

A Pro-Life Religious Outreach Newspaper

The Little Sisters of the Poor Win at the Supreme Court

The Supreme Court upheld the religious liberty of the Little Sisters of the Poor and other pro-life organizations on May 15 when it declared that the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) must find a different way to provide services which the Little Sisters find morally objectionable, instead of forcing the nuns to pay for them.

According to the notorious HHS Mandate, the Little Sisters of the Poor and other pro-life non-profit organizations have been required to provide insurance to their employees that covers "services" that the Little Sisters find morally objectionable.

The Little Sisters refused to follow this mandate, but faced \$7 Million in fines. In an attempt to force their cooperation, the HHS concocted an "accommodation" which required the Sisters to sign a waiver which alleged that none of the money they paid for insurance funded objectionable services. The Sisters objected that this was simply a smokescreen. On March 23, the Little Sisters' case arrived in the Supreme Court. After hearing opening arguments, the Supreme Court Justices suspected that the two sides could come to an agreement without its intervention, especially since corporations like Exxon and Visa do not follow

the HHS Mandate. The Supreme Court asked each side to submit further arguments in writing. In the HHS brief, its lawyers reluctantly admitted that they could change their position. In a May 15 ruling, the Supreme Court sent the Little Sisters' case back down to the lower Tenth Circuit Court of Appeals.

Last July, this court ruled that the Little Sisters would need to follow the HHS Mandate. However, the Supreme Court overruled this decision and has now presented the Little Sisters and HHS a fresh chance to reach an agreement which will not require the nuns to pay for objectionable services. Other pro-life, non-profit cases, which were combined with the Little Sisters' Supreme Court case, will likewise be resolved in various other circuit courts around the country.

The case is not closed, but it presents another opportunity for the Sisters' religious liberty to be protected. "This is a game-changer. This unanimous decision is a huge win for the Little Sisters, religious liberty, and all Americans," said Mark Rienzi, a lawyer consulting the Little Sisters of the Poor.

"The Court has accepted the government's concession that it could deliver these services without the Little Sisters. The Court has eliminated all of the wrong decisions from the lower courts and protected the Little Sisters from government fines."



The Little Sisters Celebrate their Victory (Photo: USA Today)

March 21st - National Down's Syndrome Day



Melissa Joy Reilly

Tim Norton was devastated when his daughter was diagnosed with Down's Syndrome shortly after her birth in 2006. He envisioned her growing up tragically disabled.

The years ahead seemed filled with darkness.

A chance encounter on a ski slope, just a few months after his daughter was born changed Norton's outlook on Down's Syndrome and the prospects for his daughter's happiness.

While skiing near his home in Massachusetts, a gifted teenage skier with Down syndrome, Melissa Joy Reilly, glided past him at the crest of a hill.

Norton had noticed Reilly earlier in the day but had said nothing.

"Melissa stopped in front of me and said, 'Hello, how are you?' " says Norton.

"I said, 'Great. What a great night to be skiing.'"

And, just like that, Norton's life was changed.

"Without her even knowing it, without her even trying — it was quite remarkable — I got just the positive lift that I needed," says Norton, whose daughter, Margaret, is now 7. "She opened my eyes to what the possibilities could be for my daughter," says Norton. "It was like, 'Wow, this isn't a big black hole. This is a girl who can walk and talk and ski.'"

(Article source: Liz Szabo: USA TODAY)

R.I.P. Mother Angelica

By: Ernest L. Ohlhoff

Mother Angelica, whose vision for a global Catholic television network was unprecedented, will be mourned by millions of people whose lives have been touched by her indomitable and God-centered spirit.

Mother Angelica made "pro-life" the cornerstone issue in all aspects of EWTN's programming. "A great pro-life visionary has gone to God," said Carol Tobias, president of National Right to Life. "But the work

Mother Angelica started has had a tremendous impact on the world and will continue to do so. EWTN is a great friend and ally to pro-life people of every faith. We are deeply grateful for her love and caring for all God's children."

Born Rita Antoinette Rizzo in Canton, Ohio, in 1923, Rita's parents divorced when she was 6 years old. She and her mother lived on the edge of poverty, moving frequently. As a teenager, Mother Angelica experienced lengthy and serious health ailments. She prayed fervently for nine days and was cured. That experience led her to God.

On August 15, 1944, at the age of 21, she entered the Poor Clares of Perpetual Adoration in Cleveland, Ohio. After moving to the South, Mother Angelica's vision took form in Irondale, Alabama. Her natural and distinctive approach to teaching the Catholic Faith led to parish talks, the publication of pamphlets and books, then radio and television opportunities. By 1980, the Nuns had converted the garage of their monastery into a television studio.

With only a high school education, no television experience, and only \$200 in the bank, Mother Angelica officially launched the Eternal Word Television Network on August 15, 1981. She served as EWTN's first Chairman



and Chief Executive Officer. It was a long hard road and Mother Angelica faced bankruptcy several times. But she refused to allow paid advertisements to fund EWTN, relying solely on viewer donations.

