the courageous efforts of all of us who know the truth that every unborn child created by God at the moment of conception is precious.

News Note

Doctors and Hospitals in Washington State Will Not Do Assisted Suicide

Although voters in Washington State approved legalizing assisted suicide, the second state to do so, the Washington State Medical Association said doctors do not have to participate in killing their patients.

Providence Health and Services, the largest medical system in eastern Washington, stated that it will prohibit doctors from killing patients through assisted suicide in its medical centers, nursing homes or other facilities.

"Providence will not support physician-assisted suicide within its ministries," said Providence Spokeswoman Karina Jennings. "This position is grounded in our basic values of respect for the sacredness of life, compassionate care of dying and vulnerable persons, and respect for the integrity of medical, nursing and allied health professions. We do not believe health care providers should ever be put in a position of aiding a patient in taking his or her own life."

Hospice of Spokane also said it will not participate in physician-assisted suicide since its mission is to provide care and support for patients, not to kill them

FOCA, Beyond Roe v. Wade, Invalidates Pro-Life Laws and Speech

Barack Obama has promised to sign the so-called "Freedom of Choice Act" (FOCA), which would obliterate the hard-won victories that pro-lifers have secured. **FOCA would make partial-birth abortion legal again, require taxpayer funding of abortion, and would strike down all limitations on abortion such as parental notification laws and informed consent.**

Obama is a cosponsor of the FOCA. However, in order for him to sign it into law, it would first have to be approved by the U.S. Senate and the U.S. House of Representatives, after the 111th Congress convenes in January.

The FOCA goes way beyond *Roe v. Wade*, nullifying all of the major types of pro-life laws that the Supreme Court has said are permissible under *Roe v. Wade*. It would invalidate "any statute, ordinance, regulation administrative order, decision, policy, practice, or other action" of any federal, state, or local government or governmental official (or any person acting under government authority) that would "deny or interfere with a woman's right to choose" abortion.

One result of this language would be to nullify the federal ban on partial-birth abortion, which went into effect in 2007 after the U.S. Supreme Court upheld it.

Another provision of the FOCA prohibits any law or government policy that would "discriminate against the exercise of the right...in the regulation or provision of benefits, facilities, services, or information." According to Douglas Johnson, NRLC's director of federal legislation, "This sweeping mandate could cover everything from rural health clinics, to health education programs in public schools--and even to pro-life speeches by public officials."

About half of the states have parental notification or informed consent laws which the Supreme Court has said are permissible under *Roe v. Wade*, but these will be wiped out under FOCA. The Hyde Amendment, which prohibits federal funding of most abortions, was allowed under *Roe v. Wade* but will be invalidated if FOCA becomes law. Under *Roe v. Wade*, laws that prohibit abortions in public hospitals were allowed, but FOCA will override this.

Conscience rights of doctors, nurses, hospitals, health care providers and any state-licensed professionals to decline to provide or pay for abortions would be placed in jeopardy under the FOCA. Medical professionals who are committed to protecting all human life will likely face a decision whether to act contrary to their conscience or lose their position.

The U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops Pro-Life Activities Chairman, Cardinal Justin Rigali of Philadelphia, pointed out in a letter to Congress that: "We can't reduce abortions by promoting abortion. We cannot reduce abortions by invalidating the very laws that have been shown to reduce abortions. We cannot reduce abortions by insisting that every program supporting women in childbirth and child care must also support abortion. **No one who sponsors or supports legislation like FOCA can credibly claim to be part of a good faith discussion on how to reduce abortions. Therefore, I urge all members of Congress to pledge their opposition to FOCA and other legislation designed to promote abortion.**"

Teens Suffer More From Abortions



In comparison to adult women, teenage girls who abort their child have significantly higher risk of serious physical and psychological problems.

For example, a study entitled “Detrimental Effects of Adolescent Abortion,” by Amy Sobie and David Reardon reports that, compared to adult women, teens are:

- two to four times more likely to commit suicide
- more likely to develop psychological problems, including paranoia, drug abuse, psychotic delusions, projection of their problems onto others, and “acting out” strategies
- more likely to have troubled relationships
- are generally in need of more counseling and guidance regarding abortion
- are nearly three times more likely to be admitted to mental health hospitals

Dr. Wanda Franz, a developmental psychologist and president of National Right to Life Committee, explains that adolescents, unlike adults, often approach problems from their emotions rather than from the rational part of the brain which is still developing. Their newly developed emotional and psychological self identity leads them to an almost compulsive need to protect the self from what is perceived as outside assaults or environmental pressures. This need of the self may reduce the capacity to give love unselfishly or use intellectual capacities objectively.

