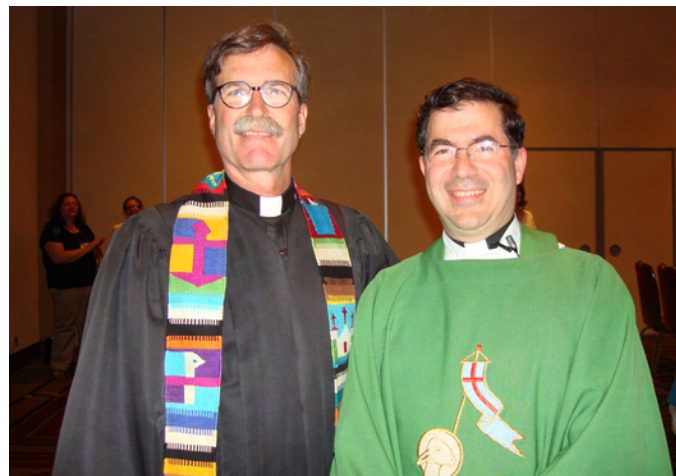


Are Pastors at the Forefront In Protecting Unborn Children? NPRC Panel Discussion Provides Support for Pastors

(Continued from page 3)



Rev Paul Stallsworth and Fr. Frank Pavone

authorities from the Didache, the Fathers of the Church, including Augustine, up through the Reformers Luther and Calvin to 20th century theologians such as Dietrich Bonhoeffer and Karl Barth, all strongly opposed abortion.

How can we encourage pastors to join in prayer at an abortion clinic?

Rev. Frank Pavone, President of NPRC and National Director of Priests for Life, told attendees that “when pastors go to an abortion mill, people follow and lives are saved.” He said that former abortionists had shared with him that, “When we saw people praying outside the clinic, we knew we would have a bad day. When we saw a pastor out there, we knew it was going to be a **very** bad day.” Fr. Pavone explained that the presence of people peacefully praying in front of the places where abortions are happening brings to the forefront what is already there in the consciences of those workers and of the men and women going into those places—that is that they shouldn’t be there. It highlights the tensions and ambivalences, the conflict already inside their spirit. Since the group praying is pro-woman, offering help, it gives the woman or couple a landing place, telling them “We’re here for you.” He suggested that it will be most convincing to your pastor if you have been there praying yourself. He also mentioned two groups that it would be helpful to connect with: Helpers of God’s Precious Infants and Forty Days for Life. It would be especially encouraging to the pastor to hear testimony from someone who knows a mother and baby who were saved. (He recently baptized two such babies in Allentown, Pennsylvania.)

Other workshops at the NRLC convention dealing with this issue were: “*Overcoming Pro-Abortion Opposition Within a Denomination*,” and “*Increasing Local Pro-Life Effectiveness in Pro-Life Religious Denominations*.” **CDs of these workshops are available from NRLC. Call: 202-347-8842.**

What do you say to pastors who tell you they don’t speak to abortion because they just preach from Scriptures?

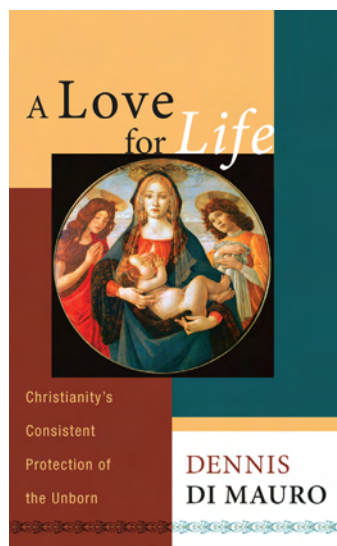
Rev. Paul Stallsworth, a United Methodist pastor and president of the Taskforce of United Methodists on Abortion and Sexuality (TUMAS)/Lifewatch, pointed out that silence on a difficult issue like abortion allows confusion to grow and ends up increasing division, even while pastors are trying to avoid divisiveness. He said that a pastor can argue against abortion from Scripture because it comes down firmly on the side of life, even though it may not use the specific word abortion. “The Triune God gives each person human dignity,” Pastor Stallsworth stressed. He explained that the bible needs to be read “in tradition,” not as a personal opinion: traditional

NPRC Now Offering New Book on Christianity’s Pro-Life History!