In 1981 when Mother Angelica launched EWTN, it had approximately 20 employees. Today, EWTN's staff of nearly 400 employees prepares and transmits 24-hour-a-day programming to more than 264 million homes in 144 countries. In addition, its religious network broadcasts terrestrial and short-

wave radio around the world, operates a religious goods catalog, and publishes the National Catholic Register and Catholic News Agency, among other communication enterprises. Mother Angelica is living proof that one determined person with God's grace can change the world.

The National Right to Life Outreach Department worked with The Eternal Word Television Network (EWTN) in early December, 2014 to tape a five-part miniseries, *When They Say, You Say*, at EWTN studios in Birmingham, Alabama. This miniseries, featuring Olivia Gans Turner, who is NRLC's director of American Victims of Abortion, is based on a workshop that helps individuals learn how to effectively answer tricky questions about abortion. It was developed by NRLC's State Legislative Director Mary Spaulding Balch J.D., and Olivia Gans Turner and has been presented at National Right to Life Conventions and state affiliate conventions for many years. EWTN Producer Doug Keck, Olivia Gans Turner, and Outreach Director Ernest Ohlhoff worked on this project for almost a year, preparing and refining proposals and content for the miniseries.

DVDs of the series are available through EWTN at (205) 271- 2900

National News and Suggested Prayers

26 Organizations Urge Passage of Conscience Protection Act of 2016 in Joint Letter to Congress

WASHINGTON - In a letter sent to Members of the U.S. House of Representatives, the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB) joined with twenty-five other major pro-life, religious, and health care organizations, including National Right to Life, to urge the House to pass the Conscience Protection Act of 2016 (H.R. 4828).



Signatories include ten medical groups representing tens of thousands of health care professionals who object to abortion and are seeking legal protection to serve their patients in good conscience.

The Conscience Protection Act (H.R. 4828), introduced on March 22 by Reps. John Fleming, M.D. (R-LA) and Vicky Hartzler (R-MO), addresses several “loopholes” in current federal laws that have allowed violations of conscience rights to continue.

“Federal laws protecting conscientious objection to abortion have been approved for decades by Congresses and Presidents of both parties. Even many ‘pro-choice’ Americans realize that the logic of their position requires them to respect a choice not to be involved in abortion,” the letter says. “Yet it is increasingly clear that the current laws offer far less protection in practice than in theory.”

The letter cites a recent California mandate for almost all health plans in the state to pay for elective abortions, and the government’s failure to vindicate the rights of New York nurse Cathy DeCarlo after she was pressured to assist at a late abortion.

The groups signing the letter/statement were:

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops + Christian Medical Association + Catholic Medical Association + National Council of Catholic Women + March for Life Education and Defense Fund + American College of Pediatricians + Christ Medicus Foundation + American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians and Gynecologists + Susan B. Anthony List + National Catholic Bioethics Center + Family Research Council + Americans United for Life Action + National Association of Pro-Life Nurses + The National Association of Catholic Nurses – U.S.A. + The Catholic Benefits Association + Catholic Healthcare International + National Right to Life Committee + American Academy of Fertility Care Professionals + National Association of Evangelicals + Southern Baptist Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission + Sacred Heart Mercy Health Care Centers (Michigan and Minnesota) + Knights of Columbus + California Nurses for Ethical Standards + Association of American Physicians and Surgeons + Institute for Youth Development + Alliance Defending Freedom

July 3 - As we celebrate the Fourth of July, may this nation once again recognize the right to life of all, we pray

July 10 - That we may never forget that each abortion kills a baby in violation of God’s law, we pray

July 17 - That all pregnant women may turn to God for the strength to carry their babies until birth, we pray

July 24 - For all those working tirelessly to protect the lives of the unborn, we pray

July 31 - That we may generously support pro-life organizations that minister to pregnant women, we pray

August 7 - For a deeper understanding of the truth that every life is a gift from God, we pray

August 14 - That all women tempted to abort their unborn child may turn to Mary for understanding and strength, we pray

August 21 - For all those who hold public office that they may work to bring justice to the born and the unborn, we pray

August 28 - For the physically and mentally challenged that they may see the value of their God-given life, we pray

September 4 - For those who labor in the pro-life vineyard that they may persevere in building a culture that respects all life, we pray

September 11 - That in the upcoming presidential election, we may choose candidates who support legal protection for the unborn, we pray

September 18 – For the eyes of all to be opened to the beauty of each of God’s children whatever their stage of life, we pray

September 25 – For those who make decisions about the right to life, that they may seek the Divine Spirit of Wisdom to guide them, we pray

October 2 – For all pregnant women, that they may accept whatever suffering is necessary to bring their unborn child to birth, we pray

October 9 - For those who are blind to the miracle of life in the womb, that they may come to see the humanity of the unborn child, we pray

October 16 - That we may see all people as children of God and work to protect their right to life, we pray



NATIONAL RIGHT TO LIFE CONVENTION 2016
HERNDON, VA // JULY 7-9, 2016 //

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:

