

Another Thrift Shop Story — By a Grateful Mother

The Right to Life store in Sidney is valuable to many different people for a variety of reasons. For some, it's a way to get nice clothing at a great price. Others have a sense of worth because, while they may not have the money to pay for the clothing, they are able to work at the store and get a voucher for clothing. Others feel it is a great place to donate their children's clothing and know it is going to someone who really needs it. Some even go there for guidance and advice. This is where the store took a new meaning for me. Guidance and advice led to a *son!* Let me take you back to March, four years ago.

"Martha" was working at the thrift shop, having a day like any other day: a few customers to help, straightening clothing, etc. Then a young lady came in. She seem distracted and out of sorts. She was looking for clothing for her young daughter and baby boy. She saw a pamphlet for adoption sitting on the counter. She asked Martha about it, explaining that she and her boyfriend had just come from a second visit at the abortion clinic. They had already paid the fees for the abortion. But they had an ultrasound and, after seeing the life inside her, the boyfriend said that they could not go through with it. (This man will always have a place in my heart, for even though he was the father of the two children they already had, he was not the father of the one she was carrying.) The young lady, who also did not want to go through with the abortion but wanted a life with her boyfriend, was at a loss. Adoption seemed to be an option.

Martha did not have a lot of answers regarding adoption but told her that she knew some people who had adopted and could help with questions. The young lady gave Martha her phone number. Martha immediately contacted my mom (who was just getting out of church from Eucharistic Adoration). She told Mom what was going on and Mom proceeded to call me. *Continued on page 4.*

Creative Ways to Give

Two recent experiences highlight the diversity of ways that our generous members find to support Right to Life.

1. On November 28, the Community Foundation of Shelby County sponsored a Match Day, challenging its fund organizations (of which RTL is one) to raise at least \$5000 in one day and thus earn matching funds from the Foundation. Due to the tight publicity window, we were only able to promote the event over e-mail and Facebook. Our contributors gave more than \$9000, giving RTL a total donation of more than \$14,000! Thank you to everyone who donated!

2. An anonymous supporter donated a large cache of Star Wars collectibles. Vondenhuevel Auction service arranged to sell the items, bringing in a total of \$700. In addition, the auctioneer waived its usual commission, allowing us to keep all the proceeds. A big thank you to Justin and the team at Vondenhuevel Auctions!

Thrift Shop Report

October

218 Customers
21.5 Work-to-earn certs.
2 Free units

November

172 Customers
5 Work-to-earn certificates
4 Free units

Join us for the Candlelight
Vigil at 7pm, Monday, Jan.
22, at the courthouse.

Ohio Becomes Third State to Ban Abortions for Down Syndrome | 2

An Ohio bill to protect unborn babies with Down syndrome from abortion became law on December 22 as Gov. John Kasich signed the legislation. The measure bans abortions on babies with Down syndrome and it follows bans in North Dakota and Indiana.

The Down Syndrome Non-Discrimination Act (Senate Bill 164) would help prevent discrimination by prohibiting abortions on unborn babies who have or may have Down syndrome. Abortionists who violate the measure could be charged with a fourth-degree felony or lose their medical license. The legislation was sponsored by Reps. Sarah LaTourette and Derek Merrin and Sen. Frank LaRose.

“Now that the Down Syndrome Non-Discrimination Act is law, unborn babies prenatally diagnosed with Down syndrome are given a shot at life” said Mike Gonidakis, president of Ohio Right to Life.

In the last 6 years, Ohio Right to Life has seen 19 pro-life initiatives passed into law by Gov. John Kasich. In a 2015 interview with CNN’s Jake Tapper, when asked if he would sign the Down Syndrome Non-Discrimination Act, Gov. Kasich said, “I’m more than glad to say that of course I would sign it.”

“A prenatal diagnosis of Down syndrome should not mean a death sentence,” said Gonidakis. “Thanks to our pro-life legislators, we are one step closer to ensuring that Ohioans with Down syndrome are recognized as humans worthy of dignity, just as they are.”

Larry and Jackie Keough, whose daughter has Down syndrome, testified in favor of the bill before a committee vote. “We ask each of you to support SB 164 that would stop the genocidal practice of aborting unborn children with Down syndrome,” Jackie Keough said. “By doing so, this can be a critical step to eliminate abortion based on individual genetic make up.”

Abortion activists fought against the legislation. In October, the radical pro-abortion group NARAL gave Ohio lawmakers a petition with 2,000 signatures in opposition to the bill. Jaime Miracle, deputy director of NARAL Pro-Choice Ohio, said the government never should get involved in a woman’s abortion decision, no matter what her reason is. “It’s not our place to judge a woman and her decision on whether or not to continue a pregnancy for whatever reason it is,” the pro-abortion leader said.

But state Rep. Sarah LaTourette, a pro-life Republican who sponsored the House version of the bill, said the abortion statistics for unborn babies diagnosed with Down syndrome are staggering, according to the Toledo Blade. “When we hear the statistic that 90 percent of women [who were given a prenatal Downs diagnosis] chose abortion because of this ... diagnosis, there’s an obvious problem there,” LaTourette said

Studies indicate unborn babies with Down syndrome are targeted for abortions at very high rates. A CBS News report earlier this year shocked the nation by reporting that Iceland has an almost 100-percent abortion rate for unborn babies with the genetic disorder.

