



DEFEND LIFE

Promoting the Culture of Life and Fighting the Culture of Death since 1987

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Bereit reveals secrets of 40 Days' success

Pro-life hearts were weary in College Station, Texas, in the dark days of fall, 2004.

At the town's Planned Parenthood, the number of abortions was increasing every year.

The media were on their side. The community was apathetic. The pulpits were largely silent.

Four frustrated pro-lifers sat around a kitchen table, searching for a solution.

"We had tried everything – voter guides, yard signs, baby feet pins,

See SUCCESS, page 5

Pope inspires bumper sticker bonanza

Forty-six thousand people descended onto Nationals Park in Washington, D.C., for the Mass offered by Pope Benedict XVI on April 17.

When they left the stadium after Mass, 20,500 of them were carrying bumper stickers proclaiming "Pope Benedict XVI says DEFEND LIFE."

Behind this impressive logistical feat was a very determined Defend Life Director Jack Ames and a phalanx of 130 or so volunteers equally determined to spread the pro-life message.

Ames and five other men drove

up near the Navy Yard metro stop's stadium exit and began unloading boxes of bumper stickers from John Reinhard's van at 5:30 a.m.

Defend Life stalwarts Missy Smith and Joan McKee arrived shortly after, with a huge supply of food for the volunteers and 160 bright blue t-shirts.

The shirts read "PRO-LIFE" on the front, and on the back, "Pope Benedict XVI says Defend Life; April 17, 2008 Anno Domini; www.defendlif.org." The Defend Life volunteers, many of whom were

See STICKERS, page 2

Black leaders: defund Planned Parenthood

You Tube videos were the springboard on April 24 for a demand by black leaders and pastors that Congress defund Planned Parenthood.

At a lively prayer vigil and protest on the front lawn of Washington, D.C.'s Sixteenth Street Planned Parenthood, the African-American pro-lifers pointed to recent You Tube videos as proof that Planned Parenthood is a racist organization.

"The words on the You Tube

See DEFUND, page 7



Pro-lifer Forest Grauel offers bumper stickers at the papal Mass at the Nationals Park.

STICKERS, from page 1

Hispanic, Philippine, Burmese and Korean Legion of Mary members, donned the t-shirts and began handing out bumper stickers.

"It was impressive to see all these blue pro-life t-shirts running around!" said Missy.

"Most of our people were at the stadium metro exit, but we were also at the Navy Yard's New Jersey Avenue metro exit and on both sides of Half Street," the walkway leading to the stadium, said Ames.

As Mass goers flooded into the stadium, their response to the offer of free bumper stickers was overwhelmingly favorable.

"There was a wonderful spirit of goodwill, an aura of goodness," Ames recalled.

"Priests were smiling, giving me thumbs up, and people were just beaming!"

"There was a real sense of excitement" among the people, agreed



Volunteers give out Defend Life bumper stickers to papal Mass goers.

volunteer Linda Cox.

Linda had driven to the College Park metro station from her home in Edgemere, arriving there at 1:30 a.m.

She spent the night "catnapping" in her car in the parking lot, then rode the metro, which was "packed with cardinals and priests, and a lot of people speaking different languages."

Outside the stadium, she saw hopeful people holding up signs reading, "Will Work for a Ticket."

"It was all a lot of fun!" she exclaimed.

"People didn't stop and talk much – they were hurrying in," said Reinhard. "But they were extremely nice. They would say, 'Oh, can I get one?'"

Not so nice, however, were a half-dozen anti-Catholic demonstrators. A couple of them had mounted electronic bullhorns on top of poles, with a wire running down the pole to a microphone.

"They were saying all sorts of ugly things," said Ames.

When the Mass began at 10 a.m., the pro-lifers crowded around the giant Jumbotron TV screen outside the stadium to watch and listen to the Mass.

But the demonstrators were drowning it out.

"They were saying the Pope is Satan, and we were all going to hell. It was sad," said Reinhard.

Ames and volunteer Nenen Toledo began leading a rosary of reparation.



Placido Domingo, leaving Nationals Park after singing at the papal Mass, obligingly holds up a Defend Life bumper sticker for a photo by pro-lifer Sandy Babyak.

See MASS, page 4

GAP 2 at Towson U was not so raucous

They did it once before, and despite all the resultant flak, this spring they decided to do it again.

In November 2006, just two weeks after they formed Towson Pro-Life, Towson University students Maria Cordon, Nicole Chandler and John Eubank staged a GAP demonstration on campus.

The large Genocide Awareness Project signs, comparing graphic photos of aborted babies with photos of lynching and Holocaust victims, brought on a stormy reaction.

"We had a big protest against us," recalled Maria.

"It was only the three of us – but the hill next to us was full of people holding signs and yelling at us! It was intense."

"It was bad from the beginning," John agreed. "They were charging us nonstop."

"Now that I think of it, I think we were crazy to do it!" said Maria. "But in the end, it brought us a lot of members. Now we're prepared – we have eight to ten people helping us this time."

On April 21, while Defend Life's Albert Stecklein and Bryon McKinney set up the Defend Life-owned GAP signs on brick-lined Democracy Plaza, Nicole led fellow students in prayer.

"Heavenly Father, we thank you for this beautiful day," she murmured. "Please help us, because we're doing this for you."

"Hey, Nicole! I love your dead babies!" chirped a classmate as he walked past the display.

April 21-25 was not only Pro-Life Week at Towson, Nicole explained: the University's Queer Student Union was holding QSU Pride Week as well.



Nicole Chandler (center) talks to a student while Byron McKinney and Albert Stecklein set up the GAP display.

A stone's throw from the GAP display, Nicole's facetious classmate helped hand out free "Gay? Fine by me" t-shirts at the QSU booth.