A Love for Life will provide Christians with the biblical and historical information that they need to make an informed decision on the abortion question. It will also take a critical and biblically based look at the arguments and theologies of today’s most prominent pro-choice clergy. And it will determine if abortion really fulfills the will of God, as many pro-choice Christians believe, or whether abortion is a clearly sinful act. In short, readers of A Love for Life will discover the real message of the church on abortion.

Author Dennis Di Mauro is secretary of the National Pro-Life Religious Council, president of Northern Virginia Lutherans for Life, and a doctoral student in church history at the Catholic University of America in Washington D.C.

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National Pro-Life Religious Council, PO Box 61838, Staten Island, NY 10306
website: www.nprcouncil.org e-mail: mail@nprcouncil.org

National Pro-Life Religious Council

The National Pro-Life Religious Council (NPRC) is a Christian coalition which acknowledges Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and works to encourage every Christian denomination to affirm and witness to the biblical standard of the value, dignity and sanctity of human life, and to foster ministry to those vulnerable to the violence of abortion or euthanasia.

Anglicans for Life

Common Good

Conservative Congregational Christian Conference (CCCC)

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Life Education and Resource Network (LEARN)

Lutherans for Life (LFL)

The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LCMS)

National Clergy Council (NCC)

National Pro-Life Action Center

Presbyterians Pro-Life (PPL)

Priests for Life (PFL)

Religious Outreach, National Right to Life Committee

Taskforce of United Methodists on Abortion and Sexuality (TUMAS)/Lifewatch

United Friends for Life (UFL)

“Is This What You Mean?” Project The Abortion Procedure Revealed: A Challenge to Politicians and Voters

By Fr. Frank Pavone, President, NPRC

Priests for Life has launched a special project called “Is This What You Mean?” It aims to:

- 1) Reveal the nature of the abortion procedure to the public, and
- 2) Challenge public officials and candidates who support the legality of abortion to admit what abortion is.

The project makes use of the words of the abortionists themselves. Quoting these words, we simply ask abortion supporters, “When you say the word ‘abortion,’ is this what you mean?” What the abortion supporter says in response does not matter. The goal is accomplished: what that person stands for has been revealed, both to that person and to the voters who listen.

The project is explained in its entirety at <http://www.priestsforlife.org/isthiswhatyoumean/index.htm>

This project is applicable not only in election season, but all year long, because the abortion supporters it challenges don’t have to be politicians. They can be anyone: academicians, celebrities, clergy, friends and neighbors.

One of the reasons the project is so powerful is because the evidence is indisputable. The words describing abortion come from the mouths of those who actually perform the procedures. The quotes come from medical textbooks and court testimony. Nobody can say to us that we are making it up, that we are exaggerating, or that we are “imposing our morality” on anyone. The project is not talking about morality or beliefs. It is simply asking the other person to clarify what he or she means by the word “abortion.” It seeks to establish a starting point for the conversation by simply making sure that the people conversing are talking about the same thing.

This project is a call for honesty. When faced with the question, “Is this what you mean?” the abortion supporters either have

to admit that what they support is horrific, or have to demonstrate, by their evasion, that what they support is so horrific that they cannot bring themselves to describe it. Either way, it doesn’t look good for abortion and it doesn’t look good for them.

The ideal forum for this project is at a town hall meeting with a pro-abortion politician. The quotes can be shared, and the question “Is this what you mean?” asked in other circumstances as well, such as in private meetings, in classrooms, on television or radio programs, or on blogs and other internet forums. Some examples of brief, powerful quotes are as follows:

“Question: Can the heart of a fetus or embryo still be beating during a suction curettage abortion as the fetus or embryo comes down the cannula?”

Answer: For a few seconds to a minute, yes.”

(Sworn testimony given in US District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin (Madison, WI, May 27, 1999, Case No. 98-C-0305-S), by Dr. Harlan Raymond Giles, an abortionist. He describes the most common abortion procedure, which is legal activity.)

