



Heartbeat

The beat of Students for Life at SLU

Volume 2, Issue 8, May 2009



Upcoming Events

Have a great summer!

Students for Life Meetings

Meeting times for next year to be determined



Defending Life as “The Invention” of a Loving Creator

By Eugene J. Diamond
SFL President 2006-2007

Not long ago I stumbled across a short reflection in *Magnificat* that seemed fitting for those who are actively defending life. Written by Sister Elvira Petrozzi, the Italian foundress of *Comunità Cenacolo*, a program for disillusioned, desperate, and hopeless young men and women who are convinced that life has no meaning or value, the meditation explores the importance of "Being 'Prophetic' Regarding Our Life."



"Our life is not an invention," Petrozzi writes, "but rather the invention of God, who had the courage to have so much faith in us to give us this gift, put into our hands life, existence, with all the 'tools' to be able to live it well." We are "the invention" of a Loving Creator, individually willed by Him, created in His image and likeness, and not simply "an invention," some indefinite discovery and without purpose. Our life is a "gift," something unique and special that He gives to us with all the "tools" necessary to know, to love, and to serve Him.

Modern society tries to convince us that this isn't the case, to tell us that we are just "an invention," that, as Petrozzi cautions, "we are simply born because our parents wanted us or, in any case, for natural or human motives." However, we exist not because of "natural or human motives," but because of supernatural and superhuman ones. We are here, Petrozzi remarks, "because God wanted to give to you, to me, to everyone the gift of life."

This gift demands introspection and calls us to seek out the ultimate Gift Giver. "If we do not discover this in ourselves," Petrozzi warns, "we do not even know how to welcome or defend the life of others, of our children, or of those whom we say we love." The good Italian sister warns us against going about our lives thinking we are mere afterthoughts. Welcoming and defending life is based first and foremost on knowing and believing that life is worth defending because God created it; that we indeed are "the invention" of God.

The fact remains, however, that we must make this discovery, this knowing God, on our own. "No one can enter into the heart of our life for us. It is a personal journey," Sister tells us. But how easy it is for us to forget from where the gift of our life originates! Only after we have unwrapped the gift of our lives and discovered that its rich and varied flavors are given to us by a Loving Creator, can we experience the joys of defending life.

“Look Good for Life”

By Ellen Albritton

"As a pregnancy counselor, I had not dealt with a single woman who thought about aborting her baby because she thought it was best.

No, it was her parents who thought it was a good idea, or a boyfriend, or a husband, or a boss, or a frowning, judgmental society which was too much for her to withstand."

-Judie Gillespie

"The use of adult stem cells and tissues derived from the patient's own adult stem cells would mean that the cells are less likely to be rejected by the immune system."

-National Institutes of Health

Students for Life has recently been given a great opportunity for fundraising called "Look Good for Life" through the tremendous generosity of a faculty member here at Saint Louis University. This faculty member is Thomas Meyer, who is also the owner of Cutters & Co. barbershop at the Chase Park Plaza. At Cutters & Co. guys can now get the "Billiken Cut." One dollar from every \$15 student "Billiken Cut" and two dollars from every \$20 adult "Billiken Cut" will go to Students for Life. But at Cutters & Co. customers get more than just a good haircut. Included with the cut are a free beverage, free hot towel, free shampoo, and free parking. This is a wonderful opportunity for Students for Life to raise money to help our group continue all of the great things we are already doing. SFL members have been working to get the word out about the "Billiken Cut" by having an informational table in the Busch Student Center and handing out flyers in the Quad. But we need your help, so make sure you tell all the guys you know to ask for the "Billiken Cut" and help make "Look Good for Life" a huge success! Appointments can be made by phone at 314-633-3222 or online at www.cutterschase.com.



A Busy April for SFL!

By Laura Tiffin

From raising funds to having fun, April was a busy month for Students for Life! On the 18th, seven members participated in Alpha Phi Omega's Showers of Service by volunteering at Our Lady's Inn, an emergency shelter for women in crisis pregnancies. The members did yard work and helped organize items for the opening of the nearby resale shop, Twice Blessed, which opened May 1st to benefit Our Lady's Inn.

On the 24th, SFL worked a funnel cake stand at the Spring Fever concert. By making and selling funnel cakes, as well as candy and Vitamin Water, we were able to raise money for a baby shower at Our Lady's Inn. The baby shower, held the following day, was a huge success! The women of Our Lady's Inn opened gifts, enjoyed spa activities, played games, and watched a magic show by SFL member Pepe Ruiz, S.J. While some members helped with the games and spa activities, other members looked after the children while their mothers attended the shower. See below for a reflection from one of the moms-to-be!