**'Heavenly Father,
please help us,
because we're doing
this for you.'**

At the GAP display, senior Travis Gibson was among seven or eight students handing out "Exposing 'Choice'" brochures explaining the reasoning behind the display.

Most of the passing students gave the GAP signs "indifferent looks," said Gibson.

But a Women's Studies major engaged him in a long discussion.

"She wanted to know why we show these images and compare

them to the Holocaust," said Gibson. "I tried to explain to her that from the moment of conception, we become people."

The student told him she would read the brochure.

Sarah Bunch, a field coordinator for Students for Life of America, had driven up from Arlington that morning to help out.

"Can I ask you what you think of the display?" she asked a coed.

"I think it's awesome!" exclaimed the young woman.

A passing student took a photo of one of the signs on his cell phone.

"I don't like the approach, but abortion sucks!" a long-haired student shouted to Eubank.

"I have a love-hate relationship" with the graphic display, Maria admitted.

"I feel it's effective, it's something that needs to be done. But you can't control seeing it when you go

by – that's our dilemma."

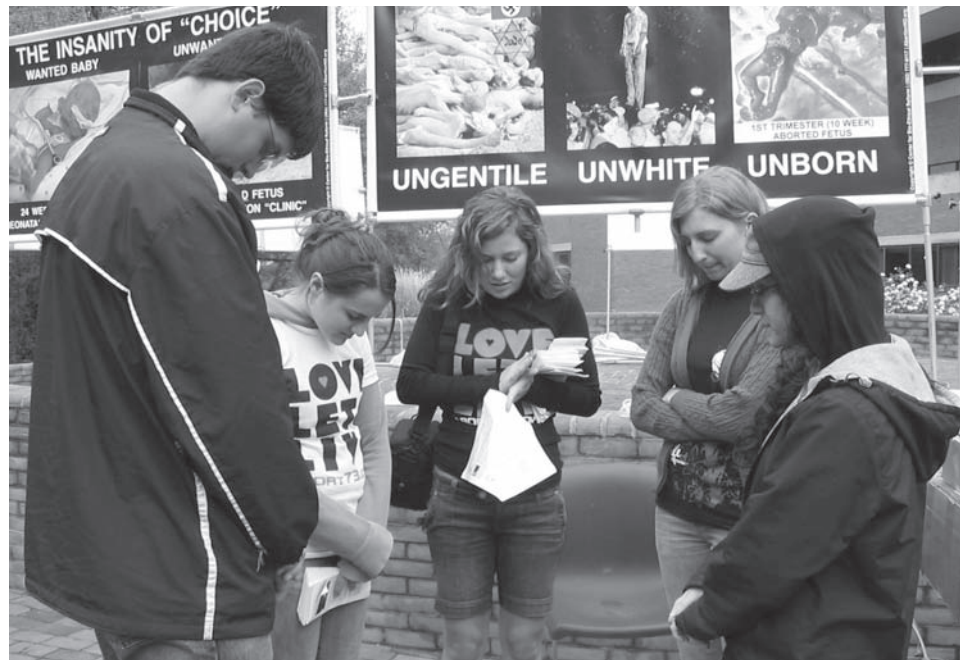
Foot traffic past the display picked up considerably around noon, when students stopped for lunch at the adjacent Brick Street Café.

By early afternoon about 15 students, mostly female, had assembled on the hill above the plaza, wearing "pro-choice" t-shirts and holding pro-abortion signs.

When several pro-lifers went up the hill to talk to the protesters, one of them called the campus police.

"When the police found out what their complaint was, they said, if you call us again for something like this, we're going to give you a ticket," reported Towson Pro-Life Vice-President Louis Jay.

"One protester came down to see the pictures up close," said Maria. "She was listening to our conversation we were having with someone else. But she went back up the hill quickly."



Towson University students start the GAP demonstration with a prayer.

By the end of the day, the pro-lifers had handed out hundreds of "Exposing 'Choice'" brochures, and about 20 students had signed up to receive Towson Pro-Life e-mails.

Overall, compared to the GAP demonstration in 2006, things were pretty quiet, said Maria.

"We had one boy yelling, but he lowered his voice again. It was not that bad."

MASS, from page 2

"There was a spiritual war going on," said Toledo.

"I said to the police, 'Can you try to get them to quiet down so we can hear what the Pope is saying?'" said Missy.

"They said, 'No, ma'am, they have their First Amendment rights.'"

Surprisingly, during the Consecration, there was silence.

"I couldn't receive Communion, but I knelt," recalled Reinhard. "There was stone silence for about three minutes."

Missy and Joan, with the help of "an assembly line" of Legion of Mary volunteers, had packed 300 sandwiches, 200 hard-boiled eggs, freshly cut carrots and 200 pounds of bottled water the night before.

After the Mass goers were inside the stadium, they passed out the food and water to the volunteers.

"But we had so much left over, we started giving it away," said Missy. They gave food and water to a group of about 40 schoolchildren.

"People were very grateful. We were creating a lot of good will," said Ames.

After the Mass, home-schooling mom Susan Andrews, who had brought three of her six children, went to where the buses were loading and handed out more bumper stickers.

"It was fun!" she said.

Many of the pro-lifers hurried over to South Capitol Street, in hopes of seeing Pope Benedict's departure.

"I got to see his motorcade," said Linda Cox. "We were all cheering and waving our papal flags when he went by."

When she finally left, at about 12:30, she was pretty tired, she admitted.

"But it was a good kind of tired."

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SUCCESS, from page 1

sidewalk counseling training – nothing was working,” David Bereit told pro-lifers at a Defend Life-sponsored talk at St. Stephen’s Church in Washington, D.C., May 15.

“We realized, we can’t do this ourselves; let’s go to the source – the Author of Life.”

