

# DEFEND LIFE

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[www.DefendLife.org](http://www.DefendLife.org) • [mail@DefendLife.org](mailto:mail@DefendLife.org)

Voice Mail: (410) 296-LIVE • Pro-Life Action News: (410) 296-BORN

## Woman dies after abortion at Baltimore clinic DHMH stonewalls: won't release initial survey reports

While conducting surveys of surgical abortion facilities, Maryland's Office of Health Care Quality learned that a second woman has died after an abortion this year in the state.

The first abortion-related death occurred February 7 after a late-term abortion at Germantown Reproductive Health Services (see story on page 3).

The second death took place after an abortion at Associates in OB/GYN Care, LLC, on North Calvert Street in Baltimore.

Maryland's Department of Health and Mental Hygiene has refused to disclose the date of the abortion, but documents obtained by *Defend Life* indicate that it probably took place early this year.

The death at the Baltimore facility came to light through a March 8 letter from Health Secretary Joshua Sharfstein, M.D., to the Maryland General Assembly.

Sharfstein reported that the Department had suspended the license of three Maryland abortion facilities to perform surgical abortions after initial surveys by the Department's Office of Health Care Quality revealed deficiencies "related to preparedness for and response to

emergencies."

The three clinics, in Baltimore, Silver Spring and Cheverly, are all owned by Associates in OB/Gyn Care, also known as American Women's Services.

Operation Rescue has reported that they are owned by the notorious abortionist Steven Chase Brigham, through a "shell game" in which he has placed them under the ownership of a family member.

A late-term abortion mill scandal

in 2010 at a secret Elkton abortion clinic owned by Brigham led to the passage of a Maryland law requiring licensing of abortion clinics, effective July 2012.

Of the Baltimore clinic, Sharfstein wrote, "Surveyors identified a deficient response by facility staff to a cardiopulmonary arrest in a patient."

"The responding physician was not certified in CPR, and no attempt was made to use the Automated External Defibrillator (AED). In addition, during the survey, the AED was not operational."

The *Baltimore Sun* reported on March 8 that "Although the cardiac arrest was caused by underlying health conditions and not the abortion, investigators found that it raised questions whether doctors at the clinic can handle an abortion that goes wrong."

When *Defend Life* requested information from the Health Department, including relevant documents such as the medical examiner's report and the Department's initial survey reports on the three abortion clinics, DHMH replied by email, "As discussed, both to protect the privacy of patients at the facilities and because the regulatory process



**Death won't stop him**  
**Despite Jennifer Morbelli's**  
**death, abortionist LeRoy**  
**Carhart continues to ply his**  
**trade in Germantown.**  
(Story on page 3.)

is underway, the Department cannot comment further at this time.”

A March 19 request by a Maryland state senator to the Health Department for the initial site inspection reports was also denied.

“Boy, are they stonewalling the Senator!” commented a staffer in his office. “They are saying what they have so far is not public information and we will have to wait until the deficiency reports are completed.”

Two days later, Delegates Kathy Afzali and Nicholas Kipke filed a request to the Department’s Office of Health Care Quality under the Maryland Public Information Act for the initial site inspection reports for 10 abortion clinics, including the three whose surgical abortion licenses were suspended.

In the meantime, Nancy Paltell, associate director of the Maryland Catholic Conference’s Respect Life Office, filed a formal complaint with the Maryland Board of Physicians against Valeri P. Semendy, M.D., in connection with the patient death at the Baltimore clinic.

Semendy, 71, is known to be the only female physician who works at the North Calvert Street clinic, Paltell stated in her complaint. (The *Sun* article revealed that the abortionist in question was a woman.)

“Please open a full investigation into the actions of Dr. Valeri Semendy that led to the death of this patient,” wrote Paltell.

While DHMH stonewalled the press and public, the administrator of the three clinics released a five-page letter detailing the abortion clinic’s version of the patient death.

In her March 8 letter to Secretary Sharfstein, Melissa Shachnovitz conceded that some of her

information was “secondhand and cannot be verified by us.”

But she went on to state that the patient, “an immigrant from a remote region in a third world country,” allegedly had not seen a physician in many years.

“As a result, she was not aware that she suffered from cardiomyopathy, which is a fatal heart condition,” said Shachnovitz.

“In addition, the patient may have had defective heart valves and was probably in compensated right heart failure.”

The “simple, routine, uncomplicated, uneventful first-trimester

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### **‘If not a patient’s death, what is the trigger for immediately suspending the license of a surgical abortion facility?’**

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vacuum aspiration procedure...was carried out properly and successfully,” she wrote.

After the procedure was over, said the administrator, the patient suddenly experienced extreme difficulty in breathing. EMS was quickly called and the patient was transported to the hospital, where she later died.

There is no direct evidence that the patient’s death was caused by the abortion procedure, maintained Shachnovitz.

“Because of her underlying heart condition...her death could easily have happened while she was just sitting at home watching television.”

Paltell noted that although

Shachnovitz states that the abortionist is a board-certified ob/gyn physician, the Maryland Board of Physicians lists Semendy as board certified in family medicine, with no mention of training or certification in ob/gyn.

The Health Department issued licenses to abortion facilities without conducting inspections, and did not conduct any until prompted by a February 28 letter from Delegate Kipke and 16 other delegates complaining about the licensing and inspection process.

Referring to the February 7 patient death at the Germantown clinic, Kipke wrote, “Specifically, if not a patient’s death, what is the trigger for immediately suspending the license of a surgical abortion facility...in order to protect the public?”

The website for American Women’s Services on North Calvert Street (American womenservices.com/office\_locations/md/Baltimore.php) received two Google reviews, both of which rate the clinic “Poor to Fair.”

“The atmosphere was extremely harsh and unprofessional,” wrote one reviewer. “The doctor conducting the procedures would not answer any of my questions, did not look at my medical history or any of the medications I was on...”

The second reviewer wrote, “I went to this clinic in January 2010. The doctor was rude, uncaring and physically abusive. He was rushing and mean....”

“To top it all off, the vacuum hose came off and blood spattered everywhere and I was allowed to see my mutilated fetus.”

# Carhart still doing abortions despite patient's death

On Monday morning, February 11, late-term abortionist LeRoy Carhart showed up for work as usual at Germantown Reproductive Health Services.

"We were shocked!" recalled Ellen Castellano, one of the pro-lifers who regularly pray and sidewalk counsel outside the Germantown clinic.

"We thought, how could he come back after what happened?"

Four days earlier, 29-year-old Jennifer Morbelli, of New Rochelle, N.Y., died at Shady Grove Adventist Hospital in Rockville, Md., after undergoing an abortion performed by Carhart.

Morbelli, a substitute kindergarten teacher, and her husband, Timothy Morbelli, had wanted the child, whom they had already named Madison Leigh.

But when the baby was diagnosed with a fetal anomaly related to some kind of seizure syndrome, her New York physician referred her to Carhart at GRHS.

When Jennifer arrived at the abortion clinic on Sunday, February 3, accompanied by her parents, husband and sister, she was 33 weeks pregnant.

The four-day abortion procedure began that Sunday, with a lethal injection of Digoxin into the baby's heart, causing her to have a fatal heart attack.

On the following Monday and Tuesday, Jennifer returned to the clinic for further treatment, including the insertion of laminaria and administration of Misoprostol to induce dilation of the cervix.

