

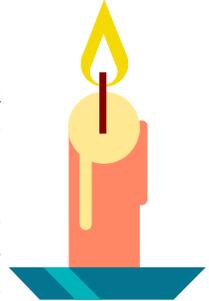
## Join Us on the Court Square! Vigil on January 24

In observance of the 40-year anniversary of the Supreme Court's Roe v. Wade decision permitting abortion across the United States, Right to Life will hold its annual candlelight vigil on Thursday evening, January 24, beginning at 7pm.

We will gather in the basement of the courthouse for an opening prayer and reflection, followed by a procession around the courthouse. Please bring wind-protected candles or other illumination and park across from the court square so that the procession will be fully visible to the community.

Buses traveling to the National March for Life will depart following the vigil. Bus riders wishing to park overnight may use the public city lot two blocks north of the courthouse, located between Ohio and Main.

It is long past time that our nation reinstated protection of the unborn. We need to persist in our efforts to bring attention to this injustice. Please join us for this important time of prayer and witness.



### Mark your calendar

- Deadline for submissions to the February newsletter: January 21.
- Board meeting: January 8, 7 pm.
- Candlelight Vigil: January 24, 7pm.

### Diaper Fund

It takes about \$100 per month to cover our diaper expenses. An anonymous donor again provided funds for diapers this month. Thank you for your amazing support of this part of our outreach.

### Clothing center report

We served 148 people during the month of November, of whom 42 received free items, and 6 took literature.

Right to Life of Shelby County is a 501(c)(3) educational and service organization. All donations are fully tax-deductible.

## Jordan to Ohio Pro-Lifers: Be "Happy Warriors"

The Ohio Right to Life Society's annual meeting was a huge success! Over 1,000 grassroots members participated in our first-ever Teletown Hall. Following the invocation by ORTL's Executive Director Rev. John Coats, President Mike Gonidakis along with Board Chair Marshall Pitchford continued the meeting with an encouraging and heartfelt greeting.

ORTL's guest of honor, pro-life Congressman Jim Jordan, presented a comprehensive overview of the pro-life movement and its recent successes in America. Jordan quickly acknowledged and gave thanks for ORTL's efforts in keeping the pro-life movement aggressive along with every supporter, member and volunteer involved. After mentioning various positive victories, not only in Ohio, but across the country, Jordan emphasized that "truth always wins in the end."

Congressman Jordan encouraged participants to strive to be "happy warriors"—warriors who present the truth with a smile and who know that the truth is on their side. Looking ahead to 2013, Jordan encouraged ORTL and the pro-life movement to continue "to keep the good faith, stay focused and good things will happen." Continued on page 2

Remember to check us out online at [www.shelbycountyrctl.org](http://www.shelbycountyrctl.org), to see additional photos of RTL events, to view back issues of newsletters, to update your e-mail information, and much more.



## March for Life Bus Trip Sign-Up

Two buses from Shelby County Right to Life will be traveling to the National March for Life in Washington, D.C. The buses depart following the Candlelight Vigil -- approximately 8pm -- on Thursday, January 24. Participants will attend a youth rally and Catholic Mass on Friday morning, followed by the March for Life, an annual, non-denominational gathering of tens of thousands of pro-lifers that takes place in the heart of our nation's capital. Buses will return early in the morning on Saturday the 26th.

A fee of \$80 covers transportation (bus ride and metro tickets). Anyone wishing to join the trip should call Bonnie York -- 937-526-4388 -- immediately.

## Membership Letter Coming Soon

Your annual membership letter should be in your mailbox in early January. Please watch for it and return it as promptly as possible. The success of Right to Life is totally dependent on your membership, your volunteer support, and your financial donations.

If you don't receive a letter by the end of January, please contact us. Thank you in advance for your ongoing dedication and support.

*we wish you and yours a new year filled with many blessings.*

## Jordan at Ohio Right to Life Meeting Continued from page 1

The Congressman continued his speech reminding Ohioans that despite Barack Obama's re-election, Ohio continued to remain a pro-life state. Congressman Jordan counseled ORTL to strive to keep up the good work and he stated that if the mainstream media isn't saying anything bad about you, then you are not doing anything good.

Wrapping up our 2012 annual meeting was ORTL's Legislative Director Stephanie Krider who recounted the many legislative successes ORTL has seen in Ohio within the past two years. Krider assured the participants that 2013 promises aggressive and full legislative action.

In closing, election instructions were presented for a slate of Member Trustees and the Chairman, Pitchford, ended on a note of humility and gratitude.

Thank you to the 1,000-plus members who participated in our annual meeting. May God bless each of you this Christmas season.

Ohio Right to Life press release, December 3, 2012.

## What Do Our Laws Tell Us About American Values?



Eagle eggs. Legal punishment for taking or destroying: \$5,000 fine or one year in prison.

Source: US Fish and Wildlife Service



Unborn human baby. Legal punishment for destroying: none.\*

\*Unless against the will of the mother.

## They Said “No”: When 12 Nurses Refused to Do Abortions

The nurses of the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey Same Day Surgery Unit are a lively mixture of backgrounds and personalities. Beryl, a native of Kenya, is a quiet ICU specialist who's been with the hospital for over 15 years. Fe Esperanza Racpan Vinoya, a veteran of the ER and ICU, is from the Philippines, and speaks with cheerful delight about her love for music and for her church. Lorna Mendoza has been a nurse for 25 years, at UMDNJ for more than a dozen, and takes both her work and her Christian faith very seriously. “We high-five each other,” Beryl says, “Most of us are there 12 hours, and that is a good portion of your day. It is important that you get along and feel relaxed and free.” “It's a noble job,” says Fe. “Very fulfilling... a healing profession. Everything you do for the patient just makes them feel better, and satisfies my entire being, because I've helped someone.”

