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RESPECT LIFE NEWSLETTER



Working together to spread the Gospel of Life across the Archdiocese of Cincinnati.

A New Take on the Ethics of the COVID Vaccine

By: Bob Wurzelbacher

Every 7 years, in November, my wife gets a kidney stone. It's like a pre-Thanksgiving 7-year ritual. And every 7 years, the story goes the same way. My wife feels the intense pain of the kidney stone and goes to the hospital. They confirm the stone, and send her home with pain medication to see if it passes on its own. It never does. She ends up back in the hospital with a more serious condition and must get the stone removed. The second trip to the hospital is always of great urgency, where it is crucial to have treatment quickly. One of those years she went septic and almost died. Still, no matter how many times she gets a stone and tells the hospital they never pass on their own, the first level of treatment is always to wait and see if it does, and take the chance that a more immediate emergency will arise.

2020 was a seventh year for us, and we had to go to the hospital for a kidney stone in November. That is actually an exciting story for another time, but what made this story different is the hospital

didn't have any beds available. They sent her home to have it pass, with no confidence that if a worse problem did develop, there would be healthcare workers and a bed available as quickly as there always had been in previous years. We went home especially nervous, not knowing what would happen when the situation worsened. Surprisingly, it seemed to pass or breakup on its own for the first time, and we never had to face the emergency situation with an overwhelmed hospital. God is good.

By now we have probably all heard about the 3 COVID vaccines in development. None are completely free of unethical development, but the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are considered much more remotely connected to unethical cell lines than the AstraZeneca vaccine. In the Bishops' statement,



the bishops make it clear that, at least for those most vulnerable to the virus, it is acceptable to make use of especially the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines, if nothing better is available. But what about the rest of us?

First of all, accepting an imperfectly tested vaccine is not an invitation to complacency to accept whatever science gives us. My interview with the National Catholic Bioethics Center last May convinced me the Church was lobbying hard in the early stages, especially for vaccines that did not use tainted cell lines in the manufacturing, and I have no doubt that it is because of our voice that 2 of the 3 vaccines are at least clean on that count. So the Catholic community has already made a significant difference in what we have available.

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Jan 2021

respectlife@catholicaoc.org

Issue 10



Welcome

Thank you for your openness to God's call to foster respect for human life at all its stages, from conception to natural death. We live in a time when so many in our culture promote values contrary to human life itself. These include life issues such as abortion and euthanasia, and issues of human dignity such as advocacy

for those with disabilities or victims of violent crime. It is a monumental task, but one worth pursuing. What is needed is people of love and humility, devoted to God, immersed in the Sacraments of Jesus Christ, and open to the direction of the Holy Spirit in helping others bring a greater respect for all human life to the lives of all.

May God bless you in this work. Know that I am truly grateful to work with you in this. Together, let us build a culture of life here in the Archdiocese of Cincinnati!

Bill Wunglbach

Director, Office for Respect Life Ministries

Alice's Story

By: Kara Ross

An Unexpected Diagnosis, An Unexpected Blessing

"Before we had Alice, whenever I saw a family who had a child with special needs, I always felt sort of sorry for them. I thought their lives must be so tough. And I also thought, 'I could never do that.'"

Ann Poirier is a mother of three beautiful children. If you ask her about her life as a mother, she says it is the life of any mother. She is busy with her children who are involved with learning, growing, and evangelizing as only children do. Part of what makes the Poiriers unique is that their second daughter, Alice, has Down syndrome. Alice's diagnosis came as a great surprise to her parents.

Ann and her husband, Tim, decided against genetic screening during their pregnancies. As Ann says, they "knew that there [was] nothing that a prenatal test could tell [them] that would make [them] choose anything other than



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JANUARY Anniversary of Roe v. Wade

22

The General Instruction of the Roman Missal, no. 373, designates January 22 as a particular day of prayer and penance, called the "Day of Prayer for the Legal Protection of Unborn Children." As individuals, we are called to observe this day through the penitential practices of prayer, fasting and/or giving alms.

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Respect Life Mass

The **Respect Life Mass** will be offered for renewing efforts to advance the culture of life at 11:00am at St. Peter in Chains Cathedral Basilica. We will also be honoring the recipients of the Respect Life Award along with the nominees and all those who contribute to Respect Life efforts in their parishes during this Mass.

Coordinator's Corner

This section is dedicated to providing seasonal resources for Parish Respect Life Coordinators. If there is a resource that you believe would be useful to include, please contact us at respectlife@catholicaoc.org.

