How my sister with Down syndrome can help
Richard Dawkins boost the sum of human joy
by Erna Albertz—Plough Quarterly * Autumn 2016

Jean Vanier, the founder of the L’Arche community, describes it well:

People with intellectual disabilities are not able to assume important roles of power and of efficacy. They are essentially people of the heart. When they meet others they do not have a hidden agenda for power or for success. Their cry, their fundamental cry, is for a relationship, a meeting heart to heart. It is this meeting that awakens them, opens them up to life, and calls them forth to love in great simplicity, freedom, and openness.

When those ingrained in a culture of winning and of individual success really meet them, and enter into friendship with them, something amazing and wonderful happens. They too are opened up to love and even to God. They are changed at a very deep level. They are transformed and become more fundamentally human.

- acceptance speech for the 2015 Templeton Prize, March 11, 2015
(excerpted from Plough article)

TO HAVE HOPE
To have hope
Is to believe that history continues open
To the dream of God and to human creativity.

To have hope
Is to continue affirming
That it is possible to dream a different world,
Without hunger, without injustice,
Without discrimination.

To have hope
Is to be a courier of God
And courier of men and women of good will,
Tearing down walls, destroying borders,
Building bridges.

To have hope
Is to believe in the revolutionary potential of faith,
Is to leave the door open so that
The Spirit can enter and make all things anew.

To have hope
Is to believe that life wins over death.

To have hope
Is to begin again as many times as necessary.

To have hope
Is to believe that hope is not
The last thing that dies.

To have hope
Is to believe that hope cannot die
That hope no longer dies.

To have hope
Is to live.

“The death of a single human is too heavy a price to pay for the vindication of any principle, however sacred.”
David Berrigan

-Missionary Sisters of St. Charles Borromeo (Scalabriniens) Honduras
“Save the Babies” or “I’m grateful for my abortion”, which one are you for? Yes, that is rhetorical for anyone reading this publication. I do, however, think that most people would be drawn to and prefer the first one.

These are two billboard campaigns currently running signage in our diocese. The first is from a pro-life, non-Church affiliated group called Prolife Across America and the second is from a local abortion provider many of you are familiar with, Preterm.

You may note that the first slogan honors human life and the second ignores that human life, a baby, is even involved. The second sign has rattled many Catholics. While this message is in our lives daily, this is the first time local abortion supporters have been so bold to proclaiming themselves on this very large advertisement. But are they really bold?

After seeing the sign, I went to the website referenced. The site is owned by Preterm but it is a stand-alone website for this campaign. I perused the pages and found one of most interest to me. It was titled ‘testimonials’. On the page there are 4 stories you can link to. One shows a man in the video link and the other three show women. I went to the man’s story first because it seemed most unusual. I wondered if he was the father, the grandfather, what? To my surprise, he read an anonymous testimonial of a post-abortive woman. Well, maybe the others are giving their own testimonials. No, each video was a reading of someone else’s testimonial. I wonder how you reconcile grateful with needing anonymity. When I’m grateful, I want the world to know of my blessings.

“Save the Babies” is definitely the mission of prolife organizations and it is a very good one. It is celebrating the life of an adorable baby. We are always grateful when a campaign like this brings the message of life to the daily lives of our fellow citizens.

People wonder what makes the Church’s message different but aligned with secular prolife organizations such as this. Well, the Church’s slogan would likely be “Save the Souls.” You see, the Church’s mission is salvation, eternal life. So we want to save the lives of the babies, while saving the souls of all those who promote, obtain, perform and support abortion in any way. We are here as instruments of the Gospel, to bring the entire human family to salvation, and our tool is the Word of God. So we work with lots of prolife organizations and we support their efforts to end abortion and we continue our broader task as Catholics following our baptismal call to promote the Gospel. We continue to live, love and learn about the gift of life that God has given each and every one of His beloved.

Peggy Gerovac

A Rachel Rosary

Here is something you can do to be in solidarity with those who suffer Post-Abortion Syndrome. These meditations and intercessions on the Sorrowful Mysteries of the Rosary and the Resurrection are gleaned from the real-life burdens shared by women and men who suffer PAS. It is not only ideal for private prayer but is particularly suitable for parish or group prayer.