On the 25th and 26th, SFL had two teams at Relay for Life, a

"President Obama's new executive order on embryonic stem cell research... ignores the fact that ethically sound means for advancing stem cell science and medical treatments are readily available and in need of increased support."

-Cardinal Justin Rigali

"How bitter the irony of those who promote abortion as a form of 'maternal' healthcare! How disconcerting the claim that the termination of life is a matter of reproductive health."

-Pope Benedict XVI

12-hour event held on Saint Louis University's campus to raise money for cancer research. A highlight of the event was the Luminaria ceremony, during which candles were lit in memory of the lives lost and in the hope of finding a cure. In total, SLU raised over \$120, 000 for the American Cancer Society!

Finally, SFL co-sponsored a screening of *Darius Goes West* on the 27th.



This documentary follows Darius Weems, a Georgia high school student with Duchenne Muscular Dystrophy, who went on a life-changing cross-country road trip with his friends. After the screening, the cast and crew were available for a question-and-answer session, and the audience was even able to talk to Darius himself via Skype online. SFL distributed fact sheets explaining the role of stem cells, namely adult stem cells, in Muscular Dystrophy research. After a busy month to end a great year, SFL members are ready for a well-deserved summer break!

A Shower of Thanks

This year SFL continued its tradition of giving a baby shower for the women of Our Lady's Inn. The following is a note from a resident reflecting on the baby shower held on April 25, 2009.

My name is Tiana. I am a single mother of two children, Ahkeela, age 2, and Jeremiah, age 18 months. I am now pregnant with my third child and I stay at Our Lady's Inn, a homeless shelter for pregnant women. A group of SLU students came to throw us a baby shower. I thought that was the most amazing event ever because I am a homeless woman, and I don't have any family to give me a thing or help. I thought that was very kind of them and thoughtful. The baby shower was wonderful. I had lots of fun! We played games with prizes and a magic man came. He was awesome! I would like to say thank you so very much for letting me be a part of that wonderful day. I really had a great time. Thank you, and God bless you all!



Sincerely, Tiana and family

Abortion Will Save a Mother's Life?

By Mary Ellen Lechner

Colleen Malloy, M.D., from Northwestern University Feinberg School of Medicine, replied to the Chicago Sun Times editorial of March 30, 2009 entitled "Women have a right to be told of abortion option." Malloy, as a practicing physician in neonatology, said she was "troubled" by the conclusions the article outlined and the misguided medical information that was published to the public.

FACT:

Infant Mortality
(per 1000 live births)

Ireland: 4
US: 7

Maternal Mortality
(per 100,000 live births)

Ireland: 1
US: 11

www.unicef.org

“I would have loved to have found no association between breast cancer and abortion, but our research is rock solid, and our data is accurate. It’s not a matter of believing, it’s a matter of what is.”

-Dr. Janet Daling,
cancer
epidemiologist and
pro-choice activist



Malloy stated that the article inaccurately said “women are put at risk when they are not offered “emergency” or urgent abortion as an option to their pregnancy.” She disputed the article’s claim that abortion is a “recommended option.” In all actuality, surgical abortion “mutilates the fetus and also poses some risk to the mother.”

“Abortion performed to ‘save’ a mother’s life almost never- if ever- is necessary,” according to Malloy. She proclaims that Ireland is a country that protects the unborn child constitutionally and therefore has the lowest maternal death rate in the world. A little more than a decade ago, a party of Ireland’s top obstetricians concluded that “there are no medical circumstances justifying direct abortion, that is, no circumstances in which the life of a mother may only be saved by directly terminating the life of her unborn child.” Unlike Ireland, abortion is available on demand in the United Kingdom, which has five times Ireland’s maternal death rate.



The entire editorial is available on-line at:

<http://www.suntimes.com/news/commentary/letters/1515980,CST-EDT-vox08.article#>

An Abundant Life

By Tommy Piolata

Pope Benedict XVI, in his second encyclical letter, *Spe Salvi*, explains that man is only truly alive, that is, living an abundant life, when he has dedicated himself to a life of love, and thereby is committed to “live for others” (28). Such a theme is similar to the great Jesuit message of becoming “men and women for others.” This vocation, rooted in the Judeo-Christian tradition, is essential for living a true and whole life. Thus, it is partly for this reason that I joined Students for Life at Saint Louis University.