"She looked weak and pale," said Castellano, who stood outside the clinic both days.

When Jennifer left the clinic with her family on Tuesday, said Castellano, "We offered them some post-abortion counseling information. They were not interested."

By Wednesday, February 6, "She actually needed a wheelchair to get from the car into the clinic," said the pro-lifer. "That's not normal."



**LeRoy Carhart has reportedly raised his prices for late-term abortions since Jennifer Morbelli bled to death after he aborted her 33-week-old baby.**

According to Morbelli's death certificate, she was delivered of her dead baby on February 6.

That day, Morbelli remained at the clinic for almost nine hours, much longer than patients usually stay, said Janet Kotowski, manager of Germantown Pregnancy Choices, a pregnancy center directly across from GRHS.

After her delivery, Morbelli and her family returned to their hotel as usual. Carhart boarded an airplane and left the state for Nebraska.

When Morbelli began to experience heaviness in her chest and shortness of breath that night, her family was unable to reach Carhart by phone.

The family drove her to the Shady Grove Adventist Hospital, arriving at about 5:00 a.m. on February 7. Hospital staff were also unable to reach Carhart or anyone at GRHS.

Discovering that Morbelli had severe internal bleeding into her ab-



**Pallbearers leave Holy Name of Jesus Catholic Church in New Rochelle, New York, after Jennifer Morbelli's funeral February 13.**



dominal cavity, they considered an emergency hysterectomy.

But by 10:00 a.m., she had experienced about six “Code Blue” (respiratory or cardiac arrest) incidents. Despite efforts to resuscitate her, she died at 12:25 p.m.

Two weeks later, the Montgomery County Medical Examiner’s office stated that Morbelli bled to death after amniotic fluid in her womb spilled into her bloodstream.

Operation Rescue’s Cheryl Sullenger filed a formal complaint with the Maryland Board of Physicians on February 19, asking for a full investigation of Carhart’s treatment of Morbelli and an emergency suspension of his Maryland medical license.

In the complaint, Sullenger alleges that the 71-year-old abortionist committed “acts of gross negligence” by injuring Morbelli’s uterus, resulting in internal bleeding that caused her death.

Carhart’s absence and inability to be reached as his patient faced life-threatening complications “amounts to patient abandonment,” the complaint alleges.

His conduct also qualifies for second-degree murder charges under Maryland law, under the “depraved heart murder” doctrine, Sullenger states.

The Maryland Board of Physicians, in a March 1 letter to Sullenger, said that the Board would conduct a preliminary investigation

into her allegations, which could take six months or more.

If they find sufficient evidence, they will open the case for a full investigation.

In the meantime, because of the outrage over Morbelli’s death, the number of pro-lifers keeping vigil outside the Germantown clinic has increased, said Castellano.

The pro-lifers are handing out fliers with Morbelli’s picture and story to the women going in for abortions.

“We were told by women that Carhart is claiming that [Morbelli] never called him, which is not true; in other words, he’s blaming her,” said the pro-lifer.

The number of women changing their minds about having an abortion has increased, she said. There were five “saves” in the week of March 4 and two saves the following week.

The pro-lifers talk to Carhart every week that he comes to the clinic, said Castellano.

“He has to walk right by us. We say, ‘How can you say you’re help-

ing women, when women are dying?’ He tells us to go to hell, or that he wishes we would die.”

Carhart and his wife, Mary Lou, think they’re doing God’s will, said the pro-lifer: “She told me herself that God is pro-choice.”

On the Monday following Morbelli’s death, Carhart “had an agitated expression” when he walked past them, she recalled.

In 2005, 19-year-old Christin Gilbert, who had Down Syndrome and was 28 weeks pregnant, died after an abortion done by Carhart in Wichita, Kansas.

Castellano suspects that other women have died after late-term abortions by Carhart.

“Until somebody stops him, he’s just going to keep on going,” she predicted.

“We know he’s raising his prices. A client told us he was charging \$6,000 for a 21-week abortion—almost double what he had been charging.

“Maybe he sees the end coming and he’s trying to make money while he still can.”

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Defend Life holds a demonstration outside the Maryland Board of Physicians headquarters in Baltimore February 27, confronting board members with signs as they drive in to attend a board meeting.

# Swetland to Obama: Respect our religious rights

Americans are currently confronting a national moral crisis that forces us to confront an age-old problem: how do you deal with evil in the world?

"We have an evil set of laws on the books called the Affordable Health Care Act," Msgr. Stuart Swetland told pro-lifers at a Defend Life-sponsored talk in Libertytown, Md., February 15.

"It has some good things in it, but it's being administered by people with evil intent."

It's terrible legislation, said the Mount St. Mary University professor and administrator: first, because Congress, in a cowardly act, basically turned over the legislative power reserved for them in the Constitution to the Obama administration.

"What Congress said, in 2,700 pages, is, we're going to make everyone have a health care insurance policy. But we'll let Health and Human Services define what a qualified policy will be, and whatever they define will have the force of law."

So under so-called "preventive health care," HHS has mandated that health insurance covers contraception, sterilization, and abortion-inducing drugs.

Different groups of people have devised different ways of dealing with the problem of evil, Monsignor observed.

In Jesus' time there were:

- The Pharisees, a group of pious Jews who formed a close-knit community that struggled to live lives of perfection by following the moral law to the letter and not associating with anyone who was impure.

"That's why they were so scandalized by Jesus, because He associated with prostitutes and tax collectors," said Swetland.

- The Zealots, who were so zealous for the rule of Israel, their people and their land that they wanted to drive out the Roman



**The Obama administration wants to force employers to "check their religion at the marketplace door," says Msgr. Stuart Swetland.**

occupiers. "They felt that the way you deal with evil is, you destroy it, you wipe it out," said Monsignor.

- The Sadducees "looked at the Roman occupation, the oppression of the people, and their attitude was, you go along to get along—you can't fight city hall, you can't fight the Roman legions. So you do the best you can in a bad situation; you compromise with evil. Herod was of this group. They be-

came the puppet government for the Romans. They, of course, became powerful and wealthy in the process."

- The Romans' attitude was, *we* define what is good; *we* define what is evil. "This was Pilate's attitude when he talked to Jesus: 'What is truth?' The Roman Empire defines what is truth with their power and might."

Every one of those first-century ideologies exists today, observed Swetland.

Jesus said in His parable about the weeds growing simultaneously in the field along with the wheat, we live in a pluralistic society: there is evil growing alongside good.

So how do we respond?

"We can't respond like the Pharisees and set up a separate enclave of perfection and say, the hell with the rest of the world," said Swetland.

"We can't be like the Zealots and destroy the evildoer, because in the process, we make ourselves like them. We can't compromise with evil like the Sadducees and just go along to get along, as many of our Catholic politicians have done and compromised with the Culture of Death."

Nor can we pretend there is no objective right and wrong, good and evil, as the post-modern relativists do.

"We must respond with the love and compassion of Jesus. We're called to love our enemies and pray for those who persecute us."

But in a world that is a mixed bag of weeds and wheat, we need to distinguish between what moral

theologians call formal and material cooperation with evil.

"We can never *formally* cooperate with evil, which is when we make the evil choice our own," Monsignor explained.

"For example, if I drove the getaway car in a bank robbery, I didn't actually rob the bank, but I chose to cooperate in the robbery."

