

Family & ProLife News Briefs

February 2024

Is Human Life Valued Only Because It's "Productive"?

Can Human Life Be Easily Discarded?

Many Americans think babies with Down syndrome are better off being killed in the womb than being born. Their language turns a baby into a "thing." But our language must remind the world that babies, in or out of the womb, are human. Each pre-born child is a real, immeasurably valuable, and unique human being. An innocent little person worthy of life.

Pro-lifers support a real alternative, a real choice for women, like pregnancy resource centers. Abortion activists frame the narrative that **killing the baby is the only choice**, but that couldn't be further from the truth. Those who believe in abortion must separate it from the fact that unborn children are people. They must use language that strips the unborn of all dignity and deceives vulnerable women into thinking killing a child is "reproductive freedom." [extract from Sarah Holliday, Language Matters, *The Washington Stand*, 1/25/24]

Follow Up Thoughts

What our culture teaches us is that things are valuable insofar as they are productive, helpful or useful. Sensible as that **utilitarian view** is, many erroneously apply it to our fellow human beings. Thus, elderly, sickly and severely disabled persons are treated as "less valuable" than healthy individuals. What Pope St. John Paul II called a "culture of death" describes a strictly materialistic, utilitarian view of our fellow human beings, be they elderly or in the womb. But science teaches us that each and every human being is unique, having his or her unique personality, skills, tendencies and other attributes. Each of us, then, needs to examine what we believe gives value to human life. As Christians, we know that each person, no matter what his or her condition is, has a soul and is loved infinitely by our Creator. [editor]

Over 3,000 Help Centers for Women

The March for Life has introduced a new resource at its website: "Support Families Facing Unexpected Pregnancies by Donating to Your Local Pregnancy Resource Center or Maternity Home!" The website has a pull-down menu of states. **Every state is listed**, many with multiple pregnancy help centers.

After choosing a state, one can select from among the many pregnancy centers listed. Your editor did this for New Jersey and found the following listed:

Bridge Women's Center (Old Bridge), Crisis Pregnancy Services (Egg Harbor City), Gateway Pregnancy Center (Elizabeth), Good Counsel Homes (Riverside), Several Sources (Ramsey), and Solutions Health & Pregnancy Center (Shrewsbury).

www.marchforlife.org

Reinvigorated Growth of

In 2020, parents got a glimpse of the bureaucracy of public sector education. The pandemic offered parents a rare opportunity to see its darker underbelly. It revealed, in many though not all places, a system that prioritizes staff over students, an administration that has a disdain for parental rights, a hollowed-out and often vacuous curriculum, and a teaching class motivated by political ideology and a false anthropology. One sad feature of modern secular education is its fragmentation. Following certain philosophical and pedagogical trends, it divides the student and the curriculum, and separates the illuminating and vivifying power of faith from both. For many parents, this was enough for them to seek alternative educational opportunities. Since 2020, **there have been over 200 new Catholic "classical" schools established in the United States and a 78% enrollment increase in established classical academies.**



The aim and purpose of all education, whether classical, secular or parochial, is twofold: the **acquisition of truth and the formation of culture**. Schools, such as many modern online academies, choose to emphasize the quest for knowledge and, by design, have very little formation in culture. What makes Catholic classical education distinct is that it seeks to form students in the totality of truth and intends to initiate them into the breadth of Western civilization. Catholic classical schools aim at the acquisition of truth for the sake of truth itself and are not directly interested in passing on knowledge to prepare students for the labor market (although it does do this, and does it well), but rather focus on exposing them to the breadth of knowledge available to the human person. For an outstanding example, the Diocese of Tulsa reports that 30% of its parochial schools are now classical. There is also a large and very active diocesan supported K-12 **home-schooling co-op** that utilizes a thoroughly classical curriculum. [excerpts from Richard Meloche, Exploring the new springtime for Catholic classical education, *Our Sunday Visitor*, 1/26/24]

In his 1987 speech addressed to U.S. Catholic educators, Pope St. John Paul II stated that Catholic educators are charged with "transmitting the full truth" that includes not only the knowledge proportionate and accessible to natural human reason (writing, reading and arithmetic, e.g.), but more importantly the knowledge that surpasses human understanding; the knowledge, as St. Paul writes that "eye has not seen, and ear has not heard" (1 Cor 2:9), namely, the knowledge of God himself.