The Sobie/Reardon study found that teens are more likely to abort because of pressure from their parents or the baby’s father. The attitude of peers and of the social environment surrounding her may also be important factors. When she has an abortion under these pressures, she is at higher risk for adverse psychological effects.

Teens who have participated in post-abortion counseling report that they felt misinformed in pre-abortion counseling, were unsatisfied with abortion services, and experienced greater post-abortion stress than adults. They felt the abortion procedure itself was stressful and experienced guilt, depression and a sense of isolation. Younger women were more likely to report severe pain during abortion and greater levels of anxiety and fear prior to the abortion. They were also more likely to report severe nightmares following abortion and to score higher on scales measuring antisocial traits.

Often a teen may want to keep the baby. They may then conceal their pregnancy in an effort to avoid being pressured into an unwanted abortion. This results in more late-term abortions among teens. The Center for Disease Control reports that 30% of teenage abortions occur after 13 weeks of pregnancy compared to only

12% of all abortions. Abortions in the second and third trimester, combined with the feelings of ambivalence and pressure, result in more severe emotional, psychological and physical problems.

Teens are at higher risk for physical complications and damage. They are twice as likely to receive cervical lacerations during the abortion because they have smaller cervixes than more mature women. They are also more at risk for post-abortion infections such as pelvic inflammatory disease (PID) and endometritis (inflammation of the uterus). Doctors have found that teens are less likely than adults to take the prescribed antibiotics and are at greater risk for a resulting infertility. When it is a late-term abortion, there are additional risks of future miscarriages, cervical incompetence, ectopic pregnancies, rupture of the uterus, and low birth weight in later pregnancies.

Some studies have found that teens who have lost a child through abortion become pregnant again within 15 to 24 months. These repeat pregnancies are a symptom of unresolved issues from the first abortion, often a desire to replace the lost child with another child. But then the second child is also aborted because the teen still has the same pressures and possibly more than in the first experience. A New York study found that teens with a previous abortion were four times as likely to abort a current pregnancy as teens with a first pregnancy, and in Los Angeles among teens having abortions, 38% had a previous abortion and 18% had undergone two abortions in the same year.

The Alan Guttmacher Institute reports that about 40% of teenage abortions happen without parental involvement. This means that parents have no warning about the emotional or physical harm their child may suffer. They may not understand the cause of the depression, anger or substance abuse in their daughter and their anger or confusion can cause further emotional problem for the daughter and the family.

There have been several tragic cases of death of teens from the complications of abortions that the parents were uninformed about. Following are some that the Sobie/Reardon study reports. In Maryland, 16 year old Erica Richardson died from complications, as did 13 year-old Dawn Ravenell of New York. A St. Louis 14 year-old girl committed suicide three weeks after an abortion her mother had not been told about.

Parental notification laws can help prevent such tragedies, but sadly pro-abortion advocates still oppose such legislation.

Pregnant Women Are Increasingly Victims of Violence Studies Show

Both a recent New Zealand study and an American study reveal the violence to which pregnant women are being subjected. Some men apparently consider that legalized abortion entitles them to attempt to end through violence the pregnancy of the woman they have impregnated.

Auckland University researchers interviewed 3,000 New Zealand women and found that almost 10% had experienced some sort of violence, and three-fourths of these were physically beaten by the father of a child they were carrying in an apparent attempt to cause an abortion. Researcher Dr. Janet Fanslow said many women

reported that the father hit them in the stomach. This study found that these women were almost three times more likely to have an abortion, apparently from the coercion of this violence.

An American study reported in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* also concluded that, “A pregnant or recently pregnant woman is more likely to be a victim of homicide than to die of any other cause.”

Other recent studies by two different state health departments have shown that maternal mortality is more often the result of homicide than complications during pregnancy or childbirth.

Bulletin Inserts

January 4 - The infant Jesus adored at Christmas was, like each of us, an unborn child who began and grew in His mother's womb. God-made-man accepted each and every phase of our humanity to demonstrate the sacredness of human life at all stages.

January 11 – Those who support a woman's supposed "right" to end the life of her unborn child might want to reflect on how they will be able to explain their position to the victims of abortion when we meet them face to face in the next life—which we most certainly will.

January 18 – As we mark the 36th anniversary of the Supreme Court's legalization of abortion, this question still confronts our society: Which living members of the human species should be seen as having fundamental human rights, such as a right not to be killed? The answer that still evades so many is: no human being should be treated as lacking human rights, and we have no business dividing humanity into those who are valuable enough to warrant protection and those who are not.

January 25 - When does a new human life begin? When is there a new living organism of the human species, distinct from mother and father and ready to develop and mature if given a nurturing environment? While ancient thinkers had little verifiable knowledge to help them answer this question, today the science of embryology confirms beyond a doubt that a new human life begins at conception.