“Typically the skull is brought out in fragments rather than as a unified piece...”

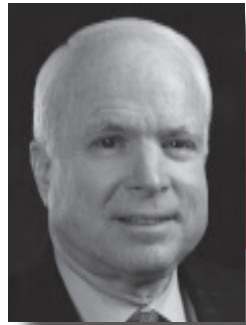
(Sworn testimony given in US District Court for the Western District of Wisconsin (Madison, WI, May 27, 1999, Case No. 98-C-0305-S), by Dr. Martin Haskell, an abortionist. He describes the second trimester D and E abortion procedure, which is legal activity.)

Additional source material, including quotes, diagrams, and videos, are on the Priests for Life website at the link mentioned above.

Another aspect of this project is that at a specified time in the near future, the Pastoral Team of Priests for Life will go together to visit the offices of the pro-abortion members of Congress, and will bring the quotes and diagrams of the abortion procedures and ask them, “Is this what you mean?”

When we do this, we want to bring with us the names of thousands of their constituents, so that we can say, “These people are also asking, ‘Is this what you mean?’”

To sign up to let us include your name, visit www.priestsforlife.org/askwashington/index.aspx



Where Do the Candidates Stand on Abortion?

John McCain

Barack Obama



**Note: The "Freedom of Choice Act" is a bill that would make partial-birth abortion legal again, provide for taxpayer funding of abortion, and invalidate virtually all state and federal limitations on abortion, such as parental notification laws.*

Roe v. Wade

- Voted to oppose *Roe v. Wade*, the Supreme Court decision that allows abortion for any reason.
- "...We would be better off by having *Roe v. Wade* return to the states....I don't believe the...Court should be legislating in the way that they did on *Roe v. Wade*."

- Co-sponsor of the "Freedom of Choice Act."*
- "I have consistently advocated for reproductive choice and will make preserving women's rights under *Roe v. Wade* a priority as President."

Partial-Birth Abortion Ban

***Note: Gonzales v. Carhart is the April 2007 Supreme Court decision upholding the constitutionality of the federal Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act.*

The partial-birth abortion procedure — used from the fifth month on — involves pulling a living baby feet-first out of the womb, except for the head, puncturing the skull and suctioning out the brain. The great majority of partial-birth abortions are performed on healthy babies of healthy mothers.

- Voted for the Partial-Birth Abortion Ban Act.
- "Today's Supreme Court ruling [in *Gonzales v. Carhart***] is a victory for those who cherish the sanctity of life."

- "I am extremely concerned that [*Gonzales v. Carhart***] will embolden state legislatures to enact further measures to restrict a woman's right to choose, and that the conservative Supreme Court justices will look for other opportunities to erode *Roe v. Wade*."

Taxpayer Funding of Abortion

- Voted in favor of the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits taxpayer funding of abortion through the Medicaid program.
- Voted consistently against federal funding of abortion.

- Voted against legislation in the Illinois State Senate that prohibited taxpayer dollars from being used to pay for abortion.
- His campaign has stated that he "does not support" the Hyde Amendment, which prohibits taxpayer funding of abortion through the Medicaid program.

Parental Notification Law

- Voted to support a bill that would have required an abortionist to notify at least one parent before performing an abortion on a minor girl from another state.

- Voted to block a bill that would have required an abortionist to notify at least one parent before performing an abortion on a minor girl from another state.

Protecting Abortion Survivors

- Voted for legislation that provides protection for babies who survive abortions equal to protection received by babies who are spontaneously born prematurely.

- Voted three times against a bill in the Illinois State Senate that would have provided protection for babies who survive abortions equal to protection received by babies who are spontaneously born prematurely.

Are Pastors at the Forefront In Protecting Unborn Children? NPRC Panel Discussion Provides Support for Pastors

At the National Right to Life Convention, on July 4 in Washington DC., NPRC Board members formed a panel at a workshop entitled, "*We are the Sheep, Where are the Shepherds,*" which addressed the need felt by many pro-life Christians to have their pastor take a stronger leadership role in the protection of unborn children in our society. The traditional biblical position is that life belongs to God, not to us, and therefore any attack on innocent human life, especially on the vulnerable child in the womb, is terribly wrong. Are we hearing this from the pulpit?