Fr. Larry Kupferman is an associate pastor in the Diocese of Rockville Center, NY, a contemporary Christian musician and a Post-Abortion counselor for Project Rachel.

Available to order through Catholic Book Publishing Corp at www.catholicbookpublishing.com (item #RP 420/04) or call 1-877-228-2665.
For Life

SAVE THE DATE

The annual Fortnight for Freedom will happen again June 21-July 4th. Join the USCCB as they pray for greater religious freedom in our country.

There will be a tour of the relics of Ss. Thomas More and John Fisher—they will be in Pittsburgh June 23-24. Make a pilgrimage there to pray with these powerful saints!

An excerpt from the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops Ad Hoc Committee for Religious Liberty’s statement on Religious Freedom, Our First, Most Cherished Liberty:

“We are Catholics. We are Americans. We are proud to be both, grateful for the gift of faith which is ours as Christian disciples, and grateful for the gift of liberty which is ours as American citizens. To be Catholic and American should mean not having to choose one over the other. Our allegiances are distinct, but they need not be contradictory, and should instead be complementary. That is the teaching of our Catholic faith, which obliges us to work together with fellow citizens for the common good of all who live in this land. That is the vision of our founding and our Constitution, which guarantees citizens of all religious faiths the right to contribute to our common life together.”

To find the rest of this document and for more information and resources, check out their website at: [www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/fortnight-for-freedom](http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/religious-liberty/fortnight-for-freedom)

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### What Catholics Should Know about the Death Penalty

**Scripture:**
- Genesis 2:7, 21-23—Every life is precious, a gift from God.
- Exodus 21:23-25—“Eye for an eye” meant to limit retribution, not to require a minimum punishment.
- Romans 12:17—“Do not repay injury with injury.”

**Catholic Teaching:**
- Pope St. John Paul II: “I renew the appeal...to end the death penalty, which is both cruel and unnecessary.” St. Louis, MO, Jan. 27, 1999
- Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI: “…I draw the attention of society’s leaders to the need to make every effort to eliminate the death penalty and to reform the penal system...” Benin, Nov. 19, 2011
- United States Catholic Bishops: “Ending the death penalty would be one important step away from a culture of death and toward building a culture of life.” A Culture of Life and the Penalty of Death, 2005

**Some Facts:**
- Blacks are 13% of US population but 42% of death row inmates
- Over 90% on death row could not afford their own attorney
- There were 43 US executions in 2011, a 56% decline since 1999
- Among Catholics only 48% support death penalty; churchgoers and younger Catholics are less likely to support it. Zogby Int’l 2006 Poll

**Resources:**
- Catholics Mobilizing Network to End the Use of the Death Penalty (CMN): [www.catholicsmobilizing.org](http://www.catholicsmobilizing.org)
- US Conference of Catholic Bishops: [www.usccb.org/deathpenalty](http://www.usccb.org/deathpenalty)
- Death Penalty Information Center (DPIC): [www.deathpenaltyinfo.org](http://www.deathpenaltyinfo.org)

Information from Catholics Mobilizing Network

Prayer Card
Job Posting for Local Ministry

The Board of Directors of Community Pregnancy Center is seeking qualified applicants for the full-time position of Executive Director. This servant-leader believes in and adheres to the teachings of the Catholic Church and possesses both proven managerial experience and a ministerial heart. Organizational and problem-solving skills are essential, along with strength in public speaking, oral and written interpersonal communications, and computer proficiency. Interested applicants may email their letter of application, resume and contact information for 3 reference to info@communitypregnancycenter.org.

Happens here too

Have you seen the bus signs, billboards, kiosks, brochures? Do you wonder who is behind it and is the Church involved?

Greater Cleveland’s Coordinated Response to Human Trafficking is a multi-disciplinary group of agencies and organizations that have come together to collaboratively address the complexities of this crime and to weave a safety net for those victimized by the crime.

Currently, the group is working together to:

1. Create broad public awareness that human trafficking exists in Northeast Ohio, so that the public recognizes the red flags of human trafficking and knows whom to contact when the red flags are present.
2. Train those in the hospitality and transportation industries regarding the red flags of human trafficking and provide them with the information about whom to contact when the red flags are present.
3. Further develop the protocol and coordination among law enforcement and the social service agencies that provide victim support, from initial reports of a possible human trafficking situation through the resolution of the victim's circumstances and/or possible court proceedings.