After one hour of prayer, he said, “We knew we had to do something framed in 40 days.”

God often did things in a 40-day time frame, they reasoned: Noah was in his ark, Moses stayed on Mount Sinai, Jesus fasted in the desert, each for 40 days.

It would be attractive to people, who would say, “Okay, I can do anything for 40 days!”

For their 40 Days for Life campaign, they decided to:

1. Call upon the Body of Christ to pray and fast – because with God, all things are possible.
2. Hold a round-the-clock prayer vigil at Planned Parenthood – because the sacrifice should be commensurate with the evil they were opposing.
3. Spread the pro-life message to the entire community. With a team of college students, they reached all 35,000 households in College Station.

That fall, said Bereit, “Over 1,000 people mobilized, over 800 of them brand-new to the pro-life efforts.

“Many people gained healing through post-abortion healing programs. And the number of abortions during that period dropped by 28 percent.”

One by one, other cities across the country said, “Wow, what a good idea!” and did the same thing.

One year ago, “We decided to have a nationally coordinated 40 Days for Life campaign. We had zero money,

just word of mouth. We were shocked when 89 cities signed up!”

After the exhausting fall 2007 campaign was over (he had traveled to 35 of the cities himself), Bereit admitted, “We were wiped out. We felt, let’s take a break.”

But many cities that had not taken part now wanted to do the 40 Days, and they didn’t want to wait a year;



40 Days for Life is using fresh concepts and new technology to advance its cause, says David Bereit.

they wanted to hold it during the 40 days of Lent.

Fifty-nine cities signed up for the Spring 40 Days, 50 of them brand-new.

When Lent ended and the dust cleared, the statistics were amazing.

A total of 139 cities in 43 states had conducted 40 Days for Life campaigns.

Over 150,000 people had prayed and fasted; 35,000 had stood vigil at abortion facilities, over 20,000 of whom had never done so before.

“We know for sure at least 514 children were saved from abortion, and hundreds of people started post-abortion healing programs,” said Bereit.

“Five abortion workers quit their jobs, saying, ‘Thanks to you, I’m getting out of this business.’

“Two Planned Parenthood operations abruptly stopped doing abortions. And an abortion facility in Rockland County, New York, closed down right after the spring campaign.

“By the grace of God, all this happened in just the last 10 months.”

Now, said the 40 Days founder, “I want to peel back the curtain and take you behind the scenes of the last 10 months to show you how we tried to size up trends so we could get more results with less time, money and energy.”

These were the six concepts they employed:

1. People want to return to God.

For the 35 years since *Roe v. Wade*, we have put our faith in the wrong place: the White House, Congress, the Supreme Court, charismatic leaders.

“These are all men, and they will let us down,” said Bereit.

“If we have succeeded in 40 Days for Life, it’s because we truly put our faith in God, and are willing to pray and fast.”

2. Bottom-up empowerment.

“For too long, we’ve waited for answers from on high – for the Supreme Court to do something, for Congress to pass a law.

“But abortions don’t happen in the White House or the Supreme Court; they happen in our own neighborhoods,” Bereit pointed out. “People want to do something where they live.”

We need to empower pro-lifers at the local level in the areas of education, manpower and leadership.

3. Collaborative multiplication.

“People often say, ‘Why are there so many pro-life groups? Why don’t they just work together?’” Bereit noted.

We have pro-life pregnancy cen-

ters, lobbying groups, legal groups and church groups, he admitted.

"Many people say, it's my way or the highway! We may not always see eye-to-eye, but we can find ways to work together."

Bereit found this happening during 40 Days. When he went to Fargo, North Dakota, for example, he found "a united front" of more than 50 people of every denomination praying before the abortion mill.

4. The decentralization of the media.

In what was the good old days for Planned Parenthood, the mainstream media controlled the news, and pro-lifers were shut out.

But new technology has leveled the playing field.

Recently, for example, UCLA student Lila Rose taped a young man calling Planned Parenthood abortion clinics, offering to donate money to target black babies for abortion. He got an enthusiastic welcome.

You Tube and blogs spread the story across the nation, finally forcing the mainstream media to cover the story.

"We can tap into this new technology and use it for great good," said Bereit.

"We have direct communication; we don't have to go through a filter and get the approval of some editor."

It's rapid and it's inexpensive.

"E-mail is incredibly effective to get your message out," he said. "When we e-mail, we estimate that within 24 hours, we reach 50,000 people with a pro-life message."

When 40 Days held a teleconference for their fall 2008 campaign, 1,400 people signed up for the simulcast call.

'When we e-mail, within 24 hours we reach 50,000 people.'

"We gave a one-hour explanation of what we planned to do. One person put up a matching challenge of \$50,000. We blew way past it; we raised \$91,000."

With the matching grant, they had raised a total of \$141,000 in 72 hours.

The teleconference had cost them \$47.

5. The organizational model shift.

Big organizations are slow-moving and unwieldy, said Bereit.

"By becoming small, lean, fast-moving, we can rapidly adapt to change, implement new ideas, and try riskier-type things, because if they fail, a small organization can quickly regroup and go in a different direction.

"40 Days for Life has no office. I work out of a corner of my bedroom, using my laptop and cell phone.

"We have one staff member and a handful of volunteers across the country. We use contract help for work we can't do ourselves."

Their last 10 months' work was done for \$74,916.36.

"I have seen organizations in Washington pay that much for a two-page ad in the *Washington Post* that gets a little blip of response, and then it's gone.

"Look what God has done with that \$74,916.36 by changing the organizational model."

6. The change in our attitude.

If we want to transform the world, we have to be positive and upbeat, even if we don't feel like it, said Bereit.

We must create an inviting environment that people want to be a part of.