We can never directly pay for something that we know is intrinsically evil. Parents or grandparents can't pay for an abortion, because they are showing that they *want* that evil.

"But sometimes we *materially* cooperate with evil. As Jesus said in the Sermon on the Mount, even God materially cooperates with evil. God rains on the just and the unjust; His sun shines on the good and the bad," Swetland pointed out.

"So we have to recognize that as an unintended consequence of our doing good things, evil people may take advantage of that for their own ends."

Catholic theology distinguishes between immediate material cooperation, which we cannot do, and mediate material cooperation, which we can do.

"It has to do with the moral proximity to the evil that is done," Monsignor explained.

Okay: A postal carrier cooperates with evil, because while most of the mail is all right or neutral, some of it, such as pornography or death threats, is intrinsically evil.

Not okay: We can't cooperate with anything close to a death-dealing act. You can't be a nurse or receptionist or advertiser for Planned Parenthood. A hospital nurse can't assist in a tubal ligation or sterilization or abortion.

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### If this proposed amendment becomes law, we will have to look at civil disobedience.

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The Church and many Christians have loudly opposed the Health Care Act because it forces employers to formally cooperate with evil.

So the Obama administration has come up with several proposals to placate the opposition. The latest proposal:

- Exempts religious organizations from being forced to pay for contraception and abortion-inducing drugs in their employees' health insurance policies. But it defines a "religious organization" very narrowly as just a house of worship or a parish.
- "Accommodates" a second grouping of employers, such as hospitals, universities and

social service agencies. They must still provide "the bad stuff" to their employees, but indirectly: their insurer has to provide it, at no cost, Swetland noted.

- Forces "for-profit" companies and groups to provide "the bad stuff" in their employees' health insurance policies directly.

"This is terrible social policy," said Monsignor. "Religious liberty is not something you 'accommodate'; it's something you respect. It didn't come from the government, it comes from God.

"We have to say, you don't *accommodate* us; you have to respect our religious rights."

The Obama administration thinks that if it can shut up the Catholic hospitals, universities, charities and bishops by "accommodating" them, it can force this on religious laymen and make them check their religion at the marketplace door, said Monsignor.


"Don't let this happen; don't let the Administration try to divide and conquer us!" he urged. "This is a classic strategy of the Evil One.

"We've got to stand strong, and thank God, the bishops are doing it."


New York Cardinal Timothy Dolan has said that the accommodation is not adequate—it does not protect the religious rights of people operating in the marketplace.

But if this proposed amendment becomes law, we will have to look at civil disobedience, Monsignor predicted.

"What form will it take? We don't know; but we will have to be as clever as serpents but as innocent as doves, because we cannot cooperate with evil."



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# Starting schools to build a Culture of Life:

## How-to advice from someone who's done it

By Joseph W. McPherson

The poet Robert Frost in his poem, "Death of the Hired Man," has one of his characters say, "Home is where when you have to go there, they have to take you in."

It is the sign of the unconditional love that is the basis of true family life. The challenge that we face in the United States basically depends on rebuilding and strengthening authentic family life.

Schools can play a great role in that, but it is important to remember that schools are not primarily the extensions of Daddy the State or even Mother the Church, but of mothers and fathers acting as primary educators.

In one sense, "primary educators" means that parents have more influence on their children than anyone else. This is just a statement of fact, and the influence can be for good or bad. But in a normative sense, it means that parents have the first obligation to shape their children's formation as best they can.

St. Matthew's gospel tells of the mission of St. John the Baptist in preparing for the Messiah, conflating it with that of Elijah the Prophet: "He shall turn the hearts of parents towards their children."

Parents often have inauthentic life-goals that impact on the way they live their family life. If they are interested in status and power, their families are of the "Launching Pad" model.

They are eager to get their children into the best colleges so they can sport the decals on their luxury

cars. They search for schools that will help accomplish this. This is an expensive proposition so they often limit the number of children.

Other families are comfort or pleasure oriented. I call them the "Consumption-Collective" model. For them, trips to Disneyworld or the Caribbean or famous ski resorts, etc., are important. It is difficult and expensive to travel with big families. Facilities and convenience are important in schools for these families.

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**Without effective  
countering, students will  
be confirmed relativists  
by late elementary school.**

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A third type are the "Model Family" model. They want to show they are good and protect their children from the evils of the world. They prove they are good by attacking evil and because this is their mentality, they sometimes find it where it isn't. (This is the type of the Pharisees, which means "the separated.")

They may have big families because that is what "good" people do. Many of these parents favor home-schooling, even when it is beyond their capabilities, or strictly structured schools which loudly proclaim their religion and morality. (This is not a disparagement of "homeschooling" per se.)

The authentic family is based on self-giving love and was given the name "Community of Persons" by

Blessed Pope John Paul II. The mutual self-giving of husband for wife and wife for husband is the basis for this model of family.

It excludes the holding back of even one's fertility, although it recognizes that it is a good that might not be prudent at a given moment, but it is very open to children and usually the families are larger than average, sometimes greatly so.

The parental love incorporates the children into it. And having more children means they have less disposable income and must be creative in their use of resources.

Such a family is not self-enclosed nor does it deal only with those vetted out to be its own type. It shows hospitality. It is not afraid of the World in the same way that the "Model Family" often is.

Not too many years ago it was possible for families to make up for the deficiencies of schools (although the opposite has never been easy.)

With the raging secularism of our society and the elimination of Natural Law from the prevailing thinking, this is not so easy. And without any effective countering, students will become confirmed relativists by the time they are in late elementary school, accepting the various moral ills that are being pushed by the ruling order.

It is unfortunate that so many Catholic schools have not been able to resist pressures from the prevailing secularism, but this is partly because a significant number of families and teachers have bought into it.

This is why the formation of wholesome independent schools by

dedicated parents and citizens is so important.

There is one big obstacle to founding such independent schools: money. Parents have a right to expect public subsidies for their children's education, although this right seems never to be raised. While there are strong arguments for government support of schools, there is none for government management of schools.

In the 1926 Supreme Court case *Pierce v. Society of Sisters*, the Court recognizes the right of parents to choose their children's schools. The Court later made this case the starting point of the infamous "right of privacy" used to strike down all laws prohibiting or limiting abortions in *Roe v. Wade*. But a right that cannot be effectively exercised is no right.

My advice:

1. Start with an organizing committee of three people (I suggest fathers) that meet regularly for planning the project.
2. Organize a group of families, primarily of the "Community of Persons" model, but also from the "Model Family" type. Have picnics, hikes, cultural excursions, talks, under the auspices of the group. Get people excited.
3. Pick a name that perhaps has historical or cultural roots;

design a crest; pick a noble motto in Latin, but don't wear your beliefs on your sleeves by making it too overtly religious. (Remember schools are natural institutions, not supernatural.)

4. Start looking for a place to rent. Protestant churches often have education wings that are underutilized and they can use the money. They often can have a school by right, thus avoiding onerous and expensive zoning changes.

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### **Organize a group of families. Have picnics, hikes, talks, excursions. Get people excited.**

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5. Develop a curriculum. Start with something like the Core Knowledge program developed out of E.D. Hirsch's "Cultural Literacy." Saxon Math is easy to implement. Poetry memorization and good literature are key. Natural History also. Have "festivals" throughout the year based on a theme.
6. Find an educator with some experience, preferably not

one who has been in public schools. Teachers will be relatively easy to find, including parents, who can often work part-time.