One of the key advocates of the Ohio bill is Kelly Kuhns, a Plain City mother and nurse whose son has Down syndrome. Kuhns told the Columbus Dispatch that doctors suggested she abort her son, but she immediately refused. Despite her resolve, she said the news of her son’s diagnosis troubled her, and the medical counseling did not help.

“They tell you of these horrific things that can happen, the different anomalies, cardiac issues,” she told the AP. “So you plan for the worst, and I really feel like you’re given a death sentence.” Today, her son Oliver, 2, is doing well. Kuhns said he has more medical appointments than her other children, but he leads a “pretty normal life” otherwise.

By Steven Ertelt. LifeNews.com, December 22, 2017. Edited for space.

January/February Prayer Intentions



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For the safety of all those participating in pro-life observances this January. May our nation rediscover respect for life and redress the injustice imposed by *Roe v. Wade*.

The International Stillbirth Scandal

(NEW YORK – C-Fam) Every day somewhere in the world 800 women and 7000 children die in childbirth. This tragedy has rightfully garnered attention at the highest levels at the UN. Lurking in the shadows is a darker tragedy: 7100 additional children are stillborn every day yet their plight has been virtually erased from the international agenda.

At a conclave of maternal health experts last week in Washington, the heads of the Guttmacher Institute, the White Ribbon Alliance, and senior staff from UNFPA and USAID were caught flatfooted when asked what happened and what can be done. This is tragic because stillbirth risks are knowable and manageable, as are its causes. A study released this year by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists analyzed 512 stillbirths and found that testing the placenta identified a cause in about two-thirds of stillbirths, fetal autopsy helped in 40% of cases, and genetic testing helped in 12% of cases. But such tests are often out of reach from mothers and midwives in the developing world, whose work is woefully underfunded.

Ann Starrs, the head of Guttmacher, declined to answer if her organization might bring the same zeal to stillbirth that it brings to contraception and avoiding childbirth, the subject of her talk on maternal health. Truth is, organizations like hers and UNFPA may not want to bring attention to the 2.6 million wanted children who die in utero every year. Their job is to keep the focus—and billions of dollars in annual funding—on averting so-called unwanted pregnancies. The United States doles out nearly half of this funding.

While it may not have been deliberate, the erasure of stillbirth was not a coincidence. A senior UNFPA official said at the advent of the Safe Motherhood Initiative in Nairobi thirty years ago that there was a deliberate separation of the child from the rights of the mother. She admitted this was a “mistake.” That “mistake” led to stillbirth’s eerie absence in the outcome document from the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development, the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women, the 2000 Millennium Development Goals, and the 2015 Sustainable Development Goals. The latter will guide international funding priorities for decades to come.

And what about the treaty that obligates States Parties to reduce stillbirths? The committee that monitors compliance has only mentioned it once, to Chile in 1998, and only as an inquiry and not a recommendation for action. The same committee pressured countries to liberalize abortion 66 times, even though abortion is never mentioned in the treaty. Meanwhile, the international coalition of maternal health practitioners from developing countries and activists from Western countries remains an uneasy one. The price of partnership seems to be accepting the diversion of billions of dollars every year to Western-based family planning organizations and away from more difficult, but lifesaving, tasks such as training and retaining midwives and giving them decent working conditions to deliver healthy babies to happy mothers and fathers.

By Susan Yoshihara, Ph.D., December 15, 2017. This article first appeared in the Friday Fax, an internet report published weekly by C-Fam (Center for Family & Human Rights), a New York and Washington DC-based research institute (c-fam.org). This article appears with permission and is edited for space.

*In memory of Karen Seigel, daughter of longtime member and former board member
Sally Naseman, in whose name a donation was made to RTL.*

+ May she rest in peace. +

Another Thrift Shop Story *continued from page 1*

It was almost noon and I was at work. Mom explained the situation and a mix of emotions filled my heart: relief and joy that the child was saved; excitement at a possible new baby; fear of disappointment; confusion—what is my role here? I headed over to the store since I worked just a short distance away. Martha was surprised to see me and excited to see that I wore a button of Our Lady of Guadalupe on my coat. She took that as a sign. She summarized her conversation with the expectant mother and gave me her phone number.

My next step was to contact the young mother. While I knew she was interested in adoption, I didn't want her to feel she had to choose us to be parents or make her feel she had to rush into this decision. I decided to just text her so she could answer at her own convenience and not feel the pressure of a voice call. (Plus I was really nervous about contacting her.)

After several messages back and forth about the process of adoption, getting background information on each other, and her eventually seeing our Life Book, she did in fact want us to parent her child. It was very exciting (as well as nerve-racking). I was able to go with her to a doctor's appointment and was there at the ultrasound when we found out it was a boy! We were right outside her door when they delivered our son. Within moments we were in the room to see him, and soon we were in our own room with him!

What are the chances of a woman walking into a store and us coming out with a child? Coincidence? I think not. God was working and was able to bring the right people and circumstances together in a way that only He could. He used willing participants to save a life. He used a family caught in a difficult situation, a store focused on Life, a sympathetic volunteer, and an opened family.