NRLCONVENTION.COM

Pro-Life Church Bulletin Inserts

July 3 - Every voice matters in the public forum. Every vote counts. Every act of responsible citizenship is an exercise of significant individual power. We must exercise that power in ways that will defend human life, especially those of God's children who are unborn, disabled or otherwise vulnerable. We get the public officials we deserve. Their virtue - - or lack thereof - - is a judgment not only on them, but on us. Because of this, we urge our fellow citizens to see beyond party politics, to analyze campaign rhetoric critically, and to choose their political leaders according to principle, not party affiliation or mere self-interest. Living the Gospel of Life: A Call to American Catholics, 11/18/98 (US Catholic Bishops)

July 10 - All direct attacks on innocent human life, such as abortion and euthanasia, strike at the house's foundation. These directly and immediately violate the human person's most fundamental right — the right to life. Neglect of these issues is the equivalent of building our house on sand. Such attacks cannot help but be ultimately destructive of other human rights." Archbishop Charles Chaput of Philadelphia in a column titled, "Living the Gospel of Life," 10/18/13 (Catholic Philadelphia)

July 17 - "When we refuse to accept and support the weak and suffering members of society, we lose our compassion as individuals and become less human." Pope Benedict XVI

July 24 - There is considerable evidence that "advance care planning" is being used deliberately to nudge patients toward accepting a denial of life-saving treatment. Despite insurance companies and government assurances, there is a legitimate fear that it will be used deliberately to try to reduce health care spending. Disabilities are portrayed in a negative way suggesting that a "low quality of life is not worth living." From: "National pro-life leaders fear health care rationing" 7/24-8/6/15 (Report of NRLC'S Powell Center for Medical Ethics in The Florida Catholic)

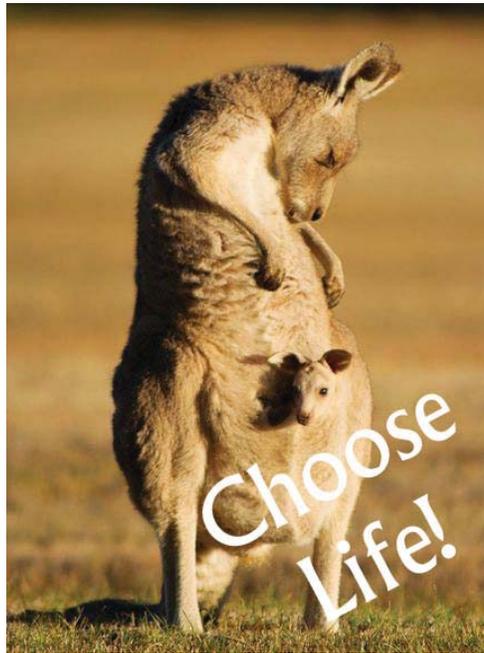
July 31 - "Subsidized by over \$500 million taxpayer dollars each year, Planned Parenthood dismembers or chemically poisons a baby to death every two minutes - killing over seven million innocent children since 1973," said Congressman Chris Smith, following Obama's veto of de-funding Planned Parenthood, NRL News, 1/9/16

August 7 - "I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, then, that you and

your descendants may live, by loving the Lord, your God, obeying his voice and holding fast to him." Deuteronomy 30:19

August 14 - "In our society, no mother should ever feel like abortion is her only option and no unborn child should ever be considered 'expendable.'" Carol Tobias NRLC President 1/22/16

August 21 - NRL News 2/26/16 reports the words of a pro-abortion med student who changed her mind after witnessing an abortion:



"I have not been able to think of anything since yesterday at 10:30 besides what that baby boy might have been. I don't think that people realize what an abortion actually is until they see it happen. I have been tortured by these images – so real and so vivid – for two days now...and I was just a spectator!"

"Never again will I be pro-choice, and never again will I support the murder of any human being, no matter their stage in life."

August 28 - "Christians who consider themselves "pro-choice" are doing precisely what the lawyer did when Jesus confronted him with the command to love his neighbor: 'And who then is my neighbor?' To deny the basic right to life to imperiled children is to smear over the conscience, and to turn

away from the face of Christ himself." Russell Moore NRL Online 1/21/16

September 4 - Abortion is fundamentally critical because, right now in our society, the unborn are dehumanized by both the culture and the law. This is true even in the language used to describe the unborn: "embryos," "fetal tissue," "products of conception." Clinical, distancing language enables us to avert our eyes from the fact that the fragile child in the womb is our neighbor. Russell Moore, NRL Online, 1/21/16

September 11 - Pro-abortion people refer to the unborn child as a "fetus" because through the constant repetition of "fetus," the "target of abortion" was reduced to something other than a child. "Fetus" is at one and the same time vague, semi-dehumanizing, and off-putting. "Fetus" served two key roles in the campaign to dehumanize the unborn child, opening the gate to abortion without limitation." Dave Andrusko 1/4/16

Choose Life is going electronic!

If you would like to receive *Choose Life* via email, please send your email address to NRLC at: outreach@nrlc.org, call (202) 626-8811, or mail to 512 10th St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20004