

Helpers of God's Precious Infants



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My Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

I would like to begin this newsletter by reflecting on the virtue of fortitude, an essential virtue for all Helpers to possess. Fortitude is one of the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit conferred on us when we are Confirmed. When we are out at the clinics we will inevitably be faced with ridicule and harassment from escorts or even passersby. We need to remain strong and courageous in the face of this harassment and focus on why we are there and what we are seeking to do there. We are there to bring the light of Christ to one of the darkest places on earth, the local abortion facility. This is where we need fortitude. Fortitude is comprised of courage, fearlessness, and strength. We should at all times imitate Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, who fearlessly fulfilled the task assigned to him by His Heavenly Father. He was strong in all aspects of His earthly life: strong in His poverty, strong when faced with temptations from Satan, and strong when He calmly announced that His Kingdom would be a spiritual one, based on self-denial and the love of God. He was strong in denouncing hypocrisy, and extremely strong and courageous in the various stages of His Passion, and strong on the Cross filially commending His soul to His Heavenly Father. Helpers can develop the virtue of fortitude in three ways. First, fortitude through faith: the strength of our actions is measured by the depth of our convictions. The more convinced we are of our convictions, the more definite, determined, and emphatic will be our conduct. If we have a strong faith in our mission, we will not waver in our determination to bring the Culture of Life to the streets of our cities. Second fortitude through hope: when we rely on God and on His grace and help, we participate in His strength and power and become invincible. Although at times it looks very ominous at these facilities and it appears we are having no success, we know that the victory has been won by Jesus Christ and therefore we have hope. We are merely His instruments, we allow Him to work through us and any successes belong to Him. Finally, and most importantly, fortitude through love: Love is as strong and as fearless as death itself. People will do extraordinary things for the love of another person. For the love of God people will accomplish even greater wonders. In 2012 Ambulatory Surgery Center in Brooklyn, New York closed after having operated as an abortion business since 1970. Over 250,000 abortions were performed at this facility. After praying and sidewalk counselling for over 20 years myself and a small band of others witnessed a conversion of heart by the owner of this business. He sold to an operator who would not perform abortions or even offer contraceptives for sale. We were there for the love of God and to bring His light to one of the most heinous places in the United States. In fact, since the founding of the Helpers in 1989, over 25 abortion clinics have closed in the New York City area. Many more have closed around the world. This has been the work of God and all praise goes to Him. The Helpers have used the talents that God has given them to assist in closing these chambers of death. I urge all Helpers to remain fortuitous whenever they are outside these facilities.

FOUNDING HELPER CALLED HOME BY GOD

On January 30, 2019 Rosemary Abruzzino entered into eternal life after a short illness. Rosemary was one of the five original founders of the Helpers of God's Precious Infants in 1989, when I first began the organization. I first

met Rosemary when I was stationed at St. Teresa parish in Rego Park, New York in the 1960s. She lived right across the street from the rectory and she and I would often converse on life issues which even then, with the advent of the widely disseminated contraceptive pill, were coming to the fore. Both she and I could see that anti-life forces all around us would soon be pushing for legalized abortion, as contraception is not always 100% effective. Indeed, by 1970 New York State had legalized abortion up to 24 weeks. Rosemary helped me organize bus trips to the state capital, Albany, to lobby members of the Assembly and State Senate to repeal such legislation. We eventually succeeded in having the law repealed, but Governor Nelson Rockefeller refused to sign the repeal bill. After this defeat, I decided to become more active in street demonstrations, but after some time I could see that such demonstrations were not effective. After much prayer before the Blessed Sacrament, I discerned God's will to be to start an organization devoted to prayer and sidewalk counselling. Rosemary was cheerfully in attendance at the first meeting, and in fact help me organize the first large pro-life vigil in October of 1989. She also helped with printing out flyers and with mailings. She will be greatly missed by myself and especially her family. I pray that she is now with her Lord in heaven. I would also like to mention the passing of Msgr. Vincent Keane, a colleague of mine when I was stationed at Cathedral Prep Minor Seminary in Elmhurst, New York. Msgr. Keane was a great help to me while I served as rector of Cathedral Prep, and although not a Helper, was a strong supporter of mine from that time until his death in February. I will never forget his con-celebrating with me my Mass of Thanksgiving on my Golden Jubilee as a priest.

LEGALIZED INFANTICIDE

On January 22, 2019 New York State, through the efforts of Governor Andrew Cuomo, enacted the Reproductive Health Act, which declares abortion as a "fundamental right", prohibits all limits on abortion up to birth, and allows any "health care practitioner" (not necessarily a medical doctor) to perform an abortion. If these provisions were not bad enough, the law will jeopardize any agency that does not refer for abortions and threatens protections for medical professionals and hospitals that refuse to perform abortions. The law also voids the need for parental consent for minors and allows direct government funding for abortions. Incredibly, this law removes all protections from illegal abortions. This provision will inevitably lead to the deaths of more women by unscrupulous abortionists. The case against Dr. Robert Rho, whom I reported on in a previous newsletter, would never have been brought under this law. Dr. Rho pled guilty to manslaughter charges after killing a young woman during an abortion procedure in 2018. Indeed, even if somehow a child survives an attempted abortion, this law makes no provision for medical care of that child. This is clearly allowing the direct killing or intentional neglect of a born child. Here we see the true objectives of the so-called pro-choice movement. The objective is no choice at all. Anyone who is even thinking about aborting their child shall have an abortion performed, and anyone opposed will be marginalized. Several other states are considering similar legislation. This law will make it more difficult for the Helpers in New York State continue their work, but at least as of now there no law against prayer or sidewalk counselling. The Helpers are on solid legal ground as the Supreme Court has declared that pro-lifers have free speech rights on public sidewalks. However, with this law I am sure that the State Attorney General's Office, which has already come after certain Crisis Pregnancy Centers, will ramp up its efforts to do away with any alternative to abortion. This would be a tragedy. Recall that in the ancient, pagan days of Rome, any undesired child could be exposed to the elements unprotected for any reason. The earliest Christians, following Jesus's call to care for the "least of my brethren", would go to where ever such children were placed and rescue them, often raising them themselves. This is also the work of the Helpers giving any abortion minded woman the chance to change her mind and either accept her child or place it for adoption. We will continue to bring the Light of Christ to the streets, even to the streets of New York State.

