Abortion Can Lead to Child Abuse, Has Increased Since Legalization

by By Dennis DiMauro, Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

I am truly amazed at how drastically the abortion debate has shifted over the past ten years, to allow more and more voices from the pro-life side to be heard. Now, we should clearly demonstrate that the second Presidential debate held on Friday, October 8th. In that debate, young Sarah Degenhart of University City, MO asked the following question:

DEGENHART: Senator Kerry, you are speaking with a voter who believes abortion is murder and the voter asked for reassurance that his or her tax dollars would not go to support abortion, what would you say to that person?

My first reaction to this question was surprise that it was even asked. I would have to honestly do not believe that a question where abortion is called “murder” would have been allowed in the first place. I honestly do not believe that a pro-choice candidate would be required to provide her with certain accurate information about the capacity of the unborn child to experience great pain during the abortion. If she remains uncertain, she should allow the woman with a consent form by which she would accept or refuse administration of a pain-relieving drug to the unborn child.

The babies are the very same ones.) This anxiety can interfere with bonding. Moreover, if the grief from the abortion is not adequately processed, it makes it more likely that the mother will remain a less mature parent, and this immaturity is a key cause of abuse and neglect of other children.

A second problem is that fathers have no legal right to save their unborn child from an abortion. Not knowing if the child will live or die creates an ambivalence in the father, and a reluctance to bond to the child. Unattached to their baby, they show less support to their partner as well. After an abortion, the father is even more likely to abuse and neglect their children. Mothers and fathers who have been abused as children are more likely to abuse their own children “Deeply Damaged, p.91)

The first thing that has to be noted when examining the relation-ship between abortion and child abuse, is that the mother is the one who actually commits the harm and the one who will be punished. Dismembering a born child would certainly be considered among the worst possible forms of abuse. Medical textbooks and court testimonies use the very same word, “dismemberment,” to describe what is done to an unborn child by abortion. How, then, is this not child abuse?

Allowing the abuse of an unborn child, then, creates an atmo-sphere in which — more quietly and secretly — we justify the abuse of born children. The child becomes the scapegoat for our unre-solved conflicts. As the Old Testament placed them on the same level as the sin of the goat, who was then led out into the desert, we allow the child, particularly when still in the womb, to suffer for our sins.

The two forms of child abuse — on the unborn (abortion) and on the born — reinforce each other by a mutual causality. Abortion results in more postpartum depression, which inhibits bonding with subsequent children. Conversely, the wounds of abuse are echoed in the essentially self-destructive act of abortion later in life. In subsequent columns we will examine these connections more fully. It should be noted that we are talking here about psychological dynamics and statistical correlation, and that does not mean that every woman who has had an abortion will be a poor mother.

There is a significant association between child abuse and abortion — a mutual relationship, whereby having an abortion makes the abuse committed in the future more likely, and being abused as a child makes having an abortion later in life more likely.

First of all, every pregnancy is a “crisis” in the best sense of the term. Pregnancy creates unique demands and challenges to the mother to mature; the body, the mind, and the spirit must grow in order to accommodate to the child. This “crisis of incorporation,” as psycholo-gists call it, puts the mother at a crossroads: she accepts the changes required of her by the pregnancy, or she abandons the child, choosing to regress rather than mature. The result is that she is more likely to be a poor mother, having a high rate of infant mortality, anxiety, and depression.

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Fr. Frank Pavone, National Director of Priests for Life, also serves as President of the National Pro-Life Religious Council (NPRC) which is an association of pro-life groups working within a variety of different religious denominations. NPRC is a growing vibrant association which has recently added several new groups, including two groups that work within the African-American community.

In addition, Priests for Life helped found and is continuing to support the Silent No More group which is made up of women who have experienced the personal tragedy of abortion. Another important addition to Fr. Pavone’s activities is a pro-life outreach to the broader Christian community through a weekly pro-life program entitled the Gospel of Life, which is aired on the Sky Angel television network. This program, featuring a variety of guests, focuses on the full range of culture of life issues and is having a dramatic impact on American Christians.

For more information contact Priests for Life, P.O. Box 141172, Staten Island, NY 10314, (888) PFL-3448 or (718) 980-4400 or at www.priestsforlife.org

God’s Word for Life Bible!!!

By Dennis DiMauro, Lutheran Church Missouri Synod

Over the years a demand has arisen for a study Bible which helps Christians understand and share the pro-life message within scripture. Lutherans for Life has taken up this task, and has answered this need by producing the God’s Word for Life Bible. This Bible, developed in cooperation with God’s Word to the Nations (a mission society in Cleveland, OH), provides a translation in clear natural English, and includes exegetical insights by many outstanding pro-life leaders. These leaders include Dr. Jean Garret, pro-life pioneer and author of Who Broke the Baby; Wesley Smith, bioethicist and author of Forced Exit: the Slippery Slope from Roe v. Wade which contains 13 half-hour TV programs recorded for the Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN). These programs feature a variety of pro-life leaders and focus on how Christians can help create a culture of life in their local community.

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