

# Diocese of Venice Respect Life Ministry News

*Supreme Court Abortion Decisions 31<sup>st</sup> Anniversary Edition*

## January 22 Special Events

The 31<sup>st</sup> Anniversary of *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* will be commemorated in a number of ways throughout the diocese by people who respect the sanctity of human life. These two Supreme Court decisions legalized abortion in all 9 months of pregnancy for any reason. A statement on the 31<sup>st</sup> Anniversary from the Florida Bishops is available at [www.flacathconf.org](http://www.flacathconf.org).

## Sarasota - PrayerWalk

The Diocesan Respect Life Department and St. Martha Parish will cosponsor the 6<sup>th</sup> annual PrayerWalk throughout the day on January 22. People can participate in a number of prayerful activities in the church. Bus shuttle service will be provided to the Planned Parenthood abortion clinic in Sarasota where walkers will circle the block in prayer throughout the day.

Light refreshments will be provided in the Friendship Room, where local Pregnancy Resource Centers will display information about their services. See the enclosed flier for details.

Anyone interested in helping can contact the Diocesan Respect Life Department.

## Port Charlotte

Local pro-life people will conduct a rosary prayer vigil on the sidewalk outside the abortion clinic on Olean Blvd. following the 8:30 AM Mass at St. Charles Borromeo Church.

## Cape Coral

St. Andrew parish will host a day of prayer for life beginning with the 9:00AM Mass on January 22. Eucharistic Adoration will begin after the Mass, concluding with Benediction at 2:00 PM. Pro-life meditations on each of the four decades of the rosary will begin on the hour between 10:00 AM and 1:00 PM. Everyone is invited!

## Naples

Naples Pro-Life Council will sponsor a prayer walk around Planned Parenthood from noon to 1:00 PM.

## Washington, DC

Father Dennis Cooney, Associate Moderator for Respect Life for the Diocese and Pastor of St. Raphael Parish, Lehigh Acres, will again be taking a group of about 30 people, including teens, to the Prayer Vigil and March for Life in Washington.

May God keep them safe and warm!

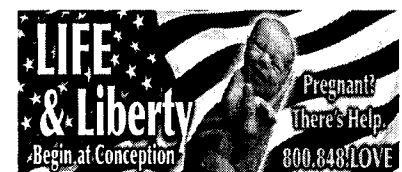
## Life Chain

South County People for Life, a non-denominational Christian organization, is organizing the Life Chain in Venice. It will be held on Sunday, January 18. Everyone is invited to stand for life for one hour.

For details contact Margie Niklas at 941-492-2418.

## Pro-Life Ads

Positive, pro-life ads are going up all around the Diocese of Venice, thanks to the generosity and faith of Ed Daccarett and his organization, L.I.F.E. He needs your help to keep them up.



Over the last four years Ed has placed billboards along the east coast of Florida, then into the interior and Panhandle. His work has been praised by the Respect Life Directors in Miami and Palm Beach.

Recently he contacted the Diocesan Respect Life

Department and met with Jeanne, Marina and a group of pro-life leaders in Lee County to discuss an active pro-life advertising campaign for the diocese.

Ed is negotiating the following:

**5 billboards** for six months;  
**10 queen size bus sides and 42 interior bus cards** with Lee Transit (pending Commissioners' approval);  
**25 interior bus cards** with SCAT (Sarasota County Area Transit) - pending approval of the County Commissioners.  
**2 billboards are already up** - one on Highway 80 east of Ft. Myers and one on Tamiami Trail, south of Naples.  
**3 additional billboards** are in production and should go up soon - 2 on Tamiami Trail in Naples and one in Clewiston with 5 more planned.

God willing, soon there should be 10 billboards, 10 queen bus sides and 67 interior bus cards.

This project is costing thousands of dollars. How does Ed do it? He is a man of total faith that God will provide the donations to pay for it all. He holds no fund raising events; no one is on salary; he pays no rent and tries to be the best steward of God's providence. He believes that God cannot be outdone in generosity.

Please prayerfully consider adopting a Life-Ad for \$100 for one month, for a few months or by making a one-time tax deductible gift. Please give whatever you can afford! Babies in the womb have no voice but yours.