7. Set tuition at a realistic rate (not too low) and offer financial aid. Develop an Annual Fund, a Fundraiser, Grandparents' Day to supplement tuition.
8. Raise \$100,000 as a fund to help deal with cash flow, emergencies.
9. Apply to the State Department of Education for a license, which will also involve dealing with local fire and health officials. This takes about six months lead time.
10. Avoid an institutional feel. Avoid small-mindedness by doing unusual things not possible in bigger schools.
11. A school cannot call itself Catholic under Canon Law without the approval of the ordinary. But a school can say it "teaches religion according to the New Catechism of the Catholic Church and has Catholic practices and criteria woven into the fabric of school life."

*Joseph W. McPherson is founding headmaster of Brookewood School in Kensington, Md., and helped found The Heights School in Potomac, Md., The Avalon School in Gaithersburg, Md., and Chelsea Academy in Front Royal, Va.*

*He also served as the Headmaster of The American School in Switzerland, an international boarding school. He is a graduate of Harvard College and Georgetown University Law School. He and his wife Madlyn have six grown children and nine grandchildren.*

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# Foul-mouthed Md. abortionist put on probation

A 71-year-old long-time Maryland abortionist has been placed on a minimum one-year probation by the Maryland State Board of Physicians for unprofessional conduct in the practice of medicine and for practicing with or aiding an unauthorized person in the practice of medicine.

The Board also fined abortionist Abolghassem M. Gohari \$10,000 and ordered him to complete a Board-approved course in appropriate physician-patient relations and communication.

The Board based its December 19 Consent Order on two complaints. In the first complaint, "Patient A" alleged that when she went to Gohari's Gaithersburg, Md., office for a medical abortion in 2009, the doctor was nowhere to be found and she never saw him.

Instead, a medical assistant had her fill out some forms, after which the assistant performed a sonogram to determine the gestational age of the baby.

When the woman asked the assistant if she was qualified to make this assessment, the assistant replied that she "does it all the time."

The medical assistant then gave Patient A a cup containing the RU-486 pill (mifepristone, a drug used to induce early medical abortions).

The woman refused to take the medication, having misgivings about taking it without a doctor's authorization.

Patient A said she went to another doctor's office the next day. The doctor assessed her pregnancy as so far advanced that she needed a surgical abortion.

When she phoned Dr. Gohari to ask for a refund because she never

had the abortion performed, the abortionist became irate, started yelling at her and used profanity.

Gohari admitted to Board investigators that he had permitted his unlicensed assistant to perform the sonogram and administer the RU-486 pill to Patient A in his absence, stating that he allowed his medical assistants to do this "1- to 2 percent of the time" for patients seeking medical abortions.

He also admitted that he did "lose his temper" while speaking to the woman on the phone.

In the second complaint, "Pa-

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## **When she began to cry on the operating table, Gohari became abusive and started yelling at her.**

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tient B" said that when she went to Gohari's office for a surgical abortion in 2011, while she was on the operating table prior to the beginning of the procedure, she became upset and began to cry.

In response, Gohari became belligerent, abusive, and started yelling at her.

At one point, he left the operating room and swore audibly while talking to a medical assistant. He then finished the abortion.

Patient B said she was told to come for a follow-up visit, but refused to do so because of Gohari's abusiveness.

Gohari, who received his Maryland medical license in 1975, completed medical school at the Tehran School of Medical Sciences in 1969 and is board-certified in obstetrics

and gynecology.

His primary office is at the Metropolitan Family Planning Institute on Greenbelt Road in College Park, Md.

He also has offices on Allentown Road in Suitland, Md., and Shady Grove Court in Gaithersburg, both named Metropolitan Family Planning.

"Patient ratings" of the abortionist on various websites are a mixed bag. At [vital.com/doctors](http://vital.com/doctors), a patient commented in January, "He is the best doctor ever—very kind . . ."

A patient in 2012 "found him to be rushed, but caring and kind."

But "Joan" in 2008 said, "My worst experience ever with a doctor. He cursed all the time. Stress you out! You can't relax!"

"Then when you complain, he says you are crazy! That people here are crazy! Asking me if I went to school! I actually have a bachelor's in MIS! He is—I don't even know what to say!"

Google Metropolitan Family Planning Institute, College Park, MD, and under the listing for the clinic website, [mfpclinic.com](http://mfpclinic.com), three "Google Reviews" of the facility give it a "poor to fair" rating.

One of the three "Google Users" commented a year ago, "The College Park location is the worst. They're rude, the place is disgusting and the staff is the worst people in the world."

"The doctor was extremely rude to me during the surgery abortion. He kept yelling at me to shut-up, while I was cramping."

"This was the worst experience. Ladies please do not go there—Save yourself."

# Retta settles FACE lawsuit with Dept. of Justice

Dick Retta is back and he's got a megaphone.

On Wednesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays, the 81-year-old sidewalk counselor stands in front of the Planned Parenthood abortion mill on 16<sup>th</sup> Street in Washington, D.C., as he has done for years, trying to persuade abortion-minded women to let their babies live.

But as of January 24, when a U.S. District Court consent judgment went into effect, Retta can no longer pass through the clinic gate and walk beside a woman up to the door, offering advice and help.

He also may not step into a court-ordered 18-by-6-foot "buffer zone" on the sidewalk in front of the gate.

Hence the acoustic megaphone, which the police have told him it's okay to use.

The U.S. Department of Justice filed suit against Retta in July 2011, charging him with violating the Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances Act (FACE).

The DOJ charged the Rockville, Md., retired engineer with physically obstructing a "patient" from entering the Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington clinic in January of that year.

"Defendant Retta has been among the most vocal and aggressive anti-abortion protesters outside of the clinic," the DOJ Complaint stated.

DOJ demanded that Retta pay \$15,000 in damages to three "victims."

They also asked the court to bar not only Retta, but all pro-life counselors from going past the gate and within 20 feet leading up to the gate, thus creating a large "bubble zone"



**Dick Retta offers information to a woman in front of the Planned Parenthood clinic in Washington, D.C., in April 2012.**

that would severely decrease their ability to counsel women going in for abortions.

When the DOJ suit was first brought, said Retta, "I had an optimistic outlook. I thought, this is a snap!"

The American Center for Law and Justice agreed to represent him pro bono.

"First, we went to discovery, and then depositions," said Retta.

"I thought I came out pretty good. Even some of the escorts backed me up. They had said that I made the client cry. But one escort said, 'Oh no, that wasn't what she was crying about! She was crying because her boyfriend didn't come.'"

Retta knew, however, that litigation has its risks, and that he could have been 100 percent right and still lost his case. He had a few strikes against him.

First was the Planned Parent-

hood video of Retta allegedly blocking the woman from entering the clinic.

Even though Retta thought that a careful scrutiny of the video revealed that a Planned Parenthood escort was actually pushing the client to go in, the first impression it gave was that Retta was blocking the woman.

Secondly, Retta's wording on his weekly online report, "16<sup>th</sup> Street Chronicles," was unfortunate.

"What I wrote was, I *did* block her, but I crossed in her path so I could talk to the escort."

