What’s in Your Toolbox?

By Georgette Forney

My husband Jim has a blue metal tool box and it is filled with a variety of basic tools as well as some odd shaped contraptions. A few days ago a neighbor came over and mentioned that her door lock was broken and she was going to call a locksmith. Jim went out to our garage and came back carrying his toolbox, assuring her that he could fix the problem. I just laughed because the running joke in our house is when we have a problem with anything—leaking faucets, squeaking brakes, jammed compact disc players, etc.—tell Daddy and he’ll come to the rescue with his trusty blue toolbox! He loves to fix things that are broken.

As I watched Jim walk back home from our neighbors, sporting a smile of success and carrying his toolbox I got to thinking about how important it is to have the right tools to tackle a problem. Obviously you need different tools to fix different problems and you have to know which tool to use. You cannot fix a flat tire with a hammer nor can you unplug a drain with a screwdriver!

As we consider the problem of de-valued life in our society (caused by abortion, euthanasia, violence and despair), we need to think about what tools will help us restore dignity and protect those most vulnerable from destruction.

Here at Anglicans for Life (AFL) we provide many types of tools for your “pro-life toolbox.” Our Sanctity of Life Sunday bulletin inserts educate and inspire parishioners by using Bible verses and facts. The Silent No More Awareness Campaign DVD has 15 testimonies you can use to help people understand what happens to women after abortion. The Anglicansforlife.org website has a beautiful pre-natal slideshow that highlights the intricacy of God’s creation of mankind which is great to share with someone who questions the humanity of the unborn child. AFL’s monthly News Brief regularly features books and movies that present the value of life in a non-confrontational entertaining way.

Some tools are educational in nature; some have a spirit of advocacy about them, while others are ministry driven. Sometimes you need a combination of tools to handle a problem. Some tools address many life topics such as bible verses, while others can only relate to a specific issue. You cannot expect the Partial Birth Abortion Ban to influence someone about the evils of embryonic stem cell research. The key is to know which tool(s) to use with each problem/circumstance. This is where the Holy Spirit comes into play.

We must be prepared and have our toolboxes well stocked with a variety of basic tools, know where to acquire additional items as needed and be walking rightly with the Lord so we can hear His guidance about which tool to use.

The one caveat to all this is our experience. Sometimes when we have had a previous encounter with an issue, we want to respond the next time in the same way. We recently learned that a baby was saved after the pregnant mother watched a testimony on our DVD. Now I want to equip every sidewalk counselor with a DVD player! However not all women will choose life after hearing a testimony—but some might after seeing an ultrasound.

Making a difference for life means having lots of good tools in our toolbox but it also means depending on God to show us which tool to use. Anglicans for Life has a great variety of tools available. Please call, email or visit our website to request a catalogue.

The list of tools we can use to affirm the sanctity of life includes:

- Holy Scripture
- Brochures
- Bumper stickers
- Fatal models, billboards
- Research and facts
- Letters to editors
- Testimonies
- Movies
- Websites
- Articles
- TV/Radio Commercials
- Marches/Walks for Life Books
- Campaigns
- Legislation
- Political candidates
- Periodicals/Newsletters/Publications
- Sidewalk Counselors
- Graphic signs
- Newspaper advertisements
- DVDs
- Organizations
- Pregnancy Resource Centers
- Personal conversations

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Catholic Bishops Strengthen Priority of Life Issues in Political Document

On November 14, the U.S. Catholic bishops overwhelmingly approved their document, “Forming Consciences for Faithful Citizenship,” which made clearer than earlier versions that the issues of abortion and euthanasia—questions of life or death—take priority over other political issues of lesser moral weight.

Bishop Nicholas DiMarzio of Brooklyn, NY, on Nov. 12 introduced the document for which he was responsible as the chairman of the bishops’ committee on Domestic Policy. He had led the document through extensive consultation and discussion by other committees of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops.