Quite possibly, these could be the only positive pro-life messages some people will ever see. See the insert for details.

## Billboard Vandalized

Just before Christmas the pro-life billboard sponsored by Our Lady of Lourdes parish in Venice was vandalized with paint.

The parish has sponsored a pro-life billboard for over 10 years. Last year the billboard was updated with a customized version of the one shown above.

The phone number for Pregnancy Solutions, a local Pregnancy Resource Center, was listed. The powerful graphics and message motivated many young women to seek the services of Pregnancy Solutions.

Although the billboard could not be restored, the pro-life people of South Sarasota County will not let the Culture of Death prevail and are attempting to replace it.

## Abortion Clinic Prayer Vigils

Father Dennis Cooney leads a prayer vigil on the first Saturday of every month at the **Ft. Myers Women's Health Center** at 3900 Broadway Blvd., Ft. Myers around 9:30 AM, following the 8:00 AM Mass at St. Raphael Church in Lehigh Acres. Join him whenever you can.

Other groups lead prayer vigils every Friday at 1:30 PM and Saturday mornings at the Planned Parenthood Abortion Clinic at 1958 Prospect St., **Sarasota**.

Sarasota Women's Clinic, the site of regular prayer vigils over 13 years, recently closed. It was reported that the owners of the clinic said they were tired of it and business was down. They also had trouble finding doctors to perform abortions.

Others lead vigils at the clinic in Port Charlotte.

If you are interested in praying at any of the clinics at these or other times, please contact the Respect Life Department for information on how to reach the prayer leaders.

## Gabriel Angels

The Gabriel Project, a parish-based or areawide one-on-one mentoring program for pregnant women is making a difference by helping women and saving babies.

Started in Naples in 1999, over 77 clients, ages 14-41 have been helped so far, with 45% being teens. One of the first clients was a 15-year-old whose mother (also a single mom) threatened to make her leave if she did not abort.

The greatest need is for volunteers.

Started in Lee County in January 2003, over 106 women have been helped already. 65% keep their babies. 30% place their children for adoption. This is

an outstanding success rate! 5% give their baby to family members to raise.

Others who found out they were not pregnant received counseling and are showing signs of changing their lives.

Help has been provided in the form of assistance with rent, electric, food, medical, transportation, counseling, family planning, life skills training and, most importantly, spiritual encouragement. One pregnant woman who was living out of her car with several children was set up in an apartment and her children enrolled in school.

The greatest needs in Lee County are money for the phone bill and yellow page listing and volunteers, especially Hispanic and African American.

Another Gabriel Project is due to be launched in Immokalee in January. There is a great need for Spanish and Creole speaking volunteers.

A coordinator has been trained in Manatee county. More "angels" will be needed. A coordinator is needed to start the project in Sarasota. Interest has also been expressed in Sebring.

Pray about becoming a Gabriel Angel, Auxiliary or perhaps even a coordinator!

Donations are needed for phone and advertising expenses. You can contribute directly to:

Gabriel Project  
c/o St. Ann Church  
407 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue South  
Naples, FL 34102

Project Gabriel  
c/o St. Cecilia Church  
5632 Sunrise Drive  
Fort Myers, FL 33919-1798

## Pennies for Babies

Over \$5,000 was collected in the first year of the fund, but your help is needed on an ongoing basis so that the bottle bank doesn't become empty.

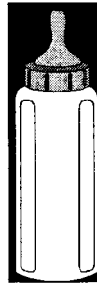
Funds have already been used to keep several pregnant women from being evicted from their apartments or having the electricity or water turned off. Unfortunately, many times the low-income housing isn't well insulated or has inadequate air conditioning systems. The summer heat was brutal on the budgets of many clients.

All alternate sources of funding through the community are exhausted before the Pennies for Babies Fund is tapped.

Many thanks to everyone who has participated. Special thanks to St. Francis of Assisi Parish in Grove City for their donation of over \$1,000 from a successful Pennies for Babies campaign. Keep up the good work. You are making a difference!