The client had actually decided *not* to have an abortion and was coming out of the clinic, and the escort had grabbed her by the arm and was trying to get her back in, said Retta.

"I told the escort, 'Get your hands off her,'" he explained.

**See SETTLE, page 19**



# DEFEND LIFE

*Proclaiming the Culture of Life and  
Fighting the Culture of Death since 1987*

DefendLife.Org

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[www.DefendLife.Org](http://www.DefendLife.Org)  
Jack Ames, Director  
410-337-3721  
[Jack@DefendLife.Org](mailto:Jack@DefendLife.Org)

*April 7, 2013 Anno Domini  
Divine Mercy Sunday*



**Dear Friend of Defend Life,**

**Mike Schwartz**, one of the greatest heroes in the history of our **PRO-LIFE** movement, was called to his eternal reward on February 4 at age 63. His real name was Duffy, but when his mother remarried, he took the name of his step-father and became Mike Schwartz.

When it came time to apply to college, Mike received a large packet from the **University of Dallas**. Mike noticed that some of the contributors to his favorite magazine **Triumph** were also faculty members at Dallas. That clinched it! The University of Dallas is where he attended.

Shortly after graduation, Mike came to work for that **same Triumph magazine** located in Warrenton, Virginia. He worked there with such heroes as **Brent Bozell** and **Warren Carroll**. While in the Washington area, Mike organized the first **RESCUE** in the history of the **PRO-LIFE** movement at the old **GW Hospital** in Washington which was performing abortions even prior to **Roe v. Wade**. In **1973**, he also was a founding member of the **March for Life** along with the legendary **Nellie Gray**.

Shortly thereafter, Mike went to work in Milwaukee as Field Director for the **Catholic League for Religious and Civil Rights**. In that capacity, he traveled widely giving talks and doing much to attract future **PRO-LIFE** activists such as **Liz Dever**, now a home-schooling mother of **7** in Baltimore. He also did extensive research on **Margaret Sanger**, the founder of **Planned Parenthood**. Nobody in our entire movement knew any more about the evil machinations of Planned Parenthood than Mike Schwartz.

In 1986, he returned to the Washington area to work with **Paul Weyrich** at the **Committee for the Free Congress**. In that capacity, Mike co-hosted a satellite TV program on the Empowerment Network.

Mike was an absolutely fantastic speaker. He was compelling and convincing. He never used a note. I am sure Mike had a photographic memory! He spoke at least **7** times for **DEFEND LIFE** alone here in Maryland.

He worked many years on Capitol Hill orchestrating **PRO-LIFE** legislation. His last position was as Chief of Staff for **Doctor/Senator Tom Coburn** from Oklahoma. Listen to the tribute Tom Coburn gave to Mike on the floor of the U.S. Senate which is posted at **YouTube.com**. It will bring tears to your eyes. I believe numerous books will be written about the life of this great and yet extremely humble man!

Here is just one example of Mike's genius. Mike had long been aware of the fact that the **Homosexual Network** had infiltrated the Church. In **1989**, a young man who had been sexually abused by a priest years earlier when he was an altar boy in San Francisco was willing to go public when he learned that this priest was now the **Bishop of Honolulu**.

One of the Bishops' two annual meetings in 1989 was to be held at a hotel in Baltimore. During that Bishops' Conference, Mike arranged a TV news conference at that same hotel. He wanted to publicize that this man had been sexually abused years earlier by a priest who was now the Bishop of Honolulu. Unfortunately, the Bishops kept their heads in the sand, completely ignoring this startling revelation. **Keep in mind that the ultimate story of priestly sexual abuse in the Church did not break until 2002, 13 years later.** How tragic that the American Bishops did not heed Mike Schwartz's prophetic warning. Instead, they shunned him when they saw him at this and future Bishops' Conferences. As the expression goes, **no good deed goes unpunished.**

Well done, Mike! We miss you already! **Pray that Mike will become a Patron Saint for our movement!**

Long Live Christ Our King!

*Jack Ames*  
Jack Ames, Director

Enclosure





## Former Truth Tour heroine chooses life of prayer

Joan Walsh burst into frightened tears when a state trooper arrested and handcuffed her, along with 17 others, at Defend Life's Face the Truth Tour stop in Bel Air, Md., August 1, 2008.

But she was all smiles as she made her first profession of vows at the Poor Clare Monastery in Alexandria, Va., on February 2.

The Poor Clares are a Franciscan cloistered, contemplative order that observes an intense regime of poverty, prayer and penance, and strictly limits contact with the outside world.

After her first profession of vows, Joan, now named Sister Mary Damiana of the King of Glory, may send just two letters and receive two brief visits from her family a year.

"For my sister, raised in a family of doers and go-getters, of passionate, loud, headstrong Irish Catholics, it is what you might call a



**Sister Damiana makes her first profession of vows at the Poor Clare Monastery.**

slight change of atmosphere," wrote Christine Dhanagom, Joan's older

sister, on LifeSiteNews.com March 6.

Joan, then 18, was one of 16 pro-lifers who spent the night in crowded jail cells, praying and singing hymns, for peacefully exercising their First Amendment right of free speech on the Truth Tour.

Joan was part of the tour's "core team," helping her older sister, Truth Tour Director Beth Walsh, in the five-day trek across the state in the grueling summer heat.

The jailed pro-lifers were charged with failure to obey a lawful order, loitering, and disorderly conduct.

Eleven days later, the State of Maryland dropped all the charges against them.

Joan was one of the nine arrestees who sued the Maryland State Police for wrongful arrest.

The case was settled out of court in their favor in 2012, with the Defend Lifers receiving \$385,000 in damages.

A graduate of Franklin High School in Reisterstown, the Owings Mills teen "did all the things teenagers do," said her mother, Irene Walsh.

"She played basketball, was on Facebook, loved Starbucks. So in some ways we were surprised she was considering a religious vocation.

"But by the time she was in the ninth grade, I was aware of it. We talked about it quite a bit."

Joan often went to Sacred Heart Church in Glyndon, the family's parish, and spent hours in quiet prayer.

"She explored different orders—



**Joan Walsh is handcuffed by a Maryland State Trooper during the 2008 Face the Truth Tour.**

**See VOWS, page 18**

## Book Review

# Nativity changes course, creates controversy—and prospers

By Diane Levero

*Timonium Tim is a good guy. If you met Tim at a party, you'd like him. He's educated, well-dressed and successful.*

*Tim is married with children. He has a beautiful home and a comfortable lifestyle. He drives a nice car.*

*On Sunday mornings, Tim is at the golf course, or maybe at M&T Stadium watching a Ravens game. But wherever he is, he's definitely not at church.*

*Tim is culturally Catholic, the product of a parish religious ed program or a parochial school. But he is not a believer.*

*Maybe Tim's attitude toward God, faith and church is one of indifference; but more likely, it's one of cynicism and contempt.*

Fr. Michael White and Tom Corcoran talk a lot about “Timonium Tim” in their new book, hot off Ave Maria Press, *Rebuilt: Awakening the Faithful, Reaching the Lost, Making Church Matter*.

(Full disclosure: My grandson, Tony Levero, helped edit the book last year while a senior at Loyola University Maryland.)

Father White is pastor of Church of the Nativity in Timonium, a moderately affluent suburb north of Baltimore. Corcoran is lay associate to the pastor at Nativity.