The document states: “Intrinsically evil actions... must always be rejected and our private consciences from our public acts, and it cannot be done. At the end of the 20th century, is the crowning... human life from the moment of conception until natural death is always wrong and is not just one issue among many.”

Further, the statement strongly warns that Catholics who vote for candidates because they want to keep abortion legal, or who ignore the pro-abortion stance of a candidate and support him or her just because of party loyalty, are acting immorally.

LCMS World Relief and Human Care worker Rev. Dr. Albert Collver (on right) delivers baby items to Oleg Ryumin, director of the Caring Pregnancy Center in St. Petersburg Russia.

While attending the 4th World Congress on Families in Warsaw, I met leaders (both Christian and non-Christian) from around the globe who have made it part of their vocation to encourage governments to enact family-friendly legislation and to value the sanctity of the relationship between parents and children.

As a side note, I was able to visit Auschwitz on my last day in Poland. Nothing can prepare you for the tangible legacy that these innocent lives left behind... This is chilling evidence of the dehumanizing doctrine that disregarded even the most basic human right to life. As I walked among the cell blocks and traced my fingers down the list of victim’s names, I was suddenly struck by the realization that this place is only 60 years old. These contemporary structures are the same today as they were then... The fact that the facility had the appearance of a modern prison that could be used tomorrow.

LCMS Life Minisries director, and NPCRC Board Member Maggie Karner (on right) and assistant Sandy Hurst organize and track the shipments of donated baby items for Russia.

Congressman Hyde’s stirring defense of the ban on partial-birth abortions: By upholding this tragic veto [by President Clinton,1996] those colleagues join the network of complicity in supporting what is essentially a criminal against humanity, for that little, almost born infant struggling to live is a member of the human family, and partial-birth abortion is a lethal assault against the very idea of human rights and destroys, along with a defenseless little baby, the moral foundation of our democracy because democracy is not, after all, a mere process. It assigns fundamental rights and values to birth and being, the first of which is the inalienable right to life. One of the great errors of modern politics is our foolish attempt to separate our public consciences from our public acts, and it cannot be done. At the end of the 20th century, is the crowning achievement of our democracy to treat the weak, the powerless, the unwanted as things? To be disposed of? If we, as we have not elevated justice we have disgraced it.

This is not a debate about sectarian religious doctrine or about policy options. This is a debate about our understanding of human dignity, what does it mean to be human? Our moment in history is marked by a mortal conflict between a culture of death and a culture of life, and today, here and now, we must choose sides.

I am not the least embarrassed to say that I believe one day each of us will be called upon to render an account for what we have done, and maybe, more importantly, what we fail to do in our lifetime, and while I believe in a merciful God, I believe in a just God, and I would be terrified at the thought of having to explain at the final judgment why I stood unmoveed while Herod’s slaughter of the innocents was being reenacted here in my own country.

This debate has been about an unspeakable horror... We are not talking about abstractions but about real living human beings. Our nation’s role at this time is to be the conscience of the world in this battle for the soul of civilization. This battle is won only by appealing to the good, not to the bad... It is, in the end, the final battle of freedom versus slavery. Life exists for the purpose of expressing the most profound, the most beautiful, the most compelling, and the most powerful of human experiences... Our task is to speak loud and clear on behalf of the defenseless, the vulnerable, and the voiceless, and the cry of the innocent.

Let the innocence of the unborn have the last word in this debate. Let their innocence appeal to what President Lincoln called the better angels of our nature... Make it clear once again there is justice for all, even for the tiniest, most defenseless in this, our land.

While LCMS World Relief and Human Care workers have shipped multiple shipments of winter items were collected from various churches and were hand-delivered in late October. Items sent included baby sweaters, hats, blankets and bunting. These shipments of winter items were collected from various churches and were hand-delivered in late October. Items sent included baby sweaters, hats, blankets and bunting.