Be creative! Here are some ideas:

♥ **Loose Change Sunday:**  
Ask parishioners to donate whatever loose change they have in their pocket or purse one Sunday.



### ♥ Penny a Year Sunday:

Ask parishioners to donate one penny for each year of life.

### ♥ Penny a Visit:

Ask parishioners to drop one penny into a designated container each time they come to church.

### ♥ Baby Bottle Sunday:

Invite parishioners to take a baby bottle or other container home, put all loose change in it every day and return it the following Sunday.

School children and organizations (Knights of Columbus, Council of Catholic Women, Legion of Mary, etc.) can help too.

For information on large baby bottle banks, contact the Respect Life Department.

All donations - in the form of checks - should be made payable to Catholic Charities Pennies for Babies Fund, P.O. Box 2116, Venice, FL 34284-2116. Thank you!

## Pro-Life Medical Clinic

Please pray for the Task Force that is working towards the opening of a Pregnancy Help Medical Clinic with ultrasound in Ft. Myers.

### Why a Medical Clinic?

● The medical services offered by such a clinic attract more abortion-vulnerable women than traditional crisis pregnancy centers.

● Only a clinic under the direction of a medical doctor can confirm a viable pregnancy.

● When a woman sees her baby via ultrasound, bonding begins, making it less likely that she will abort.

● People respect medical professionals. Women will listen to a doctor or a nurse.



What will it take?

**Volunteers** (physicians, nurses, sonographers, counselors, office workers)

**Donations** (ultrasound machine, salaries, office equipment, furnishings, operating expenses such as rent and utilities)

**Lots of prayers and hard work!**

There are over 2,000 abortions in Lee County each year. A pro-life medical clinic will offer women the help they need to choose life. For more information or to help, call Chris Kroeger, 239-395-0718.

## Partial Birth Abortion Ban

As you've undoubtedly heard through the news media, President Bush signed the Partial Birth Abortion Ban on November 5. Opponents immediately blocked its implementation by taking it to court, claiming that it is unconstitutional. President Bush made special arrangements for the case to be heard quickly, hopefully in March, rather than having it languish in the court system. Please pray that this new law will be upheld.

## Parental Notification

This summer the Florida Supreme Court struck down the Parental Notification Act that the Florida Legislature had passed and that Governor Bush had signed into law. The right to privacy in a Florida Constitutional Amendment was cited as the reason.

The Florida Legislature is looking into ways to rectify this situation. Legislation has already been proposed for the March legislative session.

What can you do? Sign up for the Diocese of Venice Action Alert System (or one in your parish). Send an e-mail request to **SUBSCRIBE** to: [action.alert@dioceseofvenice.org](mailto:action.alert@dioceseofvenice.org).

## The Future

Based on reported abortion statistics, in the next 10 years, the following number of abortions may be performed:

20,000 Lee County  
20,000 Sarasota County  
2,000 Charlotte County

What can be done to stop it? A lot of wonderful people have been working very hard over the years to provide education and services, but it is not enough. What worked 20 years ago won't work with Generation Y (teens) or even Generation X (young adults). New strategies are needed to reach a new generation.

Join us for:

**Prayer ● Study ● Action**

## Other Events

**January 27** - Naples Pro-Life Council annual dinner at St. John the Evangelist Life Center with speaker Bowie Kuhn, past Commissioner of Major League Baseball and current Vice Chairman of the Board of Culture of Life Foundation. Call 239-262-5433 by January 23 to RSVP.

**February 17** - Our Mother's House wine tasting party at Park Place, Venice. RSVP by February 10 to 941-485-6264.

**February 28** - Right to Life of Lee County dinner with speaker football player Frank Rice. Call 239-277-5683.

**March 13** - Lifeline Family Center/Cape Coral Benefit Dinner at the Sanibel Harbour Resort with speaker and humorist Lee Ezell and Grammy Award winning country singer Larry Ford. Call 239-542-4457 for reservations.

Please pray for Harry Hight who is critically ill. Harry has worked tirelessly for life through St. Raphael/Englewood Parish Respect Life Committee, the Knights of Columbus and South County People for Life.

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