When the two men came to Nativity in the late '90s, they found a church that was ageing very ungracefully:

- A survey of the congregation revealed that 96 percent of the



**Fr. Michael White and Tom Corcoran have written *Rebuilt*, a book about the dramatic—and very controversial—changes at Church of the Nativity in Timonium.**

parishioners identified “convenient parking” as the No. 1 reason they were there.

- Kids hated the religious education program.
- There was no youth ministry; teens and young adults simply didn't come to church.
- Weekend Masses were moribund and depressing.
- The music was painfully, ear-achingly bad.
- Rotating priest-celebrants guaranteed an uneven quality of preaching.
- The small staff was deeply dysfunctional.
- Parishioners treated clergy and staff like employees—sometimes with hostility, often with indifference or condescension.
- Complaint was the standard

form of communication.

- A new non-denominational church nearby was already twice the size of Nativity and growing. About 60 percent of their congregation were former Catholics, including the pastor.
- For two decades, Nativity was losing 30 to 50 people a year. Nobody was replacing them. In other words, Nativity was dying.

For five years, White and Corcoran (who began at Nativity as youth minister) tried every standard, time-worn trick in the book to turn things around.

They updated the religious ed program and held lots of events for kids—breakfast with Santa, Easter egg hunts, puppet shows, plays.

They started a youth ministry program, which was really a youth *entertainment* program, with an endless array of activities: ski trips, movie nights, lock-ins and dances.

They recruited musical talent to provide professional quality music in a variety of styles; offered fellowship programs like receptions, bus trips and lectures; hosted complimentary lunches for funerals and coffee service after daily Mass.

None of it worked.

They didn't understand then that they were dealing in their church with what they later realized was a "consumer culture."

Their parishioners were "demanding religious consumers." They gave little or nothing of themselves to the church, but made ceaseless, insatiable demands.

Father White's "moment of truth" came on the final night of "Family Friendly Fridays."

For six Fridays during Lent, he and the staff had provided a free dinner, child care, after-dinner entertainment, and then a featured speaker.

"We offered live music and even a wine bar," Father recalled. "Hundreds and hundreds of people attended."

Father was helping serve dinner when a lady approached him to complain about the *free* food. She was loud, nasty and mean. A chorus of like-minded people joined in and added their complaints to hers.

"Something snapped," said White; "some artery exploded."

It wasn't just the lack of gratitude. It was the fact that they were working as hard as they could, and it never made any difference.

White and Corcoran considered themselves "to be obedient to the Magisterium, entirely orthodox in our Catholicism and, in fact, con-

servative by disposition. We would never compromise our faith."

But something had to change.

So they did the unthinkable: they began to study the methods of successful *Protestant* churches, mostly the evangelical ones that were prospering and growing.

*Rebuilt* is about the slow and painful process they went through to change the consumer culture at Nativity: to start challenging the regular parishioners (the "churchpeople") and seek out the "lost people" in their community (the archetypical "Timonium Tim").

*Rebuilt* is no-holds barred, brutally honest, and often bitingly funny.

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### **Many parishioners walked out— and never came back.**

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Critical to their effort was a change in focus from one of "maintenance"—dispensing the Mass and other sacraments to a stagnant, diminishing group of demanding, indifferent churchpeople—to one of mission.

Their mission? To obey Jesus' "great command": to love God with all your heart, soul and mind, and to love your neighbor as yourself—and His "Great Commission"—to go and "make disciples of all nations."

From this central mission came substantial changes.

Bands made up of talented parish volunteers play current "praise and worship" music because it's the style of music engaging to "Tim" and his family (yet Latin is sung during the most solemn parts of the Mass).

A volunteer Tech Team uses 21<sup>st</sup>

century technology to improve the audio and visual impact at Mass, projecting the service and readings on 9-by-16-foot screens on each side of the altar.

Father White gives homilies (he calls them "messages") in a series, developing one consistent, purposeful theme.

"Small groups" of six to ten people provide friendship and pastoral care for one another.

Instead of never-ending fundraisers—dinners and bull roasts, dances and fairs ("The Church of Christ is *not* a casino, caterer, or carnival"), Nativity encourages planned, or "percentage" giving as one's gift to God.

Parishioners shoulder a myriad of "ministries" within the church, from welcoming newcomers, to operating a café, to handling most of the office work, to church maintenance.

Missionary work outside Nativity has included providing a water system to an impoverished Nigerian community and aiding an earthquake-damaged parish in Haiti.

People, especially "churchpeople," don't like change. And change inevitably means conflict. White and Corcoran were bombarded with criticism, backbiting, even slander.

Many parishioners walked out and never came back.

The two admit to frequent mistaken steps and programs that failed.

But gradually, newcomers began to fill the church to overflowing.

Since White and Corcoran began their new mission in 2004, weekly attendance at Mass has almost tripled, from 1,400 to over 4,000.

I went to Mass at Nativity one Sunday. I was amazed by the

**See REBUILT, page 18**



# Bill to outlaw abortion after 20 weeks is good *first* step

By Bob Brown

A bill submitted to the Maryland state legislature could protect pre-born children who are 20 weeks and older from abortion, based on scientific evidence that pain is experienced by these babies in the womb.

As pro-life groups work hard in many states to pass similar bills, we need to keep in mind that this legislation, although it represents a positive step, can save just 1.5 percent of the preborn baby population at risk for abortion.

That's one out of every 67 little girls and boys. In the United States, 98.5 percent of abortions occur *before* 20 weeks. Should we win this skirmish, we would still have a great battle before us.

If a Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection (PCUCP) Act *were* to be enacted in *all* 50 states, 18,000 pre-born baby girls and boys would be spared annually, while almost 1.2 million would still die each year at the hands of abortionists.

But so far, only Nebraska, Kansas, Idaho, Oklahoma, Alabama, Georgia and Louisiana have enacted such a law.

Just weeks ago, Arkansas' legislators overrode the governor's vetoes of PCUCP and other important pro-life legislation. North Dakota's State Senate passed a similar bill in February that was then to move on to the House.

Using 2008 federal government census figures and state abortion rates (the latest that I could find), an estimated 1,325 fewer babies are aborted each year in the seven PCUCP states.

In Arkansas and North Dakota, the combined number of an-

nual abortions will be reduced from about 6,300 to about 6,200 when (and if) PCUCP legislation is implemented in those two states. And *if* the PCUCP Act were ever to become law in Maryland, approximately 525 (1.5 percent of 35,000) preborn children would finally have legal protection.

I am overemphasizing the underwhelming numbers for fact and focus. First, I think that some peo-

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**Should we win this  
skirmish, we would still  
have a great battle  
before us.**

---

ple read "ban at 20 weeks" and conclude errantly that PCUCP would cut the abortion rate in half, because 20 weeks is half of a normal 40-week pregnancy. Not so: just 1.5 percent, not 50 percent, of abortions would be prevented. That's three out of every 200.

Second, in whatever state this legislation is passed, I hope that the victory celebration lasts no longer than a minute and a half, for we will have much work to do on behalf of the vast majority of preborn babies who would still be without legal protection.

Every person whom God creates is precious, and every life rescued *is* worth celebrating. But if we do pass PCUCP legislation in Maryland, how should we follow it up? What's next? My answer will come after a rundown of the strategies that pro-life organizations typically use to reduce the abortion rate.

