

Lifers

Issue 21

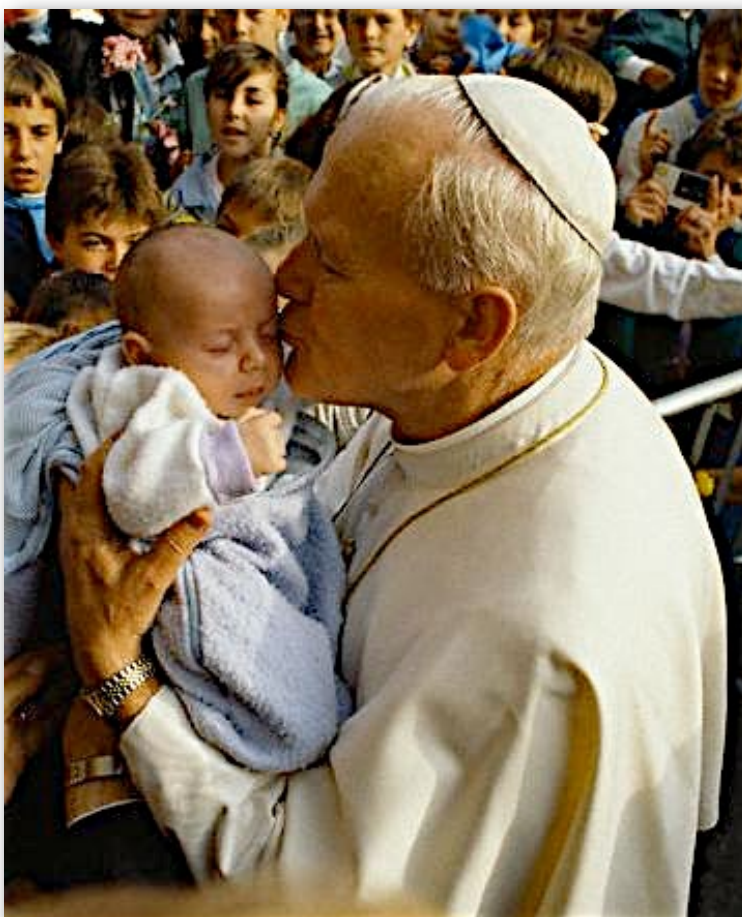
September 2011

Be Not Afraid

One of the great tragedies, if not the greatest, of our time is the dehumanizing of the weakest and most defenseless members of our society. Whether it is determined that these people are inconvenient, undesired, or unfit to live, their murders are a loss of beauty from the fabric of life. The most victimized members are the unborn. The smallest, the voiceless, the “invisible” are the ones who are the easiest to throw away. How is it that as a society we have become so detached from our identity as valuable and dignified human beings that life is now just one factor among many that is reduced to making a choice?

Human beings are, by our nature, “very good” and are beyond worth, but we are also weak and prone to act on our imperfections. We are motivated by our emotions and a foundational compulsion to survive and thrive. When certain emotions lead people to feel like they cannot succeed in a situation or that they cannot cope with the changes that

certain decisions have caused, it is then that we find decisions like abortion being made available, acceptable, and even legal. Where



then do we as a Church, and specifically as seminarians of the Church, find a call to act in the name of Christ in this epidemic of fearful, doubtful, rash, and even hopeless decisions of death? I find the answer in three simple words that, when truly heard, resound within us as an anthem of hope: “Be not afraid.”

This was a guiding motto of Blessed Pope John Paul the Great throughout his unprecedented ministry in the Church. It is also the most common imperative statement in the Bible. We as Christians find our call to action not only in the affliction of abortion but also in what our faith has to offer this broken world. In our faith and through our love we can bring hope to this world. Blessed Pope John Paul the Great was a beacon of hope to our world, a messenger of the joy that lies beyond the trivial and trying moments of life. Blessed John Paul knew the power that the timeless words “be not afraid” bore to banish fear and convey the Gospel to our fractured hearts. It wasn’t merely the words that our beloved Holy Father said but rather the life of hope and joy that he lived in the public square.

He proclaimed faith in the life of Christ. For a man whose later life was marked by suffering from the burden of frail years and Parkinson’s disease, he showed the world the dignity and redemptive value of suffering. By his hopeful temperament and audacious joy, he proclaimed that life is worth living.

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“Let the little children come to me!” - Matthew 19:14



Call to Action



Abortion is Wrong, No Matter the Circumstances

On August 10, 2011, the Jefferson City News Tribune published an article by the Associated Press entitled “Gender test raises ethical concerns.” Fr. Dylan Schrader (CSC Alum '06), Diocese of Jefferson City, wrote the following letter to the editor which appeared in the Sunday, August 14, 2011 edition of the News Tribune.