01- Word of Life & Pray for Life

02- January Action Guide

03- Walking with Moms in Need

04- Planning for January



Respect Life Coordinator Resources

01 The month's Word of Life includes information about the January Action Guide. (PDF: [English](#) | [Spanish](#)) You can also find the Pray for Life page that includes monthly prayers for moms in need. (Prayer guide: [English](#) | [Spanish](#))

02 January is a big month for Respect Life efforts across our nation. The USCCB Pro-Life Secretariat has organized a wonderful **Action Guide** for Parish Respect Life Coordinators to use in planning events that focus around the issue of abortion. **CLICK HERE** for an introductory webinar for those who want to help their parish highlight the gift of human life through key January events and observances. USCCB staff walks through the website and materials available, explaining how the available tools can help parish communities share the Gospel of life.

03 **Walking with Moms in Need** is a year of service where Catholic parishes and communities "walk in the shoes" of local pregnant and parenting women in need. This new **30-second video** can be used to share the mission of Walking with Moms in Need, and inspire all to participate in this groundbreaking effort to support vulnerable pregnant and parenting women. You can also listen to our Being Pro-Life interview about this topic **HERE**.

04 **9 Days for Life** is a novena for the protection of human life. Each day's intention is accompanied by a short reflection and suggested actions to help build a culture of life. 9 Days for Life takes place from January 21 - 29. There are also resources available **en Espanol**. Let us all join together in prayer for a conversion of heart within our nation and world.

COVID Vaccine (cont'd)

Continued from Page 1

Secondly, the vaccine is being distributed first among long-term care residents and healthcare workers. The next in line may differ among states, and no one really knows how long it will be before it becomes available to the general public. As we wait for the vaccine to become more widely available, more information about how effective it is will also become more available, including how well the vaccine does against spreading the disease. But as it looks right now, the bishops call it "an act of...charity" to receive the vaccine in this circumstance. This would be charity toward the most vulnerable who for whatever reason did not receive the vaccine, toward healthcare workers who are being overwhelmed with COVID patients, and toward those who, like my wife, might need medical care for something else and whose care can be compromised in a healthcare system overwhelmed with caring for too many COVID patients.

While there is certainly no obligation to receive the vaccine when it becomes available, there is good reason to consider getting vaccinated, even if you aren't among the most vulnerable. This isn't just about COVID, it is about how COVID is affecting the availability of other types of medical care to all of us. Let us all keep the big picture in mind as we decide what we should do to best preserve respect for life in regards to the COVID vaccine.

March for Life 2021

Resources for Local Participation

As you may know, due to COVID restrictions and with the safety of our young people in mind, the Office for Respect Life Ministries will not be organizing a bus trip to the March for Life this year. The annual Mass for Life that takes place in Washington DC is also not open to the public this year, but will be live streamed ([click here for more information](#)).

With this in mind, we have prepared a March for Life toolkit, to help you continue to remember the cause for Life at your own parish or school. You will find content that can be adapted for middle school and high school youth both in parish and school settings as well as parish events such as prayer service resources and movie night suggestions. There are also a number of local events that have been organized around the anniversary of Roe v. Wade and the weekend of the March for Life. Visit our [March for Life Page](#) to check out these free resources or to browse events near you for a way to participate locally.



JANUARY Pro-Life Rosary & Holy Hour

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On the eve of the March for Life, Archbishop Schnurr will lead us in a [Pro-Life Rosary & Holy Hour](#) at St. Peter in Chains Cathedral Basilica at 7:00pm. This event will also be available via Live Stream so that all can participate and be united in prayer. Please join us in solidarity with those who march for the rights of the unborn.

21-29

9 Days for Life

9 Days for Life is a novena for the protection of human life. Each day's intention is accompanied by a short reflection and suggested actions to help build a culture of life. [CLICK HERE](#) to download a PDF of the prayers or download the app for your [ANDROID](#) or [IPHONE](#).

Alice's Story (cont'd)

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life." It was an hour after Alice was born that a timid and flustered doctor broke the news that their precious baby had Down syndrome. Ann admits that because of her lack of knowledge of Down syndrome, she was devastated by this diagnosis. The medical professionals surrounding her did not help with this reaction as they seemed to coldly wonder why the Poiriers did not screen and then abort the child.

Thankfully, Ann and Tim had always been prolife and knew that this child was a precious gift from God. Diagnosis did not define her worth or who God had made her to be. They quickly discovered that Alice, like their other children, was made for them. They could not imagine a world without her.

Ann shares: "It has been said that those with Down syndrome are the closest to God. It is true. That extra chromosome they possess is extra love, extra joy and extra God. People with Down syndrome are capable of a level of love that the rest of us aren't. Jealousy, deceit and negativity aren't in their wheelhouse. They spread love and joy like the rest of us simply can't. They show us what's important in life and what's not. That's Christ on Earth."