"We have an opportunity to invite people to save the life of a child, to spare a mother a lifetime of regret, to bring healing to those destroyed by abortion, to transform your community, your state, the nation and the world!

"Your attitude will determine the altitude of your efforts."

The Importance of a Father



St. Joseph was strong in the face of adversity and poverty of his time.

He is a model of the virtues of prudence, humility, strength and fortitude. Even though Joseph is "silent" in Scripture, his actions speak to us more clearly than recorded words. Just as Joseph resigned his own will to do the will of God, so a good father walks

the path as God sets it out for him. The greatest gift any father can give to his children is lifelong fidelity to his Marriage Covenant. Children learn about love through a father's affections, prayer, honor, self-control, forgiveness and integrity.

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DEFUND, from page 1

video are haunting and chilling: “There are way too many black people in Ohio,” said Day Gardner, president of the National Black Pro-Life Union, which organized the protest along with Students for Life of America.

The videos were taped by pro-life students from the University of California at Los Angeles.

They phoned Planned Parenthood clinics, posing as racist donors who want their money to go to kill unborn black babies.

On the tapes, clinic workers in Ohio, Oklahoma, Idaho and New Mexico respond favorably to the requests.

“Why are our tax dollars going into a pot to fund this racist organization?” Gardner demanded.

The \$300 million in federal funding that goes to Planned Parenthood every year would go a long way to pay for more teachers or provide housing to homeless Americans, she said.

“But instead, more than \$300 million went to this racist organiza-



Protest organizer Day Gardner calls for a halt to federal funding of Planned Parenthood.

tion as blood money to slaughter innocent children!”

“We’re here today to talk about race because Planned Parenthood has made abortion about race,” charged the Rev. Clenard Childress, founder of BlackGenocide.org.

“It’s time to talk about race when Jesse Jackson, Al Sharpton, Barack Obama and Hillary Clinton have remained silent on blatant rac-

ist acts by Planned Parenthood.”

“Guess what, Planned Parenthood – your secret is out! No longer will we allow you to exploit black women for profit,” said Students for Life of America Director Kristan Hawkins.

Planned Parenthood has responded to the YouTube videos with apologies for the way the calls were handled, and promises to train employees to respond more properly.

But they accused the phone callers of being deceptive and politically motivated.

The protest speakers, however, declared that the YouTube videos were only the tip of the iceberg.

Speakers noted that the organization’s founder, Margaret Sanger, was a eugenicist and racist who campaigned to reduce the number of “unfit” people, especially blacks.

Like its founder, Planned Parenthood is still targeting blacks, the speakers alleged, pointing out that 75 percent of their clinics are in black neighborhoods.



Local college students join the protest in front of Planned Parenthood.

See PROTEST, page 14

TU looks at help for pregnant and parenting students

You get pregnant while you're in college.

What do you do?

The common perception is, you have a choice: either have the baby and drop out of school – or have an abortion and continue your education.

Feminists for Life President Serrin Foster, who believes that women should “refuse to choose” between their babies and their education, led a Pregnancy Resource Forum at Towson University on April 23.

“What’s unique about Feminists for Life is, we don’t debate” the abortion issue, Foster explained to the nine-member TU panel assembled for the forum.

“We focus on trying to find creative solutions.”

FFL held its first Pregnancy Resource Forum at Georgetown University in 1997. The forum paid off, said Foster.

Within two years, Georgetown had established Hoya Kids Learning Center, which provides daycare for children of students, faculty and staff; set up housing for parenting students; got “800” numbers for resources; and trained the counseling department to guide pregnant students to those resources.

Since Georgetown, FFL has held many pregnancy resource forums, including ones at Loyola College in Maryland and University of Maryland College Park.

The forums, as well as an FFL survey, “Perception is Reality,” released April 23, reveal that either most campuses lack resources or that students are ignorant of the resources available.

“For pregnant and parenting students, the perception that they have no resources or support is their reality,” said Foster.

Queried by Foster, the TU panel

members described the resources available to TU students.

TU’s Health Center offers confidential pregnancy tests, said Lenore Meyers, the center’s Health Educator.

A pregnant student would meet for counseling with a doctor or clinician, who would present her with all the options: abortion, adoption, or prenatal care. The center does refer for abortions.

The student health care plan has both maternity coverage and abortion coverage, and students can get an additional rider for family coverage, “but most students don’t opt for the student health care plan,” Meyers noted.

One-third of all scholarship assistance goes to international students, but also to single moms and dads, said Women’s Center Director Phyllis Freeman.

“The committee is very lenient in considering financial aid,” she said.

Burkshire at Towson University offered housing for married graduate students and their families, but is closing for renovations, panel members said.

TU has a day care center for children of students, faculty and staff.

The best price and first priority goes to students, said Director Harriet Douthirt.

“I’m an advocate for families! I’m always calling Financial Aid” for help for parenting students, she said.

The center does not take children under 2, however. Finding day care for infants under 2 in Maryland “is a huge problem,” Douthirt admitted.

TU offers a variety of online graduate and undergraduate pro-



Serrin Foster (second from left) is joined at the Pregnancy Resource Forum by Towson Pro-Life officers (from left) Maria Cordon, Nicole Chandler, John Eubank and Louis Jay.

See HELP, page 12

Priest urges men to assume their God-given roles

After Fr. Phillip Chavez became a priest, he became involved in family ministry.

"But I noticed that men in particular had a lot of problems," he told parishioners at the May 4 Masses at St. Mary of the Mills Church in Laurel.

"Every man wants to be confident, move ahead with self-assurance. But instead, men are suffering from deep issues of insecurity, a deep sense of inferiority. They have a difficult time connecting with the women in their life.

"Even men in their thirties, forties and fifties ask, 'Is this all there is?'"