February 1 - Seeing in an ultrasound the unborn child she is carrying has been a powerful influence on women contemplating abortion. One study showed 75.5 percent of undecided women decided not to have an abortion after viewing her baby's ultrasound. (*The Southern Cross*, August, 2008)

February 8 - Protection of innocent human life is not an imposition of personal conviction but a demand of justice. "Each human being is known by God and loved by him. Each is willed by God, and each is God's image...whoever violates a human being violates God's property." (Pope Benedict XVI)

February 15 - There is a nationwide effort to pass laws requiring abortion providers to offer a woman the opportunity to view an ultrasound image of her unborn child. One physician states: "Allowing a patient to view her ultrasound examination implies respect for the dignity and autonomy of a patient, and her ability to participate wisely in her own plan of care." (*The Southern Cross*, August, 2008)

February 22 – The framers of the Declaration of Independence asserted that all human beings have inalienable rights, bestowed on them not by any human power, but by their Creator. Those who hold a more exclusionary view need to explain why we should divide humanity into those who have moral value and those who do not. This moral line-drawing poses a serious threat to the dignity and rights of other poor and vulnerable members of the human family who need and deserve our respect and protection.

"The bishops of the United States recently stated, 'The Church's obligation to participate in shaping the moral character of society is a requirement of faith.' At the top of their list of Catholic moral convictions, the bishops put 'defending the inviolable sanctity of human life from the moment of conception until natural death.'"

Carl Anderson, Knights of Columbus Supreme Knight

Suggested Prayers

January 4 – As we contemplate the glory of the Christ Child, let us resolve this year to work more faithfully for the protection of each human life, we pray

January 11 – For a greater awareness of the sacredness of each human life, regardless of age, development or condition, we pray

January 18 – As we approach the 36th anniversary of the Supreme Court's legalization of abortion, may more people respond to God's call to protect the unborn, we pray

January 25 – For all women who carry within them the precious gift of life, we pray

February 1 – For leaders of all churches that they may show concern for protecting the most vulnerable among us, we pray

February 8 – That those who perform abortions may realize their sin and ask God for forgiveness, we pray

February 15 – For all those who give their time and treasure to women experiencing an unexpected pregnancy, we pray

February 22 – For all fathers that they may accept responsibility for the new life they helped create, we pray

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More News

Obama Plans Executive Order to Fund Overseas Abortions and Embryonic Stem Cell Research

Barack Obama's transition team confirms that his priority upon becoming president will be executive orders to overturn President Bush's policies preventing taxpayer money from being spent on promoting or performing abortions overseas or on destruction of human embryos for scientific research.

The Mexico City Policy, begun under President Reagan, was continued by President Bush to prevent taxpayer money from funding groups that promote or perform abortions in other countries. Additionally, President Bush has ordered that no State Department funding go to pro-abortion groups.

Planned Parenthood Federation of America President Cecile Richards reported to the Washington Post that her organization has been "communicating with [Obama's] transition staff" and expects that the protections on taxpayer-funded abortions and abortion counseling will be rescinded immediately after his inauguration, including restoring funding for the United Nations Population Fund which is involved with forced abortions in China.

Supporters for funding embryo-killing research have reportedly drafted an executive order for Obama to overturn President Bush's policy against funding any research that kills human embryos. Since August 2001, the Bush policy has prevented use of taxpayer money for funding embryonic research that involves the destruction of human life. President Bush has directed most of the public

funding toward adult stem cell research which is both ethical and effective in treating human diseases. Embryonic stem cell research, besides killing days-old human beings, has not been effective in developing any therapeutic treatments for people, whereas adult stem cells have already helped many patients suffering from at least 73 different diseases. Yet Mr. Obama will expect U.S. taxpayers to fund the unethical and unproven research.

These executive orders will trample on the value most Americans place on the dignity and inviolability of every human life and are contrary to Catholic pro-life teaching.

Cardinal Francis George of Chicago stated at the recent conference of U.S. bishops: **"Aggressive pro-abortion policies, legislation and executive orders will permanently alienate tens of millions of Americans, and would be seen by many as an attack on the free exercise of their religion,"** he said in commenting on the executive orders Obama is expected to hand down on his first days in office that would compel Americans to pay for promoting and performing abortions in other nations and embryonic stem cell research. It also refers to the so-called Freedom of Choice Act, a bill that would make partial-birth abortion legal again and require taxpayer funding of abortion-on-demand, overturning hundreds of abortion reduction laws in all 50 states.

Blessed Christmas to All!



As we begin our journey toward a new year of pro-life work, let us remember the joy of Mary and Joseph at the birth of Jesus, and their fearless dedication to His life during all the challenges and dangers they faced for His sake.

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