



Pro-Life Network Newsletter

Issue 3

August 2009

Prayer is our greatest weapon against the culture of death. We must work in all kinds of ways, but PRAYER can not only move mountains, it can change hearts.

Pray the Novena in honor of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary

Lord Jesus Christ, You have conquered the power of death and opened for humanity the hope of eternal life in body and soul.

You granted your Mother a share in heavenly glory, and did not allow decay to touch her body.

As we prepare for the Feast of the Assumption, Grant us new confidence in the victory of life over death, and renewed reverence for the human body.

As we honor Mary, Assumed into Heaven, May we proclaim the hope of Your Gospel:
That you want every human life seated on your throne.

May that hope strengthen us to protect every life here on earth.
You live and reign forever and ever. Amen.

Prayer for our Nation's Health Care Reform

Lord Jesus, you are the Divine Physician, and the source of all life and health.

Guide our nation at this critical moment, as our government seeks health care reforms.

Give our elected officials the humility to know That they are servants, not masters.
Give them the wisdom to realize that every life has equal value. Give them the strength to resist the idea that some lives can be sacrificed to save others or that killing the unborn is a part of health care.

Give your people the courage to speak up and to hold public officials accountable for their actions.

Save us, Lord Jesus, from a culture of death,
And let every reform in our public policy be based on the reform of our hearts and minds
In the light of your Gospel,
For you are Lord forever and ever. Amen.

National Pro-Life Updates

WASHINGTON— July 21, 2009

U.S. Bishops Urge Congress to Observe Respect for Life, Access for All in Health Care Legislation

—“Genuine health care reform that protects the life and dignity of all is a moral imperative and a vital national obligation,” said Bishop William F. Murphy of Rockville Centre, N.Y., as he outlined the policy priorities of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) on the issue of health care in a July 17 letter to Congress. The letter supported efforts to pass health care reform, but warned against inclusion of abortion.



Writing on behalf of the bishops as chairman of their Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, Bishop Murphy said the bishops have advocated comprehensive health care reform for decades and recommended four criteria for fair and just health care reform: respect for human life and dignity, access for all, pluralism and equitable costs.

“Two of these criteria need special attention as Congress moves forward with health care reform,” Bishop Murphy said.

On respecting life and dignity, he said, “No health care reform plan should compel us or others to pay for the destruction of human life, whether through government funding or mandatory coverage of abortion. Any such action would be morally wrong.”

After citing protections from public funding of abortion in U.S. law, Bishop Murphy added, “Health care reform cannot be a vehicle for abandoning this consensus which respects freedom of conscience and honors our best American traditions. Any legislation should reflect longstanding and widely supported current policies on abortion funding, mandates and conscience protections because they represent sound morality, wise policy and political reality.”

On the issue of access for all, Bishop Murphy said, “All people need and should have access to comprehensive, quality health care that they can



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afford, and it should not depend on their stage of life, where or whether they or their parents work, how much they earn, where they live, or where they were born. *The Bishops' Conference believes health care reform should be truly universal and it should be genuinely affordable.*"

The full text of Bishop Murphy's letter can be found online at:

www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/2009-07-17-murphy-letter-congress.pdf

Lines in the Sand

By Tom Grenchik

As members of Congress head home for their August recess, we now have a better picture of where everyone stands on health care reform. While the U.S. bishops support genuine health care reform, there is a clear line in the sand between our bishops and some congressional leaders.



On July 17, Bishop William Murphy, Chairman of the bishops' Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, wrote to Congress saying: "The USCCB looks forward to working with you to reform health care successfully in a manner that offers accessible, affordable and quality health care that protects and respects the life and dignity of all people from conception until natural death." Then Bishop Murphy drew a line, declaring that "no health care reform plan should compel us or others to pay for the destruction of human life, whether through government funding or mandatory coverage of abortion."

Some seemed surprised at this, since abortion was not specifically mentioned in draft health care bills until recently. Those with longer memories may recall that the Medicaid statute doesn't mention abortion either, but it was funding 300,000 abortions a year in the 1970s until we put a stop to that with the Hyde amendment. In any case, numerous amendments to keep abortion out of health care reform have been defeated in committee, and it is now apparent that some leaders have every intention of threatening the health care reform process by forcing Americans to accept abortion mandates and/or fund unlimited abortion in their health coverage.