As in past workshops, each panel member spoke on a prepared question and an open discussion followed. Here are the questions and remarks each board member made:

What keeps so many pastors silent on abortion?

Rev. Ben Sheldon, a founding member and past president of NPRC as well as former president of Presbyterians Pro-Life, said that pastors are afraid of controversy and of losing members. In the past, all Christian denominations were strongly opposed to abortions, he pointed out. What changed? The feminist movement was a principle influence, Pastor Sheldon suggested. To get the courage to counter this pressure, he said pastors must go to Scripture and focus on the fact that God created all life—no human being, no unborn child, is not created, none are an accident. If pastors are afraid of controversy they shouldn't be pastoring because the Gospel is controversial—it flies in the face of modern culture. Pastors have the responsibility to speak the Word of God boldly to everyone.

What do pastors need to know about women who had abortions and how they can help them?

Vera Faith Lord, president of Alpha Omega Life, an outreach to the Orthodox Church, said that first of all pastors need to know that post-abortion women are there in the congregation. Everyone knows someone who has had an abortion. Secondly, Ms. Lord pointed out, a woman who has had an abortion thinks she is alone, that she is crazy. She has a dead child and people don't give her a chance to grieve. She needs to go through a process of mourning, healing and forgiveness. But society says to her, "What baby?" This leaves her with "impacted grief" which is a serious psychological condition that can lead to eating disorders, migraine headaches, substance abuse and other serious problems. So what should a pastor do? Ms. Lord suggests the best option is to find either a post-abortive woman speaker or a doctor, either of whom can present this topic professionally in a way that will allow women to open up for the healing and forgiveness they need.

In an election year, what should we expect pastors to say about the election and the abortion issue? How can we encourage them to do and say more?

Ernest Ohlhoff, NRLC Director of Religious Outreach, said that what is most important is to raise the issue, quietly, peacefully, but clearly stressing in a constructive way how abortion is wrong. Some ways of doing this include: bulletin inserts, prayers during the service, baby showers for the local crisis pregnancy center, or anything that raises the visibility of the issue prior to the election, which will have an influence on voters when they evaluate candidates' statements. He mentioned the pamphlets from Priests for Life and from NRLC that provide guidance to what can and cannot be done prior to an election.



NPRC Board Members, l to r: Rev. Ben Sheldon, Rev. Paul Stallworth, Vera Faith Lord, Ed Szeto, Dennis DiMauro, Rev. Frank Pavone

How can we get pastors who say their people already know abortion is wrong to motivate the congregants to get active in a way that saves lives?

Edward Szeto, Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, pointed out that all Christian citizens need to be reminded that government's primary purpose is to protect the lives of its citizens. When government does not do this, we have a duty to tell them that what they are failing to do is not proper or right. Our faith must be expressed in our actions. He quoted Luther's warning that if you see anyone innocently sentenced to death and do nothing, you've denied the love of God to that person.

What should we say to pastors in a denomination that holds that some abortions are okay?

Dennis DiMauro, NPRC secretary and president of Northern Virginia Lutherans for Life, said that although this is a difficult challenge, pro-life input can make a difference through gently educating the pastor. It is first important to de-politicize the issue, he stressed, so that it doesn't appear that the pro-life issue is a conduit for the Republican Party. This is a moral issue and has to do with Church morality, which is God's morality. We need to take this seriously. Engage the pastor in the very clear biblical witness in texts such as Luke 1, Job 10 and Psalm 139, DiMauro suggested. Review with him the history of Christianity which was completely pro-life until the 1960s-1970s, including Reformation leaders Luther, Calvin, and Wesley. Also, he said it is important to remember that there are pro-life people within denominations with a pro-abortion policy, and there are pro-life groups in each of these. You should make sure your pastor knows about the National Pro-Life Religious Council in particular.

(Continued on p. 4)

Associate Membership Application

Yes, I would like to become an Associate Member of the National Pro-Life Religious Council, Inc.

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PO Box 61838, Staten Island, NY 10306-9811

Contact Person _____

Church or Group _____

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