Is That Your Final Answer? By Fr. Terry Gensemer, CEC for Life

We are all familiar with the game show “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?” A series of questions, growing in difficulty and value, are posed to a random (and hopefully knowledgeable) contestant. The closer he comes to the million dollar question, the more ominous the background music seems to sound, the hotter the lights seem to grow and the closer the audience watches his face. Watching as he will do, with thousands or even millions of dollars at stake, when the emcee looks almost in the eye and says, “Is that your final answer?”

I would love to sit in the place of that emcee some time and ask that mighty question. Only instead of a random contestant, I’d choose philosophers of history, rulers of antiquity, politicians and media pundits—the people whose thoughts and voices constantly shape the way we think. And my question wouldn’t be something like, “In what battle did the Duke of Wellington end Napoleon’s rule?” The category is “Life” and the question in need of a final answer is, “When does it begin?”

Maybe that doesn’t seem like a hard question—definitely not a long question—but it must be an important question, because its footprint is found throughout the thoughts and writings of societies in almost any given era. From the Spartans and Plato, to the Catholic Church, to the Soviet Union, to the present day—the human mind has an opinion about when life begins, and from those opinions spring laws, beliefs, and controversies. But those are all just by-products. I want the answer to the question, and there have been quite a few submitted.

Plato, for example, along with many others of his day, believed that a soul was bestowed upon the body at birth. “We are consoled when a soul comes into being at the moment of conception” (Scott Gilbert, When Does Human Life Begin?). That is why the Hippocratic Oath, still taken by doctors today, actually says, “I will not give a woman [tool] to cause an abortion. But I will preserve the purity of my life and my art.” Now Hippocrates may have been the minority at the time, he may even have leaked the scientific data we have today, but he felt absolutely certain that conception started something completely new and irreversible in the human realm, and that act required protection, especially when practicing medicine.

Six hundred years later, an early Christian apostle named Tertullian would reach the same conclusion: “Prevention of birth is a premature murder, and it makes no difference whether it is a life already born that one snatches away or a life that is coming to birth.” The future of man is a man already; the whole fruit is present in the seed.” (G. Bonnet, Abortion and the Sanctity of Human Life, and just as the agents of medicine continue to take Hippocrates’ Oath, for two thousand years the Church has held close to Tertullian’s words, believing creation to begin in the mind of God and not at the moment of conception.

As a Christian (and avid thinker) I suspect this to be our answer, measurable within the truth of God and compatible with the world of science and medicine. At the moment of conception something entirely new enters the world, a DNA code that we have never witnessed attached to cells that can’t become anything other than a human. And though that human is incredibly small, though she is young, uneducated, and less than mobile, she is as unstoppable. Because, as long as she is given an environment, nurturing, and time, that child will undoubtedly grow stronger, more intelligent, and more mobile. It’s the same with a six-year-old, a twenty-year-old, even a man at the age of fifty. While we live, we grow, and that growth begins at conception. And because we do not have the ability to give it, we are not deemed the right to take it, only the responsibility to protect the life of a child.

That’s our final answer.

NRLC Sounds Alarm on Pro-Abortion Provisions in Health Care Bill

The Obama White House and Democratic congressional leaders have made it clear that they would like to pass a final health care bill that includes abortion-related provisions along the general lines of those contained in the Senate-passed bill. These provisions, however, have been denounced by National Right to Life Committee as well as by the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops and other pro-life groups.

The NRLC believes that enactment of the abortion provisions in the Senate-passed bill will result in greatly expanded abortions, driven by federal administrative decrees and federal subsidies, explained NRLC Legislative Director Thomas Hahman. “When the general public and the medical profession toward the unborn child.

With this stunning, color imagery of the child from four to twelve weeks after fertilization, we expect even more conversions to the position that the child in the womb has the right of life on us and fully deserves protection.