That's why, two years ago, Father Chavez began a men's ministry.

At the Masses, he invited the men of St. Mary of the Mills to a retreat the following Saturday, where they would learn how to go about "Organizing Your Spiritual Playbook," which was the first talk.

At the retreat, the men were given daily, weekly and monthly spiritual practices to follow. Chavez aimed to make the spiritual journey of a man very doable and incisive from a man's perspective.

The coordinator of the parish men's group, Greg Krehbiel, wrote afterwards to Father, "Your presentations were very practical and inspiring, and I heard lots of very good feedback from the other men."

At the Masses, Father explained that while women play their roles spontaneously and instinctively, men need to be more directly taught about life and its mysteries.

And they approach life differently.

"Why is it that men love movies like *Braveheart*, *Gladiator* and *The Kingdom of Heaven*?"

"Because boys and men think of



Fr. Phillip Chavez signs up a parishioner for his men's retreat after Mass at St. Mary of the Mills Church.

everything in terms of competition and challenge," he said.

"Every man wants to fight a great battle, to stand in the ranks, to be known as someone who would be willing to lay down his life for a great cause."

You see this paradigm very early: even at 3 years of age, for a boy, every stick is a sword or a spear.

"If you take away his guns, he will chew his crackers or waffles into the shape of a gun!" he observed to smiles of agreement from women in the pews.

Boys love games where there are clearly winners and losers. They want to hunt and fish, learn skills and build things. They want adventure, conquest and challenge.

We need not be afraid of this competitive spirit, but it needs to be nurtured and mentored, said Chavez.

If he does not get this mentoring, a man becomes frustrated, confused and angry.

The ministry begins

Father Chavez was the second of ten children (his older brother David is also a priest), born and raised in Los Angeles.

He received his B.A. in Liberal Arts at Thomas Aquinas College in California.

At the age of 24, he recalls, "I felt almost a direct call from the Holy Spirit when I was visiting St. Michael's Abbey in southern California."

Chavez entered the seminary there, then continued his studies for the priesthood with the Society of Our Lady of the Most Holy Trinity (SOLT) – the same congregation of Fr. John Corapi.

They first sent him for studies in Spain, and he also had the opportunity to do summer coursework in Italy and Liechtenstein. He completed his formation at Mount St. Mary's in Emmitsburg, where he was ordained in 1993.

After earning graduate degrees in

Theology, Philosophy, and Marriage and Family Studies, Father culminated his studies with a doctorate in Rome.

At his first parish, he became very interested in family and parenting issues.

From there, he says, "I took a keen interest in the problems of men."

Eight years ago, SOLT's founder, Fr. James Flanagan, asked him to start a family institute.

"Two years ago, we decided to narrow it down to a men's ministry," he says.

Chavez kicked off his new ministry with a men's retreat in Malvern, Pa., in July 2006, sponsored by a group called The King's Men.

"We expected a handful of guys, and we got 90," he recalls.

His talk, *The Quest for Masculine Spirituality*, was published on CD by Saint Joseph Communications and was on their "most popular products" list for 6 months.



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The message spreads

Since he went full-time with the men's ministry, less than a year ago, the 45-year-old priest's message has gone out to an ever-expanding audience.

Father Chavez was the opening speaker at a conference in Phoenix attended by 800 men on Super Bowl weekend; spoke to 3,300 men at a February Men of Christ conference in Milwaukee; and addressed 2,800 at a March men's conference in Cincinnati.

At his talks, he says, "I try to get right to the heart of masculinity issues."

'What are the battles that men face today? They're all around us!'

"I'm waking up men's hearts and minds to their masculine identity and their masculine journey," he explains.

The crowning part of their masculine journey is the spiritual part.

The identity of a man is found most incisively in the figure of Jesus Christ: "He stands as the one whom all men must strive to emulate," says Father.

The Savior understood Himself always as "Son," Chavez notes.

In his men's ministry, he has seen men struggle with their identity as an acceptable and beloved "son" of their own fathers.

Men should be so formed to see their own life as paralleling Christ's entire life, which was oriented to the mission of doing His Father's will and keeping in constant loving and trustful communication with the Father, says Chavez.

Father believes that a strong identity in Christ-like sonship must be

restored in Catholic men, so they can in turn pass along this identity and be the fathers God ordained them to be.

In addition, as with all the "People of God," men are to be formed in the three offices of Christ – priest, prophet and king.

"These are key archetypes to be forged in men according to the mode of their nature," Father explains.

Men must also develop intellectually, morally, physically, emotionally and socially according to their God-given nature, says Chavez.

Once a man has grasped the concept of true masculinity, it's his job to pass it on – to mentor and lead other men, just as he was mentored.

Jesus himself made it a central task to closely mentor twelve men during his apostolic ministry, Chavez points out.

As regards the most difficult responsibilities men need to take up, he asks, "What are the battles that men face today? They're all around us!"

"We need to be addressing abortion, pornography, and other offenses which threaten life and family; it is our duty to protect society from these evils."

The reaction to his mission has been "mostly positive, even from women," says Father.

"They're very encouraging. They know that the men in their lives need a lot of help and guidance."

At St. Mary of the Mills, he noted that a woman "is like a warrior too – a mama bear who will defend her cubs at all costs."

"Also, women are warriors in prayer in a way that men are not; they have a very special gift for intercession. So I ask all you women to pray for the men in your lives, and the men going on this retreat."

Father Chavez's website is www.fatherchavez.com.

Swetland offers insights on Pope Benedict XVI

Stuart Swetland, a newly ordained deacon from Peoria, Ill., was studying for the priesthood when he got a call from the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.

"They were working on the new catechism, and the drafting committee needed help from someone whose first language was English," Swetland told his audience at Immaculate Conception Church in Towson April 3.