“Americans Have Too Much Freedom”

A new Rasumussen poll finds that 55% of graduates from Ivy League colleges said there is “too much freedom” in the country. Also, 47% of top-one-percent earners polled said Americans have “too much freedom.” However, a majority of everyday voters (57%) believe that there is “too much control,” compared to only 16% who said there was “too much freedom.”

The poll also found other areas where elite Americans had vastly different opinions from average citizens. For example, respondents were asked the following question: “To fight climate change, would you favor or oppose the strict rationing of gas, meat, & electricity?” **A whopping 89% of Ivy League graduates supported rationing.** Seventy-seven percent of the top 1% also agreed. Among everyday voters, only 28% supported the drastic measure.

Nearly three-quarters of the elites surveyed believe they are better off now financially than three years ago. Less than 20% of ordinary Americans feel the same way.

Most elites think that teachers unions and school administrators should control the agenda of schools. Most mainstream Americans think that parents should make these decisions. [Poll: Ivy Leaguers, Top 1% of Earners Think Americans Have ‘Too Much Freedom’, *Catholic Vote*, 1/26/24]

Meanwhile, the federal government administration has issued a new proposal to **amend conscience protections for healthcare workers** and institutions that wish to refrain from performing abortions and other procedures that violate their religious beliefs. The proposed rule eliminates protections that federal law shall not require individuals “to perform or assist in the performance of any sterilization procedure or abortion if his performance or assistance in the performance of such procedure or abortion would be contrary to his religious beliefs or moral convictions.”

Also to be eliminated is the prohibition against mandating that recipients of federal funds make their “facilities available for the performance of any sterilization procedure or abortion if the performance of such procedure or abortion in such facilities is prohibited by the recipient on the basis of religious beliefs or moral convictions.”

Catholic Vote states that it’s now time for another **grassroots effort**, similar to a 2019 campaign, to stop the latest pro-abortion effort.

[excerpt from www.CatholicVote.org, 1/16/24]

Human Rights Parallels: Racism & Abortion

In honor of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birthday, I thought I’d offer some quotes from his “Letter from the Birmingham Jail,” written from a prison cell to the clergy in 1963. Parts of the letter have become well known, such as King’s insistence that “Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” Here are a few longer excerpts, which can be read together or separately. The parallels with the pro-life movement are plain.

“But as I continued to think about the matter, I gradually gained a bit of satisfaction from **being considered an extremist**. Was not Abraham Lincoln an extremist? ‘This nation cannot survive half slave and half free.’ Was not Thomas Jefferson an extremist? ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.’ So the question is not whether we will be extremist, but what kind of extremists we will be. Will we be extremists for hate, or will we be **extremists for love**? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice, or will we be extremists for the cause of justice?”

“In the midst of blatant injustices inflicted upon the Negro, I have watched white churches stand on the sidelines and merely mouth pious irrelevancies and sanctimonious trivialities. In the midst of a mighty struggle to rid our nation of racial and economic injustice, I have heard so many ministers say, ‘Those are social issues which the gospel has nothing to do with,’ and I have watched so many churches commit themselves to a completely otherworldly religion which made a strange distinction between bodies and souls, the sacred and the secular.” [W. Ross Blackburn, Martin Luther King—In His Own Words, www.HumanLifeReview.com, Jan. 2024]

“The Best Week Ever” for HS Juniors

Each year, hundreds of high school juniors entering senior year spend a week at Christendom College and say (4.7 out of 5) it’s one of the best weeks of their lives. This is a popular, well-attended and highly-ranked pre-college summer program. Attendance is competitive, and interested students should not delay in applying. If you mention Relevant Radio, you will receive a **50% discount**. Here is the application link: <https://www.christendom.edu/admissions/thebestweekever/>

Helping Young Adults Find a Good Spouse

In *The ABC's of Choosing A Good Wife*, Stephen Wood offers time tested advice for making the greatest decision of your life. It's practical, convincing, full of invaluable wisdom including the key questions to ask before you ask the big question. For young women, you've dreamed of that special man who will appear and ask you to be his bride. In *The ABC's of Choosing A Good Husband*, author Wood gives practical and insightful advice to women on how to choose a partner for life. Both books are available (get a 20% discount by submitting your email address) at <https://shop.catholic.com/>

This monthly newsletter is used by dozens of churches as a bulletin insert. Since 2013 it has had over 30,000 readers and is now posted on three diocesan websites.

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