

Family & ProLife News Briefs

April 2024

IVF ... Abortion Pills ... Teen “Therapy”

April is Abortion Recovery Month

During the months of March and April there will be 85 Rachel’s Vineyard weekend retreats in the U.S. and globally. About 800 men and women will be served during these healing retreats. Attendees are always surprised that there are so many others who experience **prolonged grief and trauma after abortion**. Those in supportive healing groups learn it’s possible to survive and find meaning in all the unspoken suffering.

When individuals are healed from the traumatic experience of abortion, healing is brought back into their families and marriages. There is a positive ripple effect for the entire family and the community. When peace ends their internal war, many women desire to give voice to their own experience. They believe **women deserve better than abortion**. Repeat abortions can be stopped as women are empowered to make healthier choices that do not involve violence to babies as a form of “reproductive healthcare.” [excerpted from Dr. Theresa Burke, Founder, Rachel’s Vineyard, *Priests for Life* newsletter, April 2024] Rachel’s Vineyard retreats are offered in confidence by many Catholic dioceses.

IVF’s Abuse of Human Dignity

The Alabama Supreme Court last month ruled that **embryos created through IVF are human persons** protected under the state’s Wrongful Death of a Minor Act. Basic science tells us that whether the embryo is created through natural procreation or when sperm and egg are joined in a petri dish, **it is a human being in the earliest of stages**.

For every successful IVF-aided birth (there were more than 97,000 in 2021, according to federal data), multiple surplus embryos are either destroyed, used for experimentation (mostly to hone the industry’s own techniques), or frozen for possible future use. According to a recent worldwide survey, **the vast majority of rejected embryos are simply tossed in the trash**. Sometimes it’s because of a genetic disorder like Down syndrome. Increasingly, though, human embryos are screened out for other reasons, like the baby’s sex or eye color. “It’s like going to a sandwich shop and ordering a ham sandwich with cheese. Do you want to put pickles on?” one IVF doctor recently told *The Washington Post*. IVF clinics are designer baby boutiques and as death-dealing, on an industrial scale, as Planned Parenthood.

In the U.S. alone there are an **estimated 1.5 million embryos in cold storage**, equivalent to the population of the city of Philadelphia. Celebrity Paris Hilton boasts of having 20 unborn baby boys on ice. If she’s fortunate,

continued on p. 2

Walgreens, CVS Now Abortion Businesses

By now, you’ve probably heard that Walgreens and CVS will dispense the abortion pill, Mifepristone. The neighborhood pharmacies that we trust with our everyday needs have now been turned into abortion mills.

Chemical abortion now accounts for the majority of abortions. Mifepristone and Misoprostol are the two pills taken to complete a chemical abortion. A new investigation just found that a network of pro-abortion groups and websites are shipping foreign abortion pills, for less than \$100, with zero oversight.

The FDA had initially approved the pills for women up to 8 weeks pregnant, then later changed that to 10 weeks. They were administered by the woman’s doctor who monitored any complications. Now, no age verification, no prescription, and no concern for state laws. This has catastrophic consequences for pregnant mothers who are deceived into believing that chemical abortion is “safe.” We have all heard the increasing number of horror stories of **at-home abortions gone wrong**.

Heartbeat International, has helped save over 5,000+ babies from death by the abortion pill, thanks to **Abortion Pill Reversal (APR)**, a safe and successful option for the women who regret taking that first abortion pill. [Tom Brejcha, LifeNews.com, 3/29/24]

Your editor switched last year from CVS to a local, family-run pharmacy that does not deal with these abortion pills. If you are fortunate to have such a local pharmacy, you may want to do something similar.

Americans Becoming More Pro-Death?

Under the joint direction of Beacon Research and Shaw & Company Research, a recent Fox poll of Americans revealed a remarkable **35% of registered voters said they think abortion should always be legal**. This is much higher than the McLaughlin & Associated poll reported in this newsletter’s previous month’s issue that 21% of all Americans surveyed support abortion being available anywhere, at any time.

The survey also shows that voters are split on whether abortion should be banned at six months (when a child is fully formed and can survive outside the womb with proper life support). Nearly half (48%) are opposed to such a ban. Moreover, the survey showed that

68% of voters believe access to the abortion-inducing pill Mifepristone should be legal. The apparently **increased support for abortion among American voters** is troubling given that the procedure brutally kills innocent human life, as former abortionist Dr. Anthony Levatino has demonstrated. [For the full story, see Emily Mangiaracina, LifeSiteNews.com, 3/28/24]



IVF (continued from p. 1)

some random person won't wander into an unsecured cryopreservation area and accidentally drop them on the floor, which is what tragically happened to the embryonic children of three Alabama couples who filed a wrongful-death lawsuit against their IVF clinic. In 2018, 4,000 embryos were destroyed when a high-capacity freezer tank malfunctioned at a fertility clinic in Cleveland. And what happens to Hilton's embryos if she & her partner split up? Whose "property" are they?