"I had a glorious summer working on the catechism!" he recalled.

Every fourth meal, Swetland got to have dinner or lunch with his boss's boss, who was Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger.

At one of these meals, the Cardinal turned to the young American and asked him in English, "Who is Rip Van Winkle?"

"He had heard an insult, that whoever had been drafting the catechism for the last 20 years was a theological Rip Van Winkle," said Swetland.

"So I explained American folklore to him."

Monsignor Swetland found the future Pope Benedict XVI to be "gracious, well-educated, cultured, generous, humble, and also brilliant."

To understand Joseph Ratzinger, the person, he said, you need to understand three "big things" about him: he is Catholic, German, and an introvert.

Born in Bavaria, Germany, on April 16, 1927, Holy Saturday, he was the first person baptized in the new baptismal waters that day, a fact which he views as an act of Providence.

"For him, the most significant fact is that we are baptized Christians immersed in the Easter Mystery," said Swetland. Raised in a devoutly Catholic family, "The rest of his life is the playing out of his baptismal promises."

Ratzinger's cultural upbringing

was thoroughly Catholic, "but he is also German, and he is *very* German," observed Swetland.

Young Joseph was 6 when the Nazis came to power in 1933. To go to school, he was required to join the Nazi youth group.

At the age of 16, while in the seminary, he was drafted into the German anti-aircraft corps.

"But his family was anti-Nazi, and they looked to the Church as a haven against the Nazi lies," said Swetland.

When Ratzinger reentered the seminary after the war, many of his professors and fellow seminarians had been in concentration camps; his rector had been in Dachau for five years.

"He had experienced the gates of Hell and they did not prevail," said Swetland.

While Pope John Paul II was an extrovert, a former actor who was energized being around a lot of people, Ratzinger is an introvert: "Being with a crowd of people drains him, although he gives a great show of not acting like it," he noted.

"When we were working on the catechism, we had these coffee breaks. He would go off and take out his Bible and pray.

"He was an intense man of prayer – a quiet man, a shy man, a man who was meant to be an academic."

His priestly life is shaped by the fact that he has a massive intellect and is gifted linguistically, said Swetland.

"Right out of the seminary, he gets his doctorate and becomes a professor. This is interrupted by the Vatican Council. His cardinal [Joseph Frings] takes him along as his official theologian."

Ratzinger attended every session



Msgr. Stuart Swetland talks with Defend Life lecture audio-taper George Maalouf.

of the Second Vatican Council, but did not agree with everything the Council did. For example, he thought that the Council's last document, *Gaudium et Spes*, was too optimistic about the human condition.

The Council was for him a period of both reclaiming tradition and updating it, said Swetland.

"From the very beginning of his priesthood, he recognized the need for new forms, the need for 'aggiornamento' – a new way of presenting the ancient truths to a new generation.

"But you can't update something if you don't understand it. So what has to come first is 'ressourcement' – going back to the sources – back to the Fathers, to the Scriptures themselves."

As the pope, he is spending a lot of time writing commentaries on the Scriptures: "He is taking us back to the sources – what they really say," said Swetland.

His theological approach is Augustinian personalism. Saint Augustine's personal relationship with God appealed to him in a way that the "impersonal" thought of Thomas Aquinas couldn't, Swetland noted.

Pope Benedict XVI, he said, is a systematic theologian who loves to dabble in being a liturgist – reforming the abuses that masqueraded as reforms.

Benedict is not going to write as many encyclicals as his predecessor, "first, because he wants us to assimilate what John Paul did, but also, he wants the local bishop to take his rightful place as teacher," Swetland pointed out.

But Benedict maintains his own role as teacher through the Wednesday catecheses begun by John Paul.

Benedict finished John Paul's discussion of the psalms, then began a catechesis on the saints, starting with

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grams and credit courses.

Online courses are a great resource for parenting students, Foster commented.

Panel member Cindi Ritter, director of Pregnancy Center North, said that TU students can come to the center, located a mile south of the campus, for free pregnancy tests and counseling, as well as free layettes and other baby supplies.

"We have many resources we can connect students with," said Ritter.

"We tell our clients that pregnancy is a temporary condition, and that they can still pursue their goals."

"I'm extremely moved that you all came here and offered your help," Music Department instructor Dr. Zoltan Szabo told his fellow panel members.

"I've been teaching here for 36 years, and have seen students who have become pregnant and the struggle they went through."

He praised the students of Tow-

son Pro-Life for sponsoring the forum.

Foster suggested that freshmen should be advised at orientation of the on-campus resources for pregnant students, and that resident advisors should know about the resources as well.

"Students don't know that people are there to help them," she said, adding that "the worst thing" is students who get abortions, not knowing that there was someone who would have helped them.

Mrs. Ritter was surprised to learn, in discussion with Ms. Meyers after the forum, that Meyers would not give out Pregnancy Center North's brochures at the Health Center because, she said, they contained "propaganda."

Ritter has asked Meyers to e-mail her specifically what she considers to be propaganda or misinformation in the brochures.

"TU is a public university, and free speech should be advocated," said Ritter.

the Biblical saints and the apostles.

"His teaching is amazing!" said Swetland, who has been to some of the Wednesday sessions.

"On Joseph, he emphasized how we could all learn from his silence in this noisy world.

"On Matthew, he stressed the apostolate of like to like – how Matthew invited his fellow tax collectors to meet Jesus. On Thomas, he said that the sure sign of the resurrected Lord is His wounds – the sign of His love."

Benedict's Wednesday catechesis, which is drawing bigger crowds than John Paul's, "is a rich treasure trove to the world," said Swetland.

The Monsignor predicted that the Pope's April visit to America would

be Christocentric. "He will proclaim the basic Gospel – Jesus Christ, and Him crucified," he said.