Pro-life groups and legislators

can ask the state health department to impose stronger regulations on the abortion industry. A few small, independent clinics may close, but I fear that abortion-minded women will simply go elsewhere, driven into the wide and fatal embrace of Planned Parenthood and other national chains that have the money to pay for the higher licensing fees, better equipment, and increase in staffing that regulations require.

I should add that, according to a completely reliable source, *all* of Planned Parenthood's abortions—as a matter of national policy—are before 20 weeks. Their stated upper limit is 19.6 weeks, by which they mean 19 weeks and 6 days. This odd "coincidence" should be investigated further.

Pro-life organizations may also continue to push for restrictions to abortion access: waiting periods, parental notification laws, etc. Although they have had some benefit in other states, none of these is effectively in place in Maryland because of the lack of such laws and/or because of giant loopholes.

Now, a great victory would be sonogram legislation, in which an abortionist would offer (or, better yet, require) a woman to see a sonogram of her still-alive preborn baby. Four out of five abortion-minded women keep their babies after viewing ultrasound images of them. (Such a bill is before the Maryland legislature this year as well.)

In my opinion, pro-life groups in every state should be energetically working on ultrasound legislation and education, because ultrasounds have a proven track record of saving lives. Resistance is fierce, however, since sonogram legislation is what

PP and NARAL fear (and hate) the most.

Sonograms aren't simply a threat to their bottom line. Sonograms expose abortion for what it is, casting a light on the shameful practice that the abortion industry and its legislative henchmen are desperately trying to keep in the dark: the savage murder of a human child.

Our legislators need to be pressured, and the general public needs to be educated—and vice versa. For example, in front of every abortion clinic and at every march and demonstration, the sign that should be raised highest is, "Demand to see the ultrasound!"

Pro-lifers should not hesitate to support the PCUCP Act in Maryland or in any other state, but we have to remember that it's a very, very long way from an end to the war on preborn children.

The point of all of this is not to diminish the valiant efforts to pass PCUCP, but instead to make a plea to *you*. I believe that the success of pro-life organizations in the future will be much more heavily dependent on grassroots efforts than in the past, especially in Maryland. Even where PCUCP is successful, 20 weeks may turn out to be a line in the sand that is difficult to erase.

In short, pro-life organizations won't be able to rescue the 98.5 percent *unless* we get help. The answer to my question, "What's next?" is *teamwork*.

Christian business owners must reach out to the nurses, secretaries,

and cleaning staff at abortion clinics and offer them jobs: "Come work for us. You don't have to work in that place any longer." I think that many abortion clinic employees want to be rescued, too.

Pro-life students must make saving babies the focus of their life's academic studies and the goal of their careers.

We have all read about scientists who, since they were kids, wanted to go into medicine just to find the cure for cancer or AIDS. We need a generation of pro-life graduate students who enter scientific research fields, medicine, law or politics solely to prove (to the satisfaction of a hard-hearted culture) and pro-

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### **Finally, Christian couples need to get married and have lots of 'brilliant' babies—shining images of God.**

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tect the humanity of the preborn child from conception. There are brilliant insights yet to be made.

Pastors and youth ministers must have the courage to preach and teach sexual purity. They must not shy away from dicey words like "pornography" and "abortion."

These shepherds must also educate themselves on the moral and physiological destructiveness of contraception and, in turn, convey these truths to their flocks. Pastors must also set the example for their parishioners, modeling prayers to end abortion.

Churches, instead of spending money on temporal trappings, should invest in the eternal by buying up property in the inner cities

near residential neighborhoods. They should build crisis pregnancy centers and plant more churches, out of which they can operate *free* daycare centers and *free schools* so that working women and families will never again see children as a burden. The Church—if everyone tithed ten percent of gross—would have *plenty* of money to do this.

Philosophers, artists and teachers, strengthened in the fellowship of godly congregations and undergirded by sound Biblical teaching, must generously infuse pro-life truths into their work outside the church walls.

Finally, Christian couples need to get married and have lots of babies—through natural birth and/or adoption. They must make it a priority to raise their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord (Ephesians 6:4), building God's kingdom, not a terrestrial castle. There are brilliant infants yet to be made. ("Brilliant" means beautiful, shining images of God.)

These suggested courses of action will create a culture of life, a by-product of which will be pro-life victories in state legislatures.

#### SOURCES

[http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb\\_induced\\_abortion.html](http://www.guttmacher.org/pubs/fb_induced_abortion.html)

<http://www.census.gov/compendia/statab/2012/tables/12s0103.pdf>

*Editor's note: As Defend Life went to press, the Pain-Capable Unborn Child Protection Act (SB 456 and HB 1312) had been heard in the Senate Finance Committee March 20 and the House Health and Government Operations Committee March 15.*

*The Ultrasound Options bill (SB726) was heard in the Senate Finance Committee March 20.*

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## In My Humble Opinion

# Let's look at the gun control/pro-life connection

By Janet Baker

At first glance, you might find it odd to see an article about gun control in a magazine dedicated to combating abortion and promoting a culture of life.

You might also take umbrage at my belief that the current push by many Democrats to increase gun control laws fits hand-in-hand with their progressive anti-life agenda.

First, let's take a look at a statement on gun control on the Maryland Catholic Conference webpage: [mdcathcon.org/library/resources/Documents/2013LobbyNight/13-GunViolence.pdf](http://mdcathcon.org/library/resources/Documents/2013LobbyNight/13-GunViolence.pdf).

It very conveniently reiterates main talking points of the progressives in political control, such as an "assault weapons" ban and clip size limit to 10 rounds.

This document was penned by MCC staffer Chris Ross. The MCC staff directory states that Ross "served as campaign manager for successful primary and general campaigns."

It seemed odd to me that while the MCC boasted of these successful campaigns, they didn't divulge the identities of the candidates. However, his *linkedin* page does. He worked for "Democrats for a Better Baltimore" in 2006, for District 46 Democratic candidates Peter Hammen and Brian McHale.

Both voted to facilitate the gay lifestyle in Maryland. No wonder the MCC was so coy about the candidates he helped to elect. These gay-pandering delegates for whom Ross worked are testimony that



Ross cannot be deemed a reliable voice of Catholic social teaching.

Toward the end of his MCC paper, Ross cites writings by the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops as though they constituted Catholic dogma. Pope Benedict XVI pointed out that local Catholic conferences have *no* canonical authority to determine what constitutes Church teaching. Thus, it's simply incorrect to say that the Church has a "position on gun control." At best, what is stated is simply the *opinion* of some USCCB officials.

The MCC and USCCB issue statements claiming that they are Church teaching when they have no canonical right to arrogate that authority to themselves.

Let's look at a statement that *can* be considered authentic Church teaching. It reads, "Legitimate defense can not only be a right but a grave duty for someone responsible for another's life, the common good of the family or of the state. Unfortunately, it happens that the need to render the aggressor incapable of causing harm sometimes involves taking his life. In this case, the fatal outcome is attributable to the aggressor whose action brought it about." This comes from *Evangelium Vitae*, Section 55.

So there you have it—a papal

encyclical reflecting the Magisterium's teaching that self-defense is not only a right but a "grave duty." Does it not follow that if the Church teaches the necessity of self-defense, she also teaches that one has the right to have the means of fulfilling that "grave duty"?