Other countries regulate IVF to varying degrees but not the U.S. Many sincere **Catholic couples** who have struggled to start a family **see IVF as an answer** to their prayers. We want to support them, but many simply aren't well-informed about what IVF entails or about the basis for the Church's clear teaching against it. **IVF violates human dignity** by commodifying human life and de-humanizing and de-personalizing the sacrosanct process of procreation. The Church recognizes that each child has a right to be conceived in a natural way, not in a petri dish in a laboratory at the hands of technicians. And each child deserves to be protected and nurtured in the warmth and privacy of his or her mother's womb, not stored in a freezer in cryogenic nurseries. **Weeding out embryos** because of certain subjectively undesirable traits **is eugenics**, plain and simple; allowing them to be experimented on before they're destroyed is gravely evil. We saw that from the Nazis' eugenics programs.

Yearning to have children is good, but resorting to means that trample on the dignity and rights of unborn children isn't the answer. Fertility resources today are **helping couples** navigate this difficult medical/ethical landscape, groups like The Fruitful Hollow, Springs in the Desert and Them Before Us. The Saint Paul VI Institute & other principled Catholic medical practitioners offer couples ethical alternatives to IVF, such as those based on the **FertilityCare System & NaProTechnology**. These efforts need to be replicated nationwide.

Support with your prayers & understanding couples close to you who are struggling with infertility. Public opinion may not be on your side, but the truth is. It may be your witness and charity that changes everything. [excerpt from Michael Warsaw, publisher, *National Catholic Register*, 3/15/24]

A Free Online Pro-Life University launched by Bishop Joseph Strickland, Deacon Keith Fournier & Frank Pavone will offer classes in science, medicine, law, religion, public relations, politics, & the process of healing the wounds after abortion. Deacon Keith said: "We need to equip people to go into the courts, into the culture, into the academy, wherever they are." Students can log in whenever they have the time and choose from hundreds of courses. Bishop Strickland said: "A university for the sanctity of life is for now and the future." For more information, go to **ProLifeUniversity.org**

Teen Anxiety

Talk therapy administered to youngsters one hour weekly has side effects including demoralization, rumination, alienation, overdiagnosis, hypochondriasis, overmedication. In a new book, *Bad Therapy: Why the Kids Aren't Growing Up*, Abigail Shrier argues that therapy is the cause of America's youth mental health crisis, "the worriers, the fearful, the lonely, lost and sad."

From **1990 to 2007, the number of mentally ill kids increased 3,500%**. Ever more teens present anxiety, depression, dissociation, gender dysphoria (the subject of her previous book), eating disorders, self-harm behavior, hair-pulling compulsions, and tics. **Almost 40% of American kids have received therapy**. But the benefits of psychotherapy are vague, and many kids get worse:

- Demoralized - the patient regards herself as a problem that her parents can't solve
- Ruminative - told by therapists to dwell on disappointments and dissatisfactions
- Alienated - encouraged to judge as guilty or inadequate their friends and family
- Dysfunctional - patients take this on as their identity
- Over-medicated - loss of affect, mental acuity & libido; weight gain; suicidal ideation

Such therapy is too strong for developing brains, yet too many parents stress happiness & validation of children. Kids must receive "consequences," not punishment. They should "enjoy themselves" at school, sports, piano lessons, etc. The "ideal childhood means no pain, no discomfort, no fights, no failure." School discipline and teaching reflect these values. This is folly. Stress in life is normal, a learning experience. American schools exhibit a decline in academic outcomes and an increase in unruliness.

Shrier says that "conversations about feelings and problems styled as medicine" are easily hoisted on fragile teenagers whose parents' insurance plans cover therapy. These trends coincide with increased fatherlessness and unchurched. Smartphones have only exacerbated the negative self-focus of teens. [excerpts from book review, *Julia Yost, First Things, March 2024*]

"I shall never tire of saying that abortion is murder, a criminal act; there is no other word for it. ... It is a defeat for everyone who carries it out and anyone who is complicit in it: mercenaries, killers for hire!" *Life: My Story Through History* by Pope Francis.

This monthly newsletter is used by dozens of churches as a bulletin insert and as a handout. Since 2013 it has had over 30,000 readers and is now posted on three diocesan websites. To receive each month's free issue in your inbox, email Frank Tinari, Ph.D. at tinarifr@shu.edu