At the close of my first year as a member of SFL, I have an intense appreciation for these students who share a passion for protecting the voiceless. Every student I have met through SFL is incredibly joyful: each member, while fighting *for* life and *against* a depressing and horrific injustice, is nonetheless filled with joy. Furthermore, their joy is not individualistic; it is

communicated consistently to others. Whether it is while supporting pregnant or parenting students in need, offering care to women in crisis pregnancies, working at fundraisers, rallying at the March for Life, running at the Run for Their Lives, or simply discussing matters at weekly meetings, Students for Life has truly incorporated a sense of joy and community into its members. Indeed, SFL’s students model a life lived for the other.



Consequently, I am honored to be a part of SFL. It is a blessing to be around such fine men and women, and to develop a relationship with people devoted to ending the injustice of killing the defenseless, the voiceless, the small, the unborn. I intend to continue my involvement with SFL, and I look forward to my future years as a member. Ultimately, Students for Life is creating a culture of life at Saint Louis University, and is offering to the world men and women devoted to spreading joy, honoring life in all its sacred dignity, and living abundantly by living for others.

A Four-Year Journey with Students for Life

By Sarah Schumacher

FACT:
About half of
American women
have experienced an
unintended
pregnancy.
Source:
Henshaw S.K.

As graduation approaches, I look back on my time at Saint Louis University and realize how blessed I have been, not only by the wonderful academic experience, but also by the opportunity to be involved in Students for Life. In the past four years, Students for Life has been an essential part of my college experience, and I have journeyed with SFL through its exponential growth in size and influence.

My first SFL meetings in the fall of 2005 were very small, often just the e-board and a couple additional students, and now the meeting room is consistently full of active members. SFL's activity on campus and in the community has also steadily increased. This year, we brought a nationally-recognized speaker, Dr. Alveda King, to the SLU community to present on how abortion affects the African American community. And, most impressively, in the past year and a half we have accomplished an amazing task by establishing the Virginia D. Murphy Endowment for Pregnant and Parenting Student Assistance.

I must admit that I was skeptical when the SFL executive board suggested in the spring of 2007 that the \$1000 from our *Evangelium Vitae* Award be used to start an endowment fund to assist pregnant and parenting students at SLU, with an initial goal of raising \$25,000. Although dedicated, we were just a small group of students,



and I didn't know how this would be possible. I would never have believed that we would reach and surpass this goal before my graduation! We owe much of this accomplishment to our excellent advisor, Steve Fowler, who has guided and encouraged us regarding the Assistance Fund and throughout everything SFL has done in the past four years.

Watching and participating in the transformation of Student for Life has been an extraordinary experience, to which I'm sure all the senior SFL members can attest. The graduating members were able to reflect on this experience and be formally recognized at SFL's 1st Annual Legacy Brunch on May 3, 2009. At the Legacy Brunch, Students for Life's president Sarah Pingel, and advisor Steve Fowler, presented each senior member with a pin to wear at graduation ceremonies as a symbol of his or her involvement in SFL and of further commitment to the pro-life movement. The seniors were thanked for their contributions to SFL and encouraged to continue supporting the pro-life

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Send check donations to:
Students for Life
Busch Student Center,
MSC # 11
20 N. Grand Blvd.
St. Louis, MO 63103



cause after graduation. The brunch was a wonderful way to conclude my time as an SFL member at SLU and begin looking toward my pro-life involvement in the future. I wish Students for Life at Saint Louis University the very best, and I'm sure the group will continue to surpass expectations and make a difference in the SLU community and beyond.

Our Mission:

Students for Life is a fellowship committed to upholding the fundamental right to life on the campus of Saint Louis University. We follow the guidance of Catholic thought regarding the dignity of all human life from conception to natural death. The Jesuit Mission of Saint Louis University calls us to discern prayerful, intellectual and active means of building a culture of life that rejects the institution of abortion.

Visit Our Website at <http://pages.slu.edu/org/sfl>

"A Voice for the Voiceless"



Pregnant? Need Help?

The local Pregnancy Resource Center is within walking distance of SLU, at 4331 Lindell Blvd. Call them at 314-783-0478, or visit their website, www.thrivestlouis.org.

FREE. CONFIDENTIAL. COMPASSIONATE.

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If you would no longer like to receive this newsletter, please e-mail sfl@slu.edu.

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