Does it not also make sense that the means of self-defense must be adequate to meet the aggressions that occur in the 21<sup>st</sup> century? In other words, the person defending himself must be able to possess, without impingement or restriction, weapons that he will need to counter those brought against him.

Who is competent to determine what means a citizen must be allowed to have at his disposal? The answer is very simple—only the citizen. No governmental official or body has that competency. That arrogation is forbidden to them by the Second Amendment to the United States Constitution: "[T]he right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed." Period.

It is the progressive elements in our government who are seeking to curtail the abilities of citizens to provide for their own defense. These are the same people who are attempting to tell us what to eat (especially in New York City), what light bulbs to use in our homes, etc.

They're also telling pregnant women that they should feel free (or compelled in some cases) to slaughter their own preborn babies. A common theme runs through all this. The progressives, largely being anti-life atheists, seek to make the state (which they control) into a



de facto deity controlling the lives of all citizens.

Perhaps the progressive elements are not only seeking to make us dependent on them for defense against common criminals. Might it be that they are trying to remove our ability to defend ourselves against—them?

Consider that the framers of the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights had just thrown off the shackles of an oppressive government. They crafted the Bill of Rights to limit the powers of the government and to provide for remedies against any governmental abuses. One of the purposes of the Second Amendment was to allow the citizens the means to defend themselves against a government run amok.

Can anyone doubt that in many ways the federal government is now such an entity? Consider that drones can now fly amongst us, spying on us with the capacity to kill us. Consider that the Department of Homeland Security secured 2,700 armored vehicles; are there really that many terrorists in the U.S., or do conservative citizens fit their definitions of “terrorists”?

Judging from the way the Jus-

tice Department is lashing out at pro-life sidewalk counselors, it’s not far-fetched to presume the latter. Witness the recent filibuster conducted by Sen. Rand Paul, occasioned by Eric Holder’s astounding claim that Obama has the “constitutional right” to kill citizens on his own authority without due process.

It took 13 hours of Paul’s filibuster to convince Holder to begrudgingly rescind his outrageous claim. We should have seen this coming when *Roe v. Wade* came to pass, for when a nation’s government officially disavows its obligations to God, it begins its usurpation of His prerogatives and its metamorphism into tyranny.

The USCCB, overrun with liberal and progressive bureaucrats (and accepting many federal dollars for various programs), obediently takes up the gun-control talking points as their own. On this matter,

### REBUILT, from page 14

packed church and the many volunteers graciously welcoming everyone and answering questions at an “information table.”

I was also surprised at the large number of men in the congregation, including lots of young men with their wives and young kids—and high school-age boys serving Mass (something that doesn’t happen at my church, where virtually all the altar servers are girls).

How did White and Corcoran do this? Well, you’ll have to read the book. They’ll walk you through it step by step, interspersing their story with sections titled “You Can Do This! Steps You Can Take in Your Parish.”

You have to read it—and see it—to believe it.

as on so many others, they should be vehemently opposed by all pro-life Catholics, for “gun control” will only result in facilitation of death and evil.

### VOWS, from page 12

visited them—it’s called ‘nun runs,’” her mother recalled. “She also volunteered at the Little Sisters of the Poor in Catonsville.”

In September 2009 she entered the Poor Clare Monastery in Alexandria as a postulant. She was 19.

“She felt that was where God was calling her—that she was being called to a life of prayer,” said Irene.

“We have always supported her 100 percent. But emotionally, it was a mixed bag,” she admitted. “It was pretty rough the first year; we really missed her a lot.”

Christine observed that the cloistered religious who lead lives of prayer are a powerful reminder to pro-life activists that any “success” or “saves” they achieve are due only to prayers that call down heavenly graces, not their own ingenuity.

“The lives of those who have chosen Sister Damiana’s path stand as a witness to those of us called to the battlefield,” she wrote.

“We all have a divinely ordained part to play, and for most of us that will mean remaining in the world.

“But all of our work, however noble, will come to nothing unless we are truly possessed of the conviction that nothing comes to anything but through the grace of God.”

*Pro-lifers may contact the nuns at Poor Clare Monastery with prayer requests, including prayers for specific “turnarounds” at abortion clinics. Phone 703-768-4918, or write to Poor Clare Monastery, 2505 Stone Hedge Drive, Alexandria, VA, 22306.*

### THINKING LONG-TERM?

Remembering **DEFEND LIFE** in your will shows a serious commitment to strengthening and continuing what **DEFEND LIFE** stands for!

The following language is suggested for making such a bequest: **“I give to DEFEND LIFE, INC., a Maryland not-for-profit corporation, whose address is PO Box 5427, Baltimore, MD 21285, the sum of \$\_\_\_\_\_, to be used for the benefit of DEFEND LIFE.”**



## Keep abortion out of Ireland

Defend Life led a Keep Ireland Abortion Free campaign at Baltimore's St. Patrick's Day Parade on March 10. Defend Lifers met near the Washington Monument, donned special green pro-life T-shirts, then walked through the crowds, informing people that Ireland is on the brink of legalizing abortion. They handed out post cards to be sent to Ireland, urging the Irish government to keep Ireland pro-life.

### SETTLE, from page 10

"If I lost, not only would I lose \$15,000, but not just me, but *every* pro-life counselor would have a 20-foot bubble zone."

There was also the threat that if he decided to go to trial, the DOJ might get an injunction from the judge barring all pro-life counselors immediately from the 20-foot bubble zone until the trial—an injunction that could drag out for a year or more.

"I talked to my own people," said Retta. "They said, 'Dick, you're taking a chance. If you lose, we've got that 20-foot bubble zone forever. We might be shut down completely.'"

DOJ and Retta eventually decided to compromise on the disputed claims in order to fully resolve the case. Neither side admitted liability nor paid any money. The parties signed the consent judgment on January 14. After the settlement was reached, the judge dismissed the case.

Considering the risks to the pro-

life community, Retta views this as a good result because it enables them to continue their work for the best interests of the unborn babies.

In spite of the lawsuit, Retta had never really stopped sidewalk counseling at the abortion facility, except for a several-week hiatus for family matters around Christmas.

Since he came back on Ash Wednesday, he said, things have been going well.

"I haven't had that many saves myself," he admitted. "But in my first few weeks back, we have had 23 saves."

Retta made one himself on February 28.

"The man was adversarial, but I was talking to him over the megaphone. They wanted an ultrasound. I said, 'We'll get you one free!'"

The man took up his offer, and the couple left without getting an abortion.

The megaphone/buffer arrangement actually helps Retta's efforts in some ways.

He has almost no interaction with the "deathscorts," as the pro-

lifers have dubbed them. They used to block him and talk over him when he tried to talk to clients.

But now, he said, "They're helpless when I get on the megaphone."



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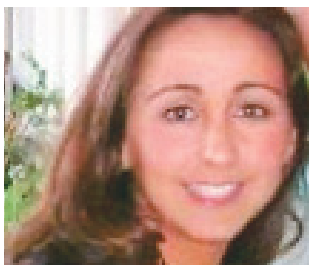
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**Read tribute by Jack Ames on page 11.**

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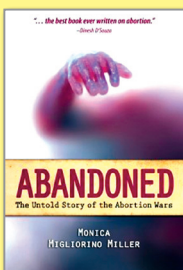
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**St. Mary’s Lyceum**

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**For more information, visit *DefendLife.org***