At the United Nations, he would call for a true vision of human rights, one based on the dignity of the human person.

"And to the bishops, he will stress their vocation as educators – he will call them to be educators of our nation," he predicted.

Monsignor Swetland is director of Homiletics and Pre-Theology at Mount St. Mary's Seminary and vice-president for Catholic Identity and Mission at Mount St. Mary's University, Emmitsburg.

His talk was sponsored by Defend Life.

Book Review

Sacrilege examines a painful subject

By Diane Levero

In 2002 the scandal of sexual abuse by Catholic priests exploded in its full horror with the shocking expose by the *Boston Globe*.

Six years later, the furor has diminished and the problem is supposedly more or less under control, but troubling questions remain.

Why did this sacrilege happen?

How did it become so widespread and so deeply embedded in the Church?

And finally, what are the root causes and what can we do about them?

Leon Podles tackles these questions in *Sacrilege: Sexual Abuse in the Catholic Church*.

Podles is a Baltimorean who attended Calvert Hall College High School on a full academic scholarship.

He then entered Guzman Hall at Providence College, a dormitory for men who were considering becoming a priest, but he soon began to doubt that he had a call to the priesthood.

His doubts came to an abrupt end when one night, he was sexually assaulted by his roommate. He moved out of the dormitory within hours.

Podles went on with his education, earning his Ph.D. from the University of Virginia.

He worked as a federal investigator for 20 years, married and had six children, and has written for publications such as *America*, *The American Spectator*, and *Crisis*.

Accounts of sexual abuse too often have been sanitized, Podles charges: euphemisms such as “fondled” cloak the dreadful things done by priests to

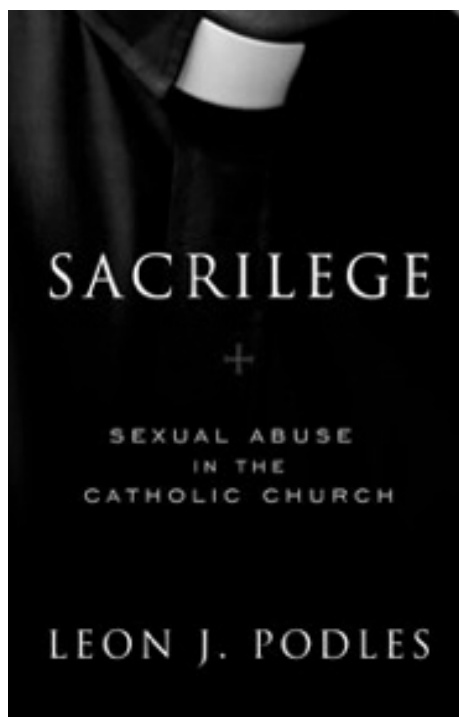
children and adolescents.

In contrast, he deals with the subject head-on, with no holds barred.

As a result, his 675-page book is not for the fainthearted.

The seemingly endless litany of specific accounts of abusive priests is sordid, disgusting, sometimes gruesome.

Reading about them is an ordeal. The reader may wonder, do we really have to go into this much unsavory detail?



But Podles does so for a reason: to bring home the enormity and horror of the problem so we will be jolted out of the natural avoidance most of us Catholics revert to as protection against an extremely unpleasant subject.

Time and again, the reader is flabbergasted by the brazen audacity of so many of the perpetrators in their serial

profligacies, and by their complete lack of feelings of guilt or remorse.

Throughout the book, Podles stresses the almost uniform indifference of the bishops and of many fellow priests to the sufferings of the victims.

Sadly, he points out, even many of the laity also are not only indifferent, but actually blame the victims for the abuse.

The bishops' only interest, as he documents repeatedly, is damage control: to shield and protect the abusers and their own diocese and reputation.

Much of the bishops' reactions can be explained by the natural tendency of all professional groups and bureaucracies to circle the wagons and protect their own, says Podles.

Baltimoreans recently saw an example of this when a student beat up a Baltimore City public school art teacher in the classroom and fellow students posted a video of the beating on the internet.

Public school officials responded with a lot of measured gobbledegook about following established protocol and having citizen volunteers come into the schools.

“Where is the outrage?” demanded frustrated radio talk show host Ron Smith.

Podles asks the same question: Where is the outrage from bishops and even Pope John Paul II, who expressed only sorrow, not anger, over the dreadful abuse.

“Righteous anger is a forgotten concept,” Podles mourns.

Bishops are usually chosen for their office because, he says, “The Vatican likes diplomatic types, conciliators, nonconfrontational types,

team players, people who don't make waves."

In other words, people who will sweep things under the rug so that their organization can put on a happy face.

But not just the bishops deserve blame for the cover-up, says Podles.

"The Vatican – the Pope and the curial officials he appoints – bear much responsibility for the sexual abuse of minors in the United States and throughout the world."

In 1989 the American bishops asked the Vatican to give them the power to laicize abusive priests. The Vatican refused the request, even though it knew what was going on, says Podles.

Addressing the tough question of what makes these abusers tick, he says that on rare occasions, they may be mentally ill and thus have diminished responsibility, "but most of the time the abusers are evil, coolly planning to exploit the weak to satisfy their desires for sex and control."

Exploring the motivation of priests who abuse young boys and teenage boys – and the great majority of the victims have been male – Podles discusses the desire for control that a boy who is developing homosexually has.

He feels he is different from other boys, and that he is being controlled by something that he does not like. He therefore considers himself a victim, and he is angry at God and society.

"This anger is diverted into establishing sexual control over others weaker than he is," says Podles.

Narcissism may also motivate the homosexual predator, who is looking for an idealized, youthful image of himself.