All operations on this unit are elective – that is, the patient chooses to have a specific procedure done: a tonsillectomy, a hernia repair, the removal of cataracts. And, sometimes, an abortion. Not the kind of abortion where the mother's life is in danger, Beryl says. “They just choose to end it. These are people who go to the doctor and say, ‘Look, I don't want this pregnancy.’” “To some, it's like contraception,” Fe says. “Five or six times, you see them there. I always tell them, ‘I'll be praying for you, and I hope that this is the last time.’”

The change came in September of 2011, with the news that a peer was being promoted. The new assistant manager announced that – since she and others had to help with abortions – she saw no reason why every nurse shouldn't help. Hospital officials agreed, and passed a new, mandatory policy to make it so. The assistant manager quickly set up a training program that would give each nurse on the unit hands-on experience in how to assist with and clean up after abortions. “As long as you work here,” she told the 12 nurses who openly protested, “you're going to have to do it. If you don't, you're going to be fired or transferred out.”

“We were all shocked,” Fe says. “All these years I've been a nurse, I was never told to help kill children. But the managers remained adamant. Hospital administrators supported them. When the nurses brought up a long-standing, in-writing agreement exempting them from taking part in abortions apart from a medical emergency, officials told them “an emergency” would hereafter be defined as any situation in which the patient was “bleeding.” And every birth involves bleeding.

“Our jobs were hanging by a string,” Beryl says. “We were like, ‘All right. If they're going to fire all 12 of us, fine. But this is against what we believe God wants us to do.’ We didn't come into this profession to do [abortions]. We told them we weren't comfortable with it and didn't feel they should force us. And if that meant our jobs, well... God was going to provide.”

When even their own union declined to help them, Fe wrote a letter to hospital officials saying that she and her coworkers would not participate in abortions. She passed it around for the other nurses; 15 signed it. She gave the letter to her manager, who took it to the director of nursing. Response was swift. A meeting was called for the next day, with each of the signing nurses, the labor board, a union official, the managers, and “an expert on ethics” scheduled to be on hand.

The day of that announcement, Pastor Terry Smith, of Life Christian Church in West Orange, New Jersey, returned from a trip. A staff member told him that one of his parishioners, Fe, had called, shared what was happening at the hospital, and asked for advice. The pastor immediately phoned Len Deo, president of the New Jersey Family Policy Council. “I'll be all over this,” said Deo, who hung up and called Alliance Defending Freedom. Shortly afterward, staff attorney Matt Bowman was on the phone with a local allied attorney, Demetrios Stratis, enlisting him to help defend the nurses. The two immediately called Fe. “I was driving and speaking to them three-way,” says Fe, who had just been convincing herself the nurses' case was hopeless. “I didn't know a thing about conscience law – it was very, very new to me.” The two told her she had a legitimate case, and offered to defend her.

Next morning, she met Stratis at the hospital entrance. She took him upstairs to the Same Day Surgery Unit and introduced him to the nurses on duty and others waiting for the meeting. Twelve of the 15 immediately agreed to have him and Bowman represent them in the case. “Who are you?” a manager asked Stratis. “He's our attorney, and he is going to speak on our behalf,” replied Fe. Everyone split into huddles – Stratis and the nurses in one room, administrators in another. After a few minutes, the nurse manager came to cancel the meeting, but not before Stratis made it clear that he would be defending “my clients' legal right not to be forced to participate in terminating a pregnancy.” “It was like we had been talking to a brick wall, and that brick wall just got smashed,” Fe says. Stratis and Bowman reminded hospital officials – face to face and in writing – that their new policy transgressed both state and federal laws that make it illegal to compel medical professionals to violate their conscience by forcing them to help with a non-emergency abortion. Continued on page 4



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## Twelve Nurses Said “No” Continued from page 3

With their actions, the hospital was not only risking a lawsuit, but more than \$60 million in federal funding. Still, administrators stubbornly contended that all abortions in the Same Day Surgery area – each scheduled weeks in advance – were “emergencies.”

With the hospital unwilling to budge, Alliance Defending Freedom filed suit on behalf of the 12 nurses to defend their legally protected right of conscience. For weeks, the 12 nurses worked in a decidedly tense environment. “It was scary,” Beryl says. “We prayed a lot. We came into work and stepped off the elevator and said, ‘God just let the day go by well, without incident’ – because we had our incidents. It was very, very uncomfortable.” The 12 drew strength, she says, from each other, from praying friends, and from their faith that, “Our God is greater than this.”

Amid all the tension, threats, and growing media coverage, the judge in the case stunned everyone by suddenly announcing, in a preliminary hearing, that a settlement had been reached. “We had gotten everything [the 12 nurses] requested,” Stratis says. “We’d gotten the hospital to agree not to force them to perform these abortions. There would be no retaliatory measures against them, and they could feel free and sleep at night, knowing that the next day they would not have to be trained on the abortion process or help a woman kill an innocent child.”

“Before, I used to think that some prayers won’t be answered,” Fe says. “Sometimes, I’d feel very hopeless. But with this case, I saw how the Lord moves... providing the resources, the people who would help us out. It just strengthened my faith. I really thank God for Alliance Defending Freedom.”

“I couldn’t do what they were asking me to do,” Beryl says. “I could not. You go against what you believe, what are you? What’s left? Just a shell of what you are.” Spoken like a woman whose conscience is in good hands.

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