Ann continually thanks God for her amazing Alice and she has found her calling to share the beauty of Alice's life so that others facing a poor prenatal diagnosis can find peace knowing that child is worthy of life and love, no matter what. God creates every baby for a purpose and for their family. Ann has seen her other children, who are five years old and one year old, come to understand the beauty of the different people who make up the Mystical Body of Christ.

You can learn more about Ann and Alice at wonderlandmommy.blogspot.com or follow Ann on Instagram [@wonderlandmommyblog](https://www.instagram.com/wonderlandmommyblog).

Being Pro-Life Students for Life

When we think of the pro-life movement in this country, it is heartening to know how many young people are involved. If you attend the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., for example, there is a huge representation by young people in high school and college. This is great news!

In honor of Catholic Schools Week, we will take a look at what young people are doing in the pro-life movement right here in our Catholic schools. We spoke with Jordan Moorman, the Ohio/Kentucky Regional Coordinator for Students for Life of America, about their great work in mobilizing what we call the "Pro-Life Generation" to abolish abortion in America.

We also spoke with some enthusiastic area students who are leading their school pro-life groups at high schools across the archdiocese. Tune in to find out what they are doing, and get more ideas for what you can do or how you can start a group in your own school. [CLICK HERE](#) to visit our Being Pro-Life Webpage with a list of this month's podcasts. **3**



Local Physicians Assist Abortion Clinic

By: Noelle Collis-DeVito

In October of 2019, there was great cause for celebration. After diligent work and many legal proceedings, the doors to the Women's Med Center Abortion Clinic in Kettering, OH were closed. Dr. Martin Haskell was finally denied a variance by the Ohio Supreme Court, and it seemed that his facility would be closed forever.

Sadly, only a week later, the parking lot was full and the doors were opened once again. Dr. Martin Haskell had applied for a new variance and it was approved. What exactly does this mean? Legally, all ambulatory facilities are required to have a written transfer agreement with at least one local hospital to ensure the safety of patients. This written transfer agreement allows for the quick and safe transfer of a patient in an emergency situation; however, *none* of the local hospitals would enter into such an agreement with Women's Med Center.

"Ohio law also allows an ambulatory surgical facility to remain open with an approved variance, rather than a written transfer agreement with a local hospital. The variance, or waiver, is based on the ASF concluding individual agreements with qualified local "back-up doctors."¹ While the original variance request citing three doctors was denied, a fourth doctor has stepped forward to support the abortion clinic. It is because of these

four doctors that the doors to Women's Med Center remain open and approximately 50 children lose their lives each week.

The most concerning detail regarding the recent variance is that all four of the doctors who have agreed to participate are employed by Wright State Physicians who specialize in obstetrics, gynecology, and gynecologic surgery in the Dayton Area. They are also all employed by the medical school at a local university.

Last year, I was referred to Wright State Physicians by my own physician. She was completely unaware of their affiliation with Women's Med Center Abortion Clinic. I explained to her that I would not be comfortable with that referral due to their relationship with Dr. Martin Haskell. My doctor was shocked and completely disgusted by this news. She now plans to refer women elsewhere. If I had not been aware of the variances, I may have taken that referral and become a client at Wright State Physicians, inadvertently supporting the doctors who are keeping a deadly abortion clinic open.

In order to shine more light on this issue, Dayton Right to Life has organized a campaign to promote awareness of the affiliation between Wright State Physicians and Women's Med Center. Information about this campaign can be found at the web address listed below in the footnotes.

¹ **Wright State Abortion Connection**; <http://wrightstateabortion.com/>;

Dayton Right to Life; 2020

FEB

Now and at the Hour...

03

It's never too soon to begin thinking about our own funeral, end-of-life care, and who will be making those decisions. Join us to learn about how to get started on planning a Catholic funeral and what the Church teaches on key end-of-life issues. **CLICK HERE** to register for this virtual event from 1:30pm - 3:00pm.

FEB

Now and at the Hour...

04

It's never too soon to begin thinking about our own funeral, end-of-life care, and who will be making those decisions. Join us to learn about how to get started on planning a Catholic funeral and what the Church teaches on key end-of-life issues. **CLICK HERE** to register for this virtual event from 7:00pm - 8:30pm.



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January is a time when parishes display the Cemetery of the Innocents in order to memorialize the millions of children lost to abortion. In order to also care for women and men who have experienced abortion, the Office for Respect Life Ministries would like to suggest that in tandem with these displays parishes also include Project Rachel information. Our office has printed a number of banners that are available for your use free of charge. We also have a number of printable resources for parishes on our **Project Rachel Page**. Contact us at respectlife@catholicaoc.org to reserve your banner in advance!



Do you have something that you would like to share in our upcoming issue?

Contact us at respectlife@catholicaoc.org or (937)281-4128.