Priest abusers of teenage males often suffer from psychosexual immaturity. They have an adolescent attitude toward sexuality, and are deeply stuck in adolescent anger.

PROTEST, from page 7

As a result, they said, black women are having 36 percent of abortions in the U.S., but only 17 percent of live births, and the black population is declining.

The speakers were preceded by a prayer vigil during which African-Americans, joined by local college students, held signs with messages such as, "Abortion is NOT a family value!" and offered spontaneous prayers.

"We pray for every doctor, nurse

and escort – that they feel what the baby feels as they're trying to abort them," prayed an older African-American woman.

"Give them a revelation that every baby is fearfully and wonderfully made," implored a young, kneeling black man.

The eight orange-vested clinic "escorts" patrolling the sidewalks maintained stoically pleasant demeanors throughout the protest, which was covered by major news media such as Fox News, *The Washington Times*, and CNS News.

Almost needless to mention is the sad fact that many priest abusers were victims of abuse themselves.

The percentage of sexual abusers in the Church is higher than their percentage in the general population, leading some to propose that celibacy causes men to become sexual abusers.

Not so, says Podles, who shows that Protestant churches, which have married clergy, still suffer a good share of sexual abusers.

Fashionable heresies and dissent among priests contributed to immorality and an increase in priests having sex with teenage boys in the '70s and '80s, he notes.

But "old errors," distortions of true Catholic teaching such as nominalism and voluntarism, have also helped the growth of sexual abuse in the Church, says Podles.

One reform he advocates is the abolition of the statute of limitations for sexual abuse cases.

I can't agree. There are good reasons for the statute of limitations, and I think we know enough about lawyers who can spot a lucrative racket in going after the Church for money. (Keep in mind, the money ultimately comes out of the pockets of us parish-

ioners.)

We recently saw an ignoble effort in the Maryland General Assembly to lift the statute of limitations in sexual abuse cases – limited just to those cases in the Catholic Church!

It went down to the defeat it deserved.

But I do agree with Podles' assertion that, while the Church should not automatically bar any man who has ever had some type of same-sex attraction, it should be extremely cautious about ordaining them, both for their own good and the good of the Church as a whole.

Podles expresses cautious hope about Pope Benedict XVI who, as Cardinal Ratzinger, spoke of "the filth" in the Church and speeded up the trials of abusers.

He commends Benedict for taking decisive action against the notorious fraud and homosexual abuser, Oblate brother Gino Burrelli, and in the tragic case of Legionaries of Christ founder Marcial Maciel.

As the Church that claims to be founded by Christ, Podles insists that the Catholic Church must be judged by its own high standards, and we must insist that it be held to those standards.

Pro-Life Training Program Series

Anti-lifers demand our approval

By Janet Baker

The anti-life mentality is a pathologically dependent one. Anti-lifers know they do wrong and demand support from like-minded individuals to quell their ever-turbulent consciences and confirm each other in their sinful pursuits. Their self-esteem, despite haughty veneers, is generally very low because their consciences will not allow them peace.

The pro-life activist, by contrast, generally possesses higher self-esteem, flowing from confidence in God. This, of course, causes angst and resentment among the anti-lifers. They continually look for excuses to declare to Christians and other pro-lifers, "We're just as good as you." If they see pro-lifers fall into sin, they are oh-so-quick to chortle, "See? You're just as bad as we are!"

Not all "Christians" suffer the ire of the anti-lifers – only those who don't affirm the anti-lifers in their sin. Some so-called "Christians" get a pass.

One notable case is a Southern Baptist who was regularly photographed walking out of Church, Bible in hand: Bill Clinton.

Do you remember how he espoused "women's rights"? Well, not all women received benefit of his "championship"; in fact, some experienced oppression to immense degrees under his hand.

Yet, strangely enough, the national office of NOW turned a blind eye to the public oppression of their sisters. Over this matter, NOW faced dissension within its ranks. In 1999, the Dulles, Va., chapter of NOW issued a statement that both praised the House managers of the impeachment committee and called for the resignation of their NOW national officers and board of directors.

Needless to say, the national NOW office didn't take too kindly to their uppity sisters (so much for tolerance and diversity), and the Dulles chapter was excluded from the NOW convention. The Dulles chapter wound up severing ties with the national NOW office – good for them!

Anti-lifers accept no limitations on their activities, and they set impossibly high standards for themselves in regards to material and temporal goals: possessions, sexual performance, careers, etc. Should they fall short (and they do), they believe that their worth as human beings is lessened: thus, the allure of euthanasia.

One is reminded of St. Augustine's words, "You have made us for yourself, Lord, and our hearts are restless until they rest in you."

Christians, on the other hand, know that they have limits imposed upon them by God and their fallen human natures. They can deal with that, knowing that God and fellow Christians will forgive them (repentance being understood).

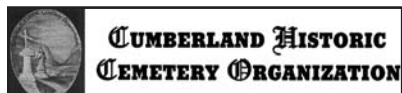
The anti-life movements are very efficient in enabling destructive behaviors in themselves and others. As people engage in these destructive behaviors, they perpetuate an ever downward-spiraling cycle of encouraging these bad behaviors and quelling resultant guilt.

The anti-lifers endeavor to force society to accept their behaviors as the norm rather than aberrations, since it is generally the contrast between sin and norms that generates guilt. Thus, we see the push to legalize homosexual "marriages," abortion on demand, acceptance of euthanasia, widespread distribution of contraceptives, etc.

They have no intentions of amending their own immoral behavior (the only correct and effective way to relieve guilt), so they seek to force Christians to at least validate their own immorality, to remove the obvious contrasts of behaviors.

The saying, "Misery loves company," is their motto.

Next time, we'll examine some ways in which their reasoning processes are flawed.



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INSIDE: Pro-lifers stage bumper sticker blow-out

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