

June 2, 2011

Dear Good Friends of the Foundation:

It's that time of year again, when Gallup polls on abortion are released. At first glance, the news seems not so good: For the first time since 2008, the percentage of Americans who call themselves "pro-choice" is slightly higher (49%) than those who call themselves "pro-life" (45%). (Last year the numbers were 45% "pro-choice" and 47% "pro-life.") But that's not the whole story. When asked this: "Regardless of whether or not you think it should be legal, do you think abortion in general is morally acceptable or morally wrong?" 51% said "morally wrong" versus 39% "acceptable." The biggest gap was when people were asked to specify under which circumstances abortion should be legal: 61% said it should be legal only under "a few or no circumstances," while 37% said "any or most." The "bottom line," reports the pollster, is that "Americans are rather conservative in their stance on abortion," but still "sharply divided" over the "pro-choice, pro-life labels."

Indeed. The label "pro-choice" has been a massive propaganda win for pro-abortion forces, covering everyone from those who have true moral repugnance but hesitate to say abortion should be illegal in *all* cases (the rape and incest exception) to those who believe abortion should be a protected "choice" throughout all nine months of pregnancy, regardless of the reason. If there were truth in labeling—"pro-abortion" and "anti-abortion" as my late father always argued it should be—the percentages would be quite different.

It seems strange to say that people still need to be educated about abortion, but what people think they know is too often woefully inaccurate; there is also a powerful lack of willingness on the part of many to really investigate. For example, polls over the years have shown that many, perhaps most Americans are not clear on what *Roe v. Wade* and its companion *Doe v. Bolton* actually effected. There is a vague sense that abortion was legalized in the first trimester, and after that only for exceptionally hard cases. Of course we know that what these Supreme Court decisions really permit is abortion-on-demand till term. Sometimes even when the facts do get out—like the graphic descriptions that appeared in news accounts during the legislative battles over partial-birth abortion—public reaction is something along the lines of "We don't really do that in America, do we?" And the facts are pushed away.

How frightening to realize that for the *babies*, the most important "choice" concerning their lives—whether they will get the *chance* to live—can be stripped from them with the collusion of the law and civilized people. As Lord Nicholas Windsor says in his recent *First Things* essay, "Caesar's Thumb," reprinted in the new *Human Life Review*: "We must never forget that the heaviest price is paid by those whose lives are not to be lived."

The *Human Life Review* exists to fight back against the miscommunication and propaganda of those who would silence abortion opposition, to wake people up to the truth by appealing to their heads as well as their hearts. We seek to enlighten readers with accurate information about abortion and all the life issues, and encourage you to feel solidarity with others in the good fight. Our new issue, on its way to you soon, is a good example of the breadth of our subjects and the powerful witness of our contributors. For example, you will find articles addressing these questions: How do things look for the pro-life cause after the 2010 elections? Are the efforts to pass fetal-pain laws a good strategy? What does the word *Ijtihad* mean in Arabic, and what does it say about Muslim countries and abortion? Why was Dr. Bernard Nathanson, the one-time abortionist and founder of NARAL who died this past February, mourned as a pro-life hero and St. Paul-like figure? (You will also find out, on p.24, who will be the Human Life Foundation's Great Defender of Life this fall!).

This latest *Human Life Review* is a double Winter/Spring issue, put together so that we could both catch up and conserve funds after my mother's illness and a financial shortfall made for an extremely difficult fall and early winter. But there has been no skimping on content and passion thanks to our wealth of wonderful contributors: the issue is packed full of fascinating and inspiring original articles and reprints.

(over, please)

Spring arrived with a nice surprise for us: Good Counsel Homes, founded by Father Benedict Groeschel and Chris Bell to house homeless pregnant women in New York and New Jersey, asked if I, as editor of the *Human Life Review* and president of the Foundation, would be their honoree at their annual Ball for Life. I readily agreed—not only was it a tremendous honor for us, but I jumped at the chance to reach new readers for our *Review*. The event was held May 6th, the Friday before Mother’s Day, and it was wonderful—the best part for me was my whole family was there, even my mother (her first “night out” since her surgery last December). I am enclosing for you my remarks, because they are largely about my parents and how the Human Life Foundation and the *Review* came to be, as well as an appreciation for Good Counsel, which is one of the “baby-saving” groups we support, thanks to *you*.

The truth is, it is *you* who should be honored! There would *be* no *HLR* without all those who have sacrificed to support it. Sure, we could write the words and edit what others have written—but the arguments would never get aired without the financial support you have provided. Likewise, we would not be able to help lifesaving organizations like Good Counsel without the funds we raise for our Foundation’s “baby-saving” grants.

One of the disheartening facts for us in our fundraising efforts—as far as approaching so-called “friendly” foundations, etc.—is that, even for some who give to religious organizations, we are “too controversial.” You will read in this issue James Hitchcock’s “Liberal Catholics and Abortion Part II”; it sure resonates with me, especially as a graduate of the Jesuit Catholic College of the Holy Cross. It is politically correct to give strong support to “social justice” causes if they are in areas of poverty and education, but the greatest social injustice of our time—the dehumanization of the unborn—well, as William Murchison remarks in his article in this issue (“The Fight Continues”), even for some conservatives, “pro-life is just kind of, you know, icky.” It’s shameful, and makes our continuing existence harder—but we continue to reach out to those who do understand the importance of what we do. I am praying for some major funding opportunities to develop soon, but the truth remains that right now *these letters*, which I try not to bombard you with, are *still our main means of support*—you are the people who “get it,” who have the generosity to help defend the defenseless, and the selflessness to do good for those you will never know.

The summer, always a slow time for us, will be here soon, and this year we are starting out pretty low in funds. So I am asking, ***would you consider a gift for the Foundation at this time?*** Remember, no gift is too small (or too big!). You may send a check back with the card in the enclosed envelope—or go to our updated website, www.humanlifereview.com, where you can donate by credit card. (Please visit the site anyway, we now preview articles, as well as feature great “oldies” from our archives.)

I’d like to close on a hopeful note—my daughter Anna, 14, is excited to “intern” here this summer. She is—like that generation—a whiz with computers; she also has an exceptionally sunny and enthusiastic personality, and she is devoted to the cause (which would have made her grandfather proud). What gives me great hope is that she can click on to websites like Students for Life (www.studentsforlife.org) and see evidence (as we see at the March for Life every year) of scores of young people standing up for life—something not true when I was a teen. There is exciting potential in the pro-life movement now, thanks to the deeply committed souls who have held on long enough to pass on the torch!

I will be in touch soon about our annual dinner (to be held October 27) and you will be getting our Winter/Spring issue any day now. Thank you again for your essential support of our efforts, and a sunny and safe summer to all!

Yours faithfully,

Maria McFadden
President