Cardinal Justin Rigali, Chairman of the U.S. Catholic bishops' Committee on Pro-Life Activities, followed up with a July 29 letter to the House Energy and Commerce Committee, declaring that "much-needed reform must not become a vehicle for promoting an 'abortion rights' agenda or reversing longstanding current policies against federal abortion mandates and funding." The Cardinal urged Committee members to preserve longstanding federal policies that prevent government promotion of abortion and respect conscience rights.

But Bishop Murphy and Cardinal Rigali are not the only ones drawing lines. Millions upon millions of American Catholics are with them. Earlier this year, dioceses across the country broke all previous records by ordering more than 34 million postcards so their parishioners could urge Congress to "retain laws against federal funding and promotion of abortion." Now that members of Congress are heading home, they need to be reminded of this message at the local level, in the context of health care reform.

As Congress takes its vacation, various proposals have been left behind. These proposals need to be examined to see how well they provide accessible, affordable and quality health care and how they impact immigrants and the poor. But one thing is certain. The bills approved so far by House and Senate committees include mandated abortion coverage and abortion funding, and that is a line we can never cross.

Now is the time to take action. Contact congressional members through e-mail, phone calls or FAX letters. E-mails can be sent by visiting www.usccb.org/prolife and clicking on the Health Care Reform Action Alert. You can also call the U.S. Capitol switchboard at 202-224-3121, attend town hall meetings in your local district, or call the local offices of your representative and senators. Full contact info can be found on Members' web sites at www.house.gov and www.senate.gov.

The message is simple: "Support genuine health care reform that respects the life and dignity of all. A fair and just health care reform bill must exclude mandated coverage for abortion, and uphold longstanding laws that restrict abortion funding and protect conscience rights."



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National Committee for Human Life Amendment (NCHLA)

Grass Roots Action Center

Remember to email your legislators (and ask friends and family to do the same) letting them know that you oppose abortion coverage in healthcare reform. Click on this link for an online form that you can complete:

[http://actions.nchla.org/Core.aspx?Screen=compose2&SessionID=\\$AID=970:SITEID=-1:VV_CULTURE=en-us:APP=GAC:ISSUEID=18830\\$](http://actions.nchla.org/Core.aspx?Screen=compose2&SessionID=$AID=970:SITEID=-1:VV_CULTURE=en-us:APP=GAC:ISSUEID=18830$)

Wisconsin Pro-Life Updates

Wisconsin counties funding Planned Parenthood

An open records request, made by Pro-Life Wisconsin, revealed that Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin is receiving county taxpayer funds from five Wisconsin counties – Dane, Fond du Lac, Manitowoc, Outagamie and Sheboygan. An open records request was made to each of Wisconsin's 72 counties, asking for copies of any payments made to Planned Parenthood in 2007 and 2008. All counties fulfilled the open records request.

"Planned Parenthood of Wisconsin is the state's number one abortion provider, both surgical and chemical," said Virginia Zignego, communications director for Pro-Life Wisconsin. "County budgets are cutting public services and unemployment is reaching an all-time high. I cannot believe Wisconsin taxpayers would want their hard-earned money supporting Planned Parenthood."

In 2008, the five Wisconsin counties wrote checks to Planned Parenthood for the following total amounts: Dane County, \$50,660.04; Fond du Lac County, \$1,052.50; Manitowoc County, \$13,589; Outagamie County, \$10,872.59; and Sheboygan County, \$11,903.51.



AP Blows Congressional Cover-Up of Abortion Coverage in Obamacare - from Barbara Lyons

The AP has blown the cover-up so carefully crafted in the House Energy and Commerce Committee allowing supporters of Obamacare to "claim" that a compromise on abortion acceptable to both sides has been reached. The AP headline says it all: "Gov't insurance would allow coverage for abortion."