The DVD “The Biology of Prenatal Development” was produced by the Endowment for Human Development, written and researched by a medical doctor, and endorsed by numerous medical school professors and experts in embryology. The video has received 11 video awards for the excellence of its research and presentation, and has even been distributed by National Geographic. The video does not address the abortion issue, but certainly will inoculate anyone from the arguments of abortion advocates who try to deny the humanity of the unborn. The video is intended for a non-professional audience of ages 12 and higher, and yet does not oversimplify its subject matter. Hence, it is even useful for medical school audiences. Along with the embryoscopy method, five other medical imaging technologies are used in the video with accompanying commentary on the scientific facts of the child’s development.

Pass the entire bill to the House and the Senate, and then we will see if we can pass the NRLC’s alarm at the Senate bill’s abortion provisions is widely shared among pro-life organizations. Roman Catholics in

The Best Videos in the World of Our Unborn Neighbors

It’s light years beyond ultrasound and will make you practically fall off your chair when you see it. We at Priests for Life are now promoting and distributing to every sector of the Church and the pro-life movement the most vivid, powerful, and striking videography of the unborn child that exists. Obtained through newly developed technique called embrioscopy, in which a video camera the size of a pen-point is inserted abdominally or cervically, this video footage has been incorporated into a 42-minute video called “The Biology of Prenatal Development,” available from Priests for Life.

You can see segments of this imagery at Priests for Life’s special website www.unborn.info.

It is widely known in the pro-life movement that ultrasound imagery changes the minds and hearts of abortion-minded women and even abortion providers, and has created the beginnings of a cultural shift in the attitudes of the general public and the medical profession toward the unborn child.

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Priests for Life intends to make this video available to every pregnancy center, every school, every Church in America. You can help us to do that! Here are some steps you can take:

1. Sign up at www.unborn.info to keep informed about this project.

2. Purchase your own copy of the DVD from Priests for Life and an additional copy to give to your local pregnancy center. Let us know that you are doing this so that we can keep track of what parishes and schools are covered.

3. Make a donation to cover the cost of sending the DVD to every parish or school in your area.

4. Recruit others to support the project by showing the DVD at your pro-life group meeting, other meetings, or at gatherings you can host in your home.
Mothership Calling
By Georgette Forney, President, Anglicans for Life

This summer I read a book entitled, To Be A Mother. The author, Deanna Jones, begins the first chapter with the story of her aunt asking her what she wanted to be when she grew up. As a six-year-old girl, the author replied, “I want to be a mommy.” The aunt then described her aunt’s negative reaction to her young answer and how the aunt’s response caused her to rethink her dream of growing up to be a mommy.

I was reading the book because, after years of working with women who have aborted their babies, I believe the correlation between feminism, abortion, and the role of motherhood in our society needs further study and debate. What should be seen as the noblest job in the world, being a mom, nurturing life, is instead dismissed and devalued.

There is a subtle lack of respect for motherhood that becomes subtly apparent in certain situations. Many of us “Moms” have been out at a social event and had somebody ask, “What do you do?” When we respond with, “I’m a full-time, stay-at-home mom,” the person posing the question dismisses us from all future conversations.

What message does this send to younger women, potential future mothers?

Recently, TIME Magazine did a front cover story entitled, “What Women Want Now,” that featured the results of a survey on gender issues designed to assess feminism’s influence and impact in today’s society. Most of the data extrapolated from the survey compares women’s and men’s attitudes on their specific roles, with an emphasis on the jobs/responsibilities of mothers and fathers in today’s society. Focus Group 2 was asked, “What good would it be like for your family if both parents worked equally, and you were left wanting to be at home?”

1. Women still earn 77 cents on the dollar compared with men.
2. A majority of both men and women still say it is best for children to have a father working and a mother at home.

2010 March for Life
One of Largest Ever

Although rain, sleet and snow immediately preceded the 2010 March for Life, at noon the sky cleared in time for the arrival of a massive outpouring of support for the pro-life cause. Most assessed the attendance as larger than usual with even more young people in attendance.