Associated Catholic Members of Greater Cleveland’s Coordinated Response to Human Trafficking:

Collaborative to End Human Trafficking - started by Religious women’s communities of the diocese, supported by the Diocese St. Vincent Charity Medical Center

SOAP (Save Our Adolescents from Prostitution) - started at Holy Angels Parish

Check the website for the extensive list of community involvement:
www.happensheretoo.org/home.html

EARTH DAY PROGRAM

We are excited to offer you the 2017 Earth Day Program! This is the second year the Covenant has produced an educational program to help parishes, schools, and religious communities celebrate Earth Day (April 22nd). Once again, we join with the Earth Day Network to observe Earth Day and to embrace our call as Catholics to increase awareness of care for both creation and the poor.

This year we offer three different age-specific programs:

1. A one-hour program for adults & high-school students
2. A 45-minute program for grades one through eight (with differentiation for older students).
3. A 30-minute program for Pre-K/Kindergarten.

Focusing on the theme of “Know the Creator Through Creation”, the programs are wonderful for inter-generational parish programs, schools, and any group interested in exploring how a deeper connection with creation can draw us closer to the Creator of the universe.

Each program includes prayers, scripture readings, a short video, discussion questions, and suggested activities to help your group learn about climate change and Catholic Social Teaching about climate change issues. With the goal to increase climate literacy in our parishes, schools, and religious communities, the programs also offer suggestions for continued educational and advocacy activities on climate issues.

Download at:
http://www.catholicclimatecovenant.org/earthday
For Life

Life Issues and Social Justice—Newton

Reproductive technologies effect another corruption, which Benedict XVI notes in *Caritas in veritate*, in that they breed *indifference* to the question of what is or is not human (n. 75).

But there are necessary *social* repercussions to this indifference. Benedict XVI asks, “How can we be surprised by the indifference shown towards situations of human degradation, when such indifference extends even to our attitude towards what is and is not human?” (n. 75). Given the context of the encyclical, the degradation he is thinking of appears to be the poverty suffered by so many people in the world. His point is that when the notion of what is human is blurred by the use of reproductive technologies, the confusion also manifests itself in our attitude toward the poor. The result of this indifference is that “while the poor of the world continue knocking on the doors of the rich, the world of affluence runs the risk of no longer hearing those knocks, on account of a conscience that can no longer distinguish what is human” (n. 75).

Aquinas and abortion—Msgr. Charles Pope

*Excerpt from Our Sunday Visitor—Sept 25, 2016*

The date of ‘ensoulment’ is not pertinent to the Church’s position on the sinfulness of abortion.

The speculation of Aquinas was that an unborn baby receives a soul 40 or 80 days after conception, depending on gender. Aquinas held this opinion based on Aristotle, who said a child has a soul when it first has a human “form” - that is, when the child looks human.

While many link this position of Aquinas to the abortion debate, the date of ensoulment is not pertinent to the Church’s position on the sinfulness of abortion. The Church roots her teaching in Scripture, Tradition and natural law. St. Thomas never wrote directly on abortion. But surely St. Thomas was well aware of the Scriptures, as well as the ancient teaching of Tradition forbidding abortion at any stage. Beginning with the Didache written around 110 A.D. which said “Thou shalt not murder a child by abortion” (2:2), and continuing with Basil, Chrysostom, Ambrose, Jerome and many other Fathers, and also authoritative councils, the Church had consistently condemned abortion.

Hence we ought not presume Aquinas, who never spoke on abortion directly, ever intending by engaging in a discussion of ensoulment, to contest the immorality of abortion at any stage. Regarding his teaching on ensoulment, theologians do not hold such an opinion today and most regard Thomas’ positions as rooted in a primitive understanding of embryology. Clearly natural science today demonstrates the existence of a genetically unique individual at conception.

New Pro-Life Program on AM 1260 The Rock

Join AM 1260 The Rock, WCCR, Cleveland’s Catholic radio station and a proud EWTN Global Catholic Radio Network affiliate, for its new half-hour program “EWTN Pro-Life Weekly.” The program, airing at 10 AM on Sundays, informs and educates listeners about current issues of importance in advancing a culture of life. According to program host Catherine Szeltner, “Each program will feature a call to action segment that is intended to very clearly give people the steps they can take to become engaged in the fight for life. This is the main vision for the show.”