This story is a must-read because it carefully and accurately explains the "compromise" and how it would "recast federal policy on the divisive issue." The story says: "It [Obamacare] would allow the

public plan to cover abortion but without using federal funds, only dollars from beneficiary premiums. Likewise, private plans in the new insurance exchange could opt to cover abortion, but no federal subsidies would be used to pay for the procedure." National Right to Life Legislative Director Douglas Johnson responds: "It's a sham. The plan pays for abortion, and the government subsidizes the plan."

The other ruse being used by pro-abortion supporters is that the Hyde

Amendment would prohibit taxpayer funding of abortion in Obamacare. The AP story blows the lid off this spin by explaining that "the health overhaul would create a stream of federal funding not covered by the [Hyde] restrictions."

Lost in the debate over Obamacare is congressional action through the appropriations process to allow use of federal tax dollars to pay for abortions for federal employees and residents of the District of Columbia. Although the outcome is not clear at this time, it is fascinating — Congress is working to re-authorize the Hyde Amendment to prohibit payment for abortions for recipients of Medicaid, while taking money out of our pockets to subsidize abortions for themselves and their employees and the people of the District. Hmmm. To read the full AP story, click this link: <http://www.google.com/hostednews/ap/article/ALeqM5jE8oH07rubGHV6lmgcgIGJFdUdkAD99SLQBG0>



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What does Church teaching say about abortion?

Excerpts from the Catechism of the Catholic Church on Life and Abortion

†2258 *'Human life is sacred because from its beginning it involves the creative action of God and it remains for ever in a special relationship with the Creator, who is its sole end. God alone is the Lord of life from its beginning until its end: no one can under any circumstance claim for himself the right directly to destroy an innocent human being.'*

†2261 Scripture specifies the prohibition contained in the fifth commandment: 'Do not slay the innocent and the righteous.' The deliberate murder of an innocent person is gravely contrary to the dignity of the human being, to the golden rule and to the holiness of the Creator. The law forbidding it is universally valid: it obliges each and everyone, always and everywhere.

†2268 The fifth commandment forbids direct and intentional killing as gravely sinful. The murderer and those who co-operate voluntarily in murder commit a sin that cries out to heaven for vengeance. Infanticide, fratricide, parricide and the murder of a spouse are especially grave crimes by reason of the natural bonds which they break. Concern for eugenics or public health cannot justify any murder, even if commanded by public authority.

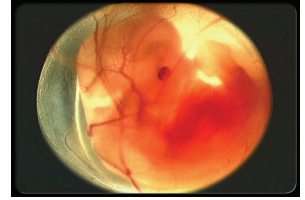
†2270 Human life must be respected and protected absolutely from the moment of conception. From the first moment of his existence, a human being must be recognized as having the rights of a person -- among which is the inviolable right of every innocent being to life. *"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you, and before you were born I consecrated you." "My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately wrought in the depths of the earth."*

†2274 Since it must be treated from conception as a person, the embryo must be defended in its integrity, cared for, and healed, as far as possible, like any other human being.

Behold, children are a gift from the Lord; The fruit of the womb is a reward. Psalm 127:3

Fast Facts on Fetal Development

- A human person's life begins at fertilization when the father's sperm penetrates the mother's egg.
- From the time of fertilization, a baby's unique DNA and genetic makeup are complete from sex to hair color to height as an adult.
- A baby's heart begins to beat just three weeks after fertilization.
- Brain waves can be detected at six weeks after fertilization.
- At two months after fertilization, all of the baby's organ systems are complete. The baby just needs to grow for the remainder of time in the womb.



Prayer intentions

For the women of our own community who are pregnant and afraid of motherhood.

For God's blessing upon pro-life associations throughout the world.

That all fathers may be renewed and strengthened to protect and care for the lives entrusted to them.

That many will dedicate some of their leisure time to pro-life activity.

PRAYER FOR LIFE

O God, our Creator, all life is in your hands from conception until death. Help us to cherish our children and to reverence the awesome privilege of our share in creation. May all people live and die in dignity and love. Bless all those who defend the rights of the unborn, the handicapped and the aged. Enlighten and be merciful toward those who fail to love, and give them peace. Let freedom be tempered by responsibility, integrity and morality.