The youth rally at the Verizon center, sponsored by the National Pro-Life Religious Council (NPRC), was sincere, but they proposed the wrong solution. Where they back alley abortions and they began to work in the church and in the pantries, pregnancy centers, and other works of help and care that have been established. Our compassion causes us to want good health care to be accessible to everyone and the prospect of a quick solution is enticing. But there is grave danger here that in our hurry to help those in need, we will inadvertently lose what we really want and what we want to be at our most basic level.

God knew what He was doing when He created women with the greatest blessing of Motherhood. For the last 50 years, my generation has been programmed to believe that being a mother is the greatest gift. God knew what He was doing when He created women with the greatest blessing of Motherhood.

A friend of Presbyterians Pro-Life recently sent me a copy of a Catechism for Young Children: Who made you? A. By loving him and doing what he commands. Q. How can you glorify God? A. For his own glory. Q. Why ought you to glorify God? A. Yes, I have a soul that can never die. Q. What did you do to help NPRC with its important work. Mail to: NPRC c/o Development Office, PO Box 6838, Staten Island, NY 10306-9811

Associate Membership Application

By Brian Bowen, Presbyterians Pro-Life

The loss of humanity is staggering. Almost 50 million U.S. babies have been aborted. Countless men and women live with regret, grief, depression, drug and alcohol abuse, and other symptoms as a result of abortion.

Now PC(USA) voices are speaking out in the national health care debate. Our current policy on abortion and our alliances with pro-abortion groups (i.e. Religious Coalition for Reproductive Choice) threaten to cause us to propose the wrong solution once more. President General Assemblies have called on the government to establish a national health care plan as recently as 2008. Last week, Gradye Parsons, Stated Clerk of the PC(USA) released a statement urging quick action on national health. The PC(USA) is also record as a supporter of a single-payer universal health care plan.

Where am I going with all this? Well, I’m not a fan of single-payer health care—I prefer personal freedom to government control as a general principle—but, it’s not a cross I would die on.....except when that plan would put human lives at stake! When endorsement of a health care plan is coupled with the current PC(USA) social witness policy on abortion, then the result is advocacy for a health care plan that covers abortions. That puts pro-life Presbyterians in fundamental disagreement with the advocacy of our denomination. A Zogby poll in March surveyed 30,117 Americans from 48 states and found that 51-69% oppose federal funding of abortion.

A. Yes, I have a soul that can never die. Q. What did you do to help NPRC with its important work. Mail to: NPRC c/o Development Office, PO Box 6838, Staten Island, NY 10306-9811

Contact Person
Church or Group
Address
City State Zip
Denomination
Phone (h)___________________(w)__________________
E-mail ______________________

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Our nation is embroiled in a heated debate about health care. It’s not a new debate. There is, however, a growing sense that our current system of health care is broken and an intense desire to find a solution quickly. Recently, faith groups and online denominations, interfaith coalitions, and advocacy groups have joined in calling for a speedy resolution that will provide health care for everyone.

The PC(USA) is one of the denominations joining the discussion. Presbyterians Pro-Life long displayed an active concern for society and involvement in our country’s government. We take seriously the command of Scripture to “love your neighbor as yourself” (Matt. 19:19). The years of Presbyterian caring are visible in the countless questions in the Catechism for Young Children: Who made you? A. By loving him and doing what he commands. Q. How can you glorify God? A. For his own glory. Q. Why ought you to glorify God? A. Yes, I have a soul that can never die.

So, I believe I speak for most pro-life Presbyterians when I say, “Abortion is not a disease or injury requiring a cure. Pregnancy is a normal and usually a healthy condition. It is to be celebrated. A woman does not have particular health care needs during pregnancy; abortion is not a treatment. Abortion causes the destruction of life and does nothing to enhance the health of the woman. Abortion is the termination of a human life, as is assisted suicide. Both end life, not in God’s time and not in God’s way. Abortion is a sin, and it is a sin that brings us as a people to the very edge of destruction.”

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