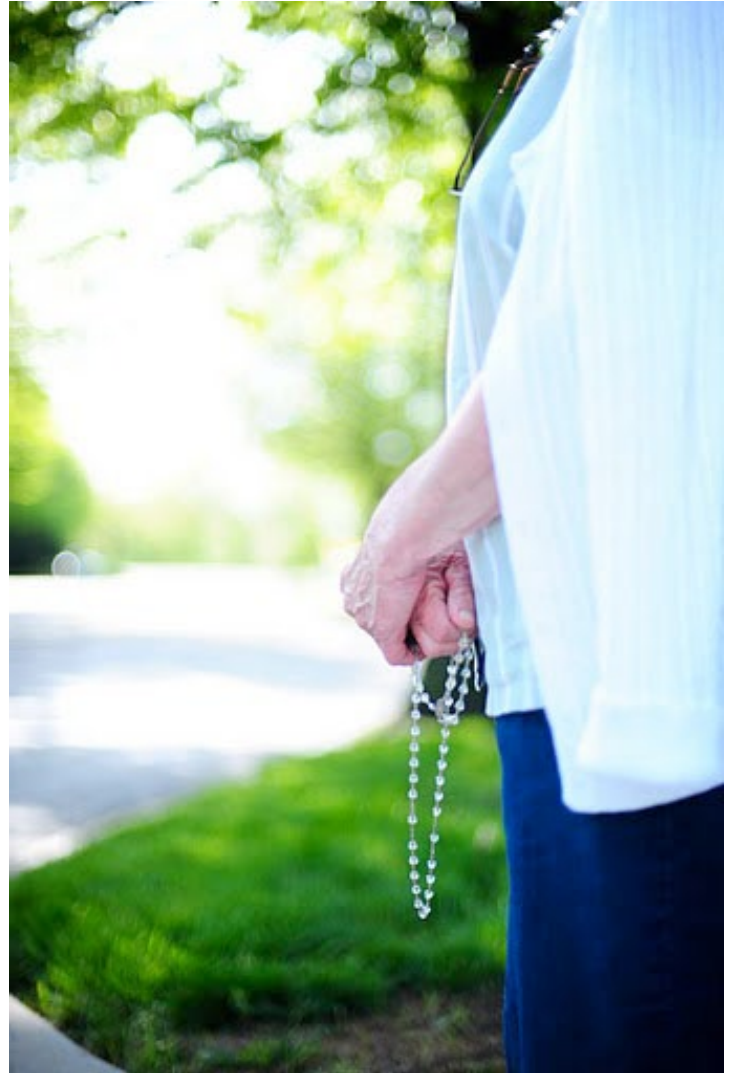
Dear Editor:

On Wednesday I read a piece reproduced from the AP, “Gender test raises ethical concerns,” which I was glad to see included in the *News Tribune*. The article is about the availability of a blood test that can accurately determine the sex of an unborn child at about seven weeks' gestation. The story indicates that some researchers are concerned about parents' potential use of this test as part of a decision for selective abortion of their child based on sex.

I share the researchers' horror at the thought of selectively aborting a child because of his or her sex, but I can't help thinking that it is inconsistent to reject abortion based on sex while accepting it for other reasons. It's like saying, “It's okay to end the life of your child, as long as you have a good enough reason.” Who is qualified to decide what is a good enough reason for abortion? If, as our society currently maintains, it is the mother of the child herself, then why should an abortion decision based on the child's sex be any worse than one based on the child's potential IQ, disability, or economic future? If a mother's freedom of choice extends to deciding whether her unborn child should live or die, then why shouldn't she make her choice based on whatever criteria she wants? Shouldn't our concern about using the sex of a child as a criterion extend also to the criteria used in any abortion decision?

In the final analysis, we should conclude that no reason is sufficient to justify the decision to take directly the life of an innocent person. None of us is qualified to judge the life of another person not to be worth living. Perhaps the ethical concerns raised about the potential applications of this test will help us to realize better the innate value and inviolability of human life.

*-Fr. Dylan Schrader,
Diocese of Jefferson City*



(Continuation of “Be Not Afraid”...)

It is this daring hope that will bring an end to our abortive culture, and not just for the unborn but for all people who are pushed aside as worthless and inconvenient. It is through joyful, public lives of sacrificial suffering and service that we will proclaim the “reason for our hope”. This sacrificial love that we are called to live is simply imitating the gift of self that Christ and his faithful servant John Paul so persuasively modeled. To “be not afraid” and cast aside the shackle of fear and the imprisonment of doubt is the only way abortion will ever dissipate. Abortion will not be ended by some elite group of men and women wearing black robes resting upon a lofty bench, but by a generation of men and women robed in the hope of Christ resting upon His promise of life beyond life. Let us be that generation. *-Jerome Krug, Diocese of Oklahoma City*