St. Peter the Rock Media, AM 1260 The Rock, WCCR, is a lay apostolate with the mission to provide quality programming that is faithful to the teachings of the Church and presented in a way that inspires conversion of heart and a deepening of faith while building up the local body of Christ. The station, which began broadcasting on May 11, 2015, is the 300th EWTN Global Catholic Radio Network affiliate. For a complete program guide and more information, visit [www.am1260therock.com](http://www.am1260therock.com) or call 216-227-1260.

“Today, every land is a ‘mission land,’ every dimension of human life is mission territory awaiting the proclamation of the Gospel.”

-Pope Francis in an October 7 meeting with members of the Oblates of Mary Immaculate
A year after genocide declaration, Knights donate nearly $2 million

Washington D.C., Mar 17, 2017 / 02:18 pm (CNA/EWTN News).- Last year, in a nearly unprecedented event, the United States declared that Christians, Yezidis, Shi’a Muslims, and other religious and ethnic minorities are victims of ISIS genocide.

It was only the second time the State Department has used the label to describe ongoing atrocities committed by a state or non-state actor. Genocide is the “crime of crimes,” according to the United Nations, because it involves the intentional destruction, “in whole or in part,” of an entire people.

Marking the one-year anniversary of that declaration, the Knights of Columbus are continuing their work to assist persecuted Christians in the region by contributing nearly $2 million in new assistance.

In a statement announcing the new aid, the fraternal organization’s CEO Carl Anderson said that “words are not enough” to protect Christians and other targeted populations.

“Those targeted for genocide continue to need our assistance, especially since many have received no funding from the U.S. government or from the United Nations. The new administration should rectify the policies it found in place, and stop the de facto discrimination that is continuing to endanger these communities targeted by ISIS for genocide.”

Many others have also called on the Trump administration to do more to help Christians and other minorities in the Middle East on the anniversary of the declaration. This week, Professor Robert Destro of the Columbus School of Law at The Catholic University of America announced a joint statement of “recommended actions” for the administration to take to protect genocide survivors.

The document was a call “to stand up constantly” for minorities “who are being targeted today by ISIS and all of its affiliates around the world” and was signed by numerous political and religious leaders.

The Knights of Columbus played a key role in lobbying for the declaration of the Christian genocide last year, as they compiled and presented a 278-page report to the State Department, documenting evidence of Christian genocide at the hands of ISIS.

Since 2014, they have donated more than $12 million to aid Christians in the Middle East, which has gone to medical clinics in Iraq, Easter food baskets for displaced Christians under the care of the Archdiocese of Erbil, general relief for the Christians of Aleppo, Syria, via the city’s Melkite Archdiocese, and support for the Christian refugee relief programs of the Syriac Catholic patriarch.

Anderson said 2017 may be “the decisive year in determining whether many Christian communities throughout the Middle East will continue to exist,” and has called for aid from the U.S. government and the international community.

The Knights of Columbus are also leading a Novena (nine days of prayer) from March 12 to 20 for grace and solidarity with Christians in the Middle East. Donations to support Christian refugees and other religious minorities can be made at www.christiansatrisk.org

The Spring Campaign ended on April 10th; supporters gathered for a Victory Rally on April 11th, thanking God for his blessings.

A few highlights from the sidewalks:

- **March 18**: a prayer volunteer at PP in Bedford spoke with one of the workers’ husband who said his wife was quitting for a better position in the medical field.
- **March 29**: 3 prayer volunteers were on the sidewalk in front of Family Planning in Painesville were able to have a fruitful conversation with a woman who genuinely wanted information on the hard cases when abortion is used, such as incest and rape. She accepted their informational resources, as well as information on post-abortive counseling. She left smiling. Our talk with her was a gift to us.
- **March 24**: a husband and wife from St. Barnabas Church were at PP in Bedford when a baby was saved, thanks to the sidewalk counseling of another prayer volunteer with a young man whose girlfriend was inside seeking an abortion.
- **April 4**: 5 prayer volunteers were at Preterm when a young woman leaving stopped to talk with us. She had an ultrasound, was 8 weeks pregnant, and didn’t know yet what she was going to do. We pointed out in the Help is Available brochure a local crisis pregnancy center for her to get help. She said she was heading there immediately and we prayed for her and her unborn baby.