Notes for Life Subscribers, the public relations officer for the Life Options Group, is hearing from the Caring Pregnancy Center in Novosibirsk, Russia, give a talk at her church last year, she thought they should do something to help the cause. She went to the president of the local quilling group in Columbia City and asked if the group would like to make receiving blankets and send them to Russia. “They ate it up,” Snyder says. “Our group does a lot of this sort of thing, but it was a special pleasure to make blankets for little babies in a cold place.” “We want to keep these babies warm, and I think it must the mothers’ spirits to get something new for their babies,” Snyder says. “We love doing this kind of thing.”

Because shipping is prohibitively expensive, shipments have been arranged as hand-carried items on board flights with LCMS World Relief and Human Care workers and Lutheran Professors traveling to Russia to work and teach.

In Russia, where 6 of 10 pregnancies end in abortion, it is encouraging that Christians are actively taking a stand for life and rolling up their sleeves to reach out to a society in need and hurt. And thanks to the partnership with LCMS churches and LCMS World Relief and Human Care and their love of life, a warm winter bag was sent overseas to these Russian mothers who chose life for their children. This made winter a little more snuggly for these special babies!

The Polish Welcome LCMS Pro-Life Talks

By Maggie Karner, Director, Life Ministries

While attending the 4th World Congress on Families in Warsaw, I met leaders (both Christian and non-Christian) from around the globe who have made it part of their vocation to encourage governments to enact family-friendly legislation and to value the sanctity of the relationship between parents and children.

At the request of my Polish hosts, the Center for Mission and Evangelism (a ministry of the Polish Lutheran Church), I spent the following week lecturing about sanctity of life issues at public schools, town halls and church basements. I was pleased by the church’s willingness to engage their congregation in a dialogue about these life issues and provide a method for outreach into their communities. All in all, I spoke in 2 town halls, 6 adult church groups, 3 radio station interviews (on the largest Christian station in Poland with 5 transmitters), 1 church youth group, and 9 public school presentations to high school and middle-schoolers. Speaking daily in different cities (one day alone I had 6 school lectures), I was thrilled to cover a variety of topics including “The Miracle of Human Development,” charity, “Pro-life Parenting in the 21st Century,” post-abortion healing, bioethics and cloning, and end of life issues and euthanasia.

I particularly enjoyed speaking to the youth who were very engaged in these discussions and asked many questions. The Miracle of Life presentation was a favorite with them, and they crowded around after my presentation to look at and hold my models of fetal development.

When discussing issues involving bioethics with the youth, I raised the question of whether someone else’s life can be deemed “unworthy to be lived” by someone else. (This is of course Hitler’s famous line.) Given that almost all of these kids were born in the shadow of the Auschwitz-Birkenau concentration camps that are located in this region of Poland, these young people and their families have been deeply touched by this tragedy. These youth clearly understood the parallels with this thinking in bioethics today. In Poland, which has so recently recovered democracy after years under Communist and Nazi rule, it is ironic that these young citizens understand their responsibility to be active and engaged citizens and to help prevent this type of holocaust of innocent human life from ever happening again on their soil.

As a side note, I was able to visit Auschwitz on my last day in Poland. Nothing can prepare you for the tangible legacy that these innocent lives left behind... This is chilling evidence of the dehumanizing doctrine that disregarded even the most basic human right to life. As I walked among the cell blocks and traced my fingers down the list of victim’s names, I was suddenly struck by the realization that this place is only 60 years old. These contemporary structures are the same today as they were then... The fact that the facility had the appearance of a modern prison that could be used tomorrow.

What I didn’t count on was the realization that as “civilized” as we pretend our modern society has become... we are never far from barbarism and the utter devaluing of human life.

Associate Membership Application

Yes, I would like to become an Associate Member of the National Pro-Life Religious Council, Inc.

Enclosed is my fee of $25.00 for membership as: an individual,a church group.

I would like to make a tax deductible donation of $____ to help NPCRC with its important work.

Mail to: NPCRC c/o Development Office, PO Box 61838, Staten Island, NY 10306-9811

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