

Family & ProLife News Briefs

June 2024

Standing for Life in a Mixed-Up Culture

Churches, Religious Groups Called Right-Wing Extremists

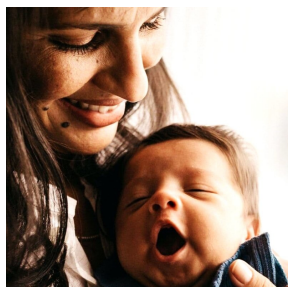
The Diocese of Albany, NY, said it would appeal to the U.S. Supreme Court after New York's highest court ruled that NY can continue to require companies with health insurance plans to cover what it called medically necessary abortions. Catholic Charities, churches and other religious groups argued that the regulation could force some employers to **violate their religious beliefs**. Yet Gov. Hochul said: "While right-wing extremists attempt to undermine our fundamental freedoms, New York will continue standing strong to protect women's health care and safeguard abortion rights." Dennis Poust, exec. dir. of the NY State Catholic Conference, said that Hochul "delted into name calling, referring to the plaintiffs in the case as 'right-wing extremists.'" [excerpted, Kate Scanlon, OurSundayVisitor.com, 5/22/24]

Born the Size of Her Father's Hand

Baby Wren was born at just 22 weeks and was the smallest baby (14 oz) her neonatal intensive care unit had ever seen, measuring about the same size as her father Rob's hand. The family just celebrated her first birthday by visiting the neonatal unit to thank the medical staff who helped Wren survive.

When she was only 22 weeks pregnant, Naomi went into hospital after noticing unusual symptoms. "I didn't know you could go into labour that early. We didn't know what to expect, we were shocked", she said. "There wasn't much hope and we were told to prepare ourselves as **she was unlikely to survive**. Yet, she exceeded all expectations. By all accounts Wren shouldn't have survived, but she did. She is the happiest smiley baby. We are so lucky & I couldn't be prouder."

The latest annual abortion statistics for England and Wales (2021) reveal that 755 abortions were performed when the baby was at 22 or 23 weeks gestation. But, according to a recent study, there were 261 babies born alive at 22 and 23 weeks who survived to discharge from hospital in 2020 and 2021. This means there could be doctors at one end of a hospital fighting to keep a baby born at 23 weeks gestation alive, and, at the other end, there could be other doctors aborting the life of a 23-week baby. [excerpted from Right to Life UK, 5/20/24]



This monthly newsletter is used by dozens of churches as a bulletin insert and as a handout. Since 2013 it has had over 30,000 readers and is now posted on three diocesan websites. To receive each month's free issue in your inbox, email Frank Tinari, Ph.D. at tinarifr@shu.edu

Will Baby Bonuses Save South Korea?

South Korea's birth rate continues to remain at an all-time low, slowly **reducing the nation's population**. In a Bloomberg column, American economist Tyler Cowen wrote that Korea is considering "baby bonuses of 100 million won (**US\$73,500**) each," two times the nation's average annual income per capita. "At current birth rates, the plan would cost more than US\$16 billion a year."

"Unfortunately, it is impossible to say how much impact the subsidies would have, as there is no precedent," Cowen wrote, noting that the only precedent that could account for such financial incentives would be Hungary's childbearing subsidies and tax exemptions, which were only instated a few years ago. Having children changes everything you do and how you do it. If you are not interested in that life-altering transformation, a birth subsidy is not going to make a difference. Subsidies might convince a couple with two children to have a third, because now the additional child is easier to afford. The problem of course is that so many families are not having two children to begin with. "We all would learn from the results," he concluded: There is not enough social experimentation in the world, and humanity has to **try something to avoid disappearing**." [excerpt from Madalaine Elhabbal, catholivote.org, 5/21/24]

*We, the entire church, having given our fixations & absolute certainties a primacy of place, and become **infused with idolatry**. Oh, we still display the "I love Jesus" certificate on the mantel, but now ... our fervent ideas stand before it, reflecting what truly enralls us -- our politics, our celebrity obsessions, our outsized liturgical scruples ..., our focus on our climate or sexuality or gender, our gadgets and -- most destructively -- the chaotic black mirror of our smartphones. Their addictive invitation to fall ever-more deeply down the echoing well of thought-narrowing self-reflection draws us away from silence and the natural world, where we may so readily find something greater than ourselves.* Elizabeth Scalia, OurSundayVisitor.com, 5/22/24.