Locally, the two saves in this campaign bring the total to 149 saves in Cleveland since 40 DFL began here in 2009.

**The Fall Campaign will take place September 27 - November 5.**
Suffering and Palliative Sedation (excerpt from The National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly—Summer 2016)
by Rev. Tadeusz Pacholczyk

The very concept of redemptive suffering suggests that there is so much more to human suffering than meets the eye, and that it is not simply an unmitigated evil from which we should instinctively flee. Rather, it is a mysterious force that can mold us in important ways and mature us, a force we ought to learn to work with and accept as part of our human journey and destiny. Through our pain and suffering, we can share in the redemptive suffering of Christ. When we are immobilized in our hospital bed, we become like Christ, immobilized on the wood of the cross. Powerful redemptive moments open before us whenever we accept and embrace our own situation in union with him. As children, we may have been taught those famous three words by our parents when pain and suffering would come our way: “Offer it up!” Even now, those simple words serve to remind us how our sufferings can benefit not only ourselves but those around us in the mystery of our human communication with them.

The acceptance of pain can thus be “an invitation to manifest the moral greatness of man, his spiritual maturity.”9 To suffer well requires both courage and fortitude. “In suffering there is concealed a particular power that draws a person interiorly closer to Christ, a special grace” in which there is “above all a call”10

Severe pain can interfere with performing the simplest of physical activities and can rob a person of psychological and spiritual well-being. For some people, pain and suffering will contribute to depression, alienation from family and friends, loss of self-worth, and a strong sense of being a burden. Spiritually it can darken the soul, curtail prayer, and interfere with relationships. For these reasons, the control of pain remains an invaluable part of care, enabling people to live their lives and interact with others as fully as possible. To prohibit the control of pain would be inhumane and insult human dignity.

Appropriate pain management can thus often serve the function of “organic and psychic relief making prayer easier and enabling one to give oneself more generously.”11 Thus pain medications, which “help to make the course of the illness less dramatic, contribute to the humanization and acceptance of death.”12

9. John Paul II, Salvifici doloris, n. 22, original emphasis.
10. Ibid., n. 26, original emphasis
12. Ibid.

Rethinking my Support of Choice
by Erna Albertz—Plough Quarterly * Autumn 2016

I began to rethink my worldview from the ground up. Is encouraging a woman to believe she is tough enough to kill her own child, yet not tough enough to raise it, really standing up for her best interests? Isn’t this actually just another way of putting a woman’s needs last, so that when all is said and done, she is left to bear responsibility for her child’s death? I began to see how many things in our society must be fundamentally wrong if women feel the imperative to make a choice like this.

-Excerpt from Pursuing Happiness: How my sister with Down syndrome can help Richard Dawkins boost the sum of human joy

Clean Water Begins at Home: Rivers, Rain Barrels, and Gardens
Saturday, May 20th 10am-12pm
Crown Point Ecology Center—3220 Ira Road—Bath, OH 44210
This event is sponsored by the Crown Point Ecology Center, Catholic Commission of Summit County, and the Care for Creation Working Group, Diocese of Cleveland.

One approach is to give our residents access to practical “down to earth” educational materials that will increase environmental awareness. What we do in our own yards has a huge impact on our rivers and lakes.

To register for this FREE event, go to: crownpt.org/events/clean-water-starts-home-rivers-rain-barrels-gardens/
“Killing a human being is always wrong because it is God’s will for man to be a sacred creature.”
- Lactantius, AD 311

Bishops’ Parameters for Health Care Reform
from their letter to Congress
Our Sunday Visitor April 2, 2017

- Respect for Life and Dignity
- Honoring Conscience Rights
- Access for All
- Truly affordable
- Care that is comprehensive and of high quality

PLEASE CONTACT US TO POST YOUR VOLUNTEER NEEDS AND UPCOMING EVENTS.
ALL OF OUR ADS CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE FOR PARISH USE!

Contact Us
For Life is a quarterly publication and educational service of the Office for Human Life of the Diocese of Cleveland.

Office for Human Life
7911 Detroit Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44102

(216) 334-2965
pmgerovac@ccdocle.org
www.ccdocle.org/office-human-life

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