More Pro-Lifers Charged

The U.S. Dept. of Justice (DOJ) has announced a lawsuit against even more pro-lifers for supposed violations of the federal Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances (FACE) Act, as sentencing continues for nine pro-life advocates convicted last fall of the same. Assistant Attorney General Kristen Clarke, citing the FACE Act, said: "The Civil Rights Division is committed to enforcing federal law to protect the rights [sic] of those who seek and those who provide access to [abortion]." Pro-lifers entered Northeast Ohio Women's Center in Cuyahoga Falls last June by falsely claiming to be patients, then began distributing roses to women in the waiting room and encouraging them to leave (five reportedly did so). *continued on page 2*

More Pro-Lifers Charged (continued)

“Red Roses Rescues DO NOT violate the FACE Act,” said Monica Miller, the head of Citizens for a Pro-Life Society who oversees RRR. “In an RRR pro-lifers never block anything or anyone – and if the Department of Justice is coming after us for our peaceful life-saving efforts it’s because they will simply play fast and loose with the FACE language having to do with ‘physical obstruction’ that prevents ‘freedom of movement.’ There have been 37 RRRs. We have NEVER been charged with FACE, and indeed, for the RRR we did at the PP in Bedford Heights, June 5, 2021, one of the two that involves this DOJ accusation, all charges were dropped!” Since May 2022, when the U.S. Supreme Court’s intention to overturn *Roe v. Wade* was first leaked, “there have been at least 90 attacks on pro-life pregnancy centers,” the *Daily Signal* reports. Yet the DOJ “charged only pro-life activists with FACE Act violations in 2022, and has since charged only five individuals with violating the FACE Act by targeting pregnancy centers.” At the same time, it has zealously pursued incidents involving pro-lifers, from the D.C. defendants to Philadelphia sidewalk counselor and Catholic father of seven Mark Houck. [Excerpted from Calvin Freiburger, LifeSiteNews, 5/21/24]

States Require Age Verification for Online Porn Access

To protect children, over a third of the states in the U.S. either have required age verification for access to pornographic websites or are in various stages of passing such legislation. In April, the U.S. Supreme Court rejected a petition from a pro-pornography organization to block Texas from enforcing its age verification laws. “We need to demand more protective measures from device manufacturers to filter out this content. Parents can always do more, but help from the institutions we build and fund is long overdue” said Family Research Council Senior Fellow Meg Kilgannon. Dani Pinter, senior legal counsel at the National Center on Sexual Exploitation, said: “Pornography can be extremely harmful to children, with negative impacts on the brain and relational development.” She continued, “Some studies show that pornography exposure is a tool in grooming and those exposed are more vulnerable to assault and predatory acts. Online pornography sites have allowed filmed child sexual abuse, rape, sex trafficking, and other non-consensual explicit material on their websites — material that normalizes criminal activity.” A Common Sense Media survey released last year revealed that a lack of age verification laws impacts and harms minors: 73% of current teens aged 13 to 17 said that they had been exposed to internet pornography by the age of 12, most of them through porn advertisement links. [excerpts, S.A. McCarthy, *The Washington Stand*, 5/21/24]

Growing Skepticism of Gender Transition Procedures for Minors

The case for treating children with gender transition procedures is falling apart in real time before our eyes. Earlier this month, the German Medical Assembly overwhelmingly voted for restrictions, as more evidence shows the harms of these procedures & lack of benefits. No substantial studies show that children with gender dysphoria live happier lives if affirmed in their delusion. Advocates demand others to “trust the science” (meaning experts) when they themselves do not “follow the science” (data). Also, the Assembly passed a resolution disapproving of “self-ID” legislation and stated that minors should not be allowed to “self-identity” gender without psychiatric diagnosis.

Countries like the U.K. once performed gender transition procedures on minors at government-run health care centers. But, after a four-year review led by Dr. Hilary Cass, the nationalized health care system turned sharply away from procedures for which there was such “remarkably weak evidence.” An updated draft guidance released by the UK secretary of state for education says students older than nine will find that “biological sex” is the program foundation rather than a narrative that claims gender is on a spectrum. [Susan Berry, CatholicVote.org, 5/21/24] Last week, Dr. Cass criticized American medical associations for “holding on to a position that is now demonstrated to be out of date by multiple systematic reviews.” A study published last month found that people who underwent gender transition surgery were 12 times more likely to attempt suicide than those who did not. [excerpted, Joshua Arnold, *The Washington Stand*, 5/21/24]

New Report on Pregnancy Centers (PRCs)

Produced in collaboration with Heartbeat International, Care Net, National Institute of Family and Life Advocates, and Focus on the Family’s Option Ultrasound Program, the report by the Charlotte Lozier Institute highlights the following:

- The value of goods and services provided in 2022 by over 2,750 U.S. PRCs was nearly \$367 million.
- The total number of both in-person and virtual client sessions in 2022 was over 16 million.
- From 2019 to 2022, there was a 41% increase in attendees for parenting and prenatal education programs.
- There was a 142% increase in PRCs providing and overseeing the abortion pill reversal protocol & providing resources and support for women following drug-induced abortions between 2019-22. This resulted in at least 5,000 women successfully continuing their pregnancies after taking abortion drugs and regretting that decision.

At a time when the federal administration is trying to cripple pregnancy centers and the national media smears them, it’s important to demonstrate the value they provide and the real choices they give to pregnant and parenting moms. (See *Newsweek*, 5/22/24 article by Chuck Donovan, “End the War on Pregnancy Resource Centers.”)