SURVIVORS OF ABORTION

The passage of this barbaric law calls to mind that there are over 200 documented survivors of abortion alive today in the United States alone. Among these survivors is Gianna Jessen, who was the victim of an attempted saline abortion in 1977. Delivered two months premature, she was born with cerebral palsy due to the attempted abortion. Despite this affliction, she has launched a successful singing career, and has become a pro-life activist. The popular movie “October Baby” was based loosely on her story. She was raised by a loving, adoptive mother and amazed her doctors by beginning to walk at age three, when they predicted that she would never walk. She would go on to run in marathons and has testified to the sanctity of life in the halls of Congress in the USA and in many other forums. Under the new law in New York State, Gianna would have been left to die. Is “survival of the fittest” to be our organizing principal? I pray to God that people will realize what is happening to them and rise to protest this wanton destruction of life. We surely can use more Helpers.

Schedule of Vigil Masses from May 2019 to December 2019

<i>Date</i>	<i>Church</i>	<i>Abortion Site</i>
May, 2019	Large Vigil – Please go to your own clinics and pray.	
June 15, 2019	Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary 88-19 Parsons Boulevard, Queens	Choices 147-32 Jamaica Avenue
July, 2019	Large Vigil – Please go to your own clinics and pray.	
August 31, 2019	Our Lady of the Cenacle Richmond Hill, Queens	Jamaica Hospital
September 21, 2019	St. Joan of Arc Jackson Heights, Queens	Women’s Care
October 19, 2019	Presentation of the Blessed Virgin Mary 88-19 Parsons Boulevard, Queens	Choices 147-32 Jamaica Avenue
November 16, 2019	St. Paul and St. Agnes Congress and Court Streets, Brooklyn	Planned Parenthood, 44 Court Street, Brooklyn
December 14, 2019	St. James Cathedral Downtown Brooklyn	14 DeKalb Avenue

NEWS AND NOTES



On October 28, 2018 I was honored at a dinner held for the Life Center of New York at the Bay Ridge Manor in Brooklyn. It was a wonderful dinner and many of my colleagues and friends were in attendance. Among them were Fr. Fidelis Moschinski, CFR, Fr. Robert Czok, John Paduano, Don Magnotta, Florence Maloney, and Fr. Kevin Sweeney, a former student of mine. Fr. Sweeney brought down the house when he spoke, telling the crowd that as he was preparing one day for Latin class, (I was his Latin teacher) someone from the administration at Cathedral Prep popped his head in the door to tell the class that there would be no Latin class that day as the instructor had been arrested that morning. I and several others had been arrested for praying the rosary that morning at an abortion facility in Manhattan. I am indebted to Fred Trabusi, the executive director of the Life Center for honoring me at this event. Fr. Moschinski, who runs the Helpers in Manhattan, holds a pro-life Mass and vigil the first Saturday of every month from Old St. Patrick's Cathedral. Old St. Pat's is located at 263 Mulberry Street in Lower Manhattan. I would like to recommend to any Helpers in the New York area to attend Fr. Moschinski's vigils as many times he is met with intense opposition from pro-abortion protestors. Fr. Fidelis asked me to concelebrate Mass with him at his vigil in October, marking the 10th anniversary of such vigils. I also participated in the first vigil in 2008. Don Magnotta, a valiant sidewalk counselor in Kew Gardens, Queens is currently helping 5 women in various stages of pregnancy. Don Has even received referrals from previous women he has helped from as far away as Florida and Texas. He has also informed me that one of his turnarounds from a few years ago would like to give back and is considering starting a charity. Praise be to God. On February 23, 2019 I was informed that the 500th Prayer vigil was held in Vienna, Austria. Led by Deacon Dietmar Fischer and Dr. Michael Tamchina, the Helpers there conduct prayer vigils twice a month in front of the two biggest abortion mills in Vienna. I remember well leading the first vigil many years ago. Congratulations to all the Vienna Helpers. Congratulations are also due to the Helpers of Lezha, Albania. I am informed that they opened St. Joseph's Pro-Life Center on March 19, 2019. This center will be a big help to all pro-lifers in Albania. Helpers in Edinburgh, Scotland were very pleased that the Edinburgh City Council rejected a motion to ban prayer vigils in their city. Please pray for the Helpers in Ealing, England where the town council has banned such vigils. The Helpers have brought a lawsuit to overturn this decision. As I am sure you know the March for Life in the United States is held every January in Washington, DC. However, there are Marches all over the United States and even in other countries. Canada, France, Italy and the United Kingdom also have Marches at various times during the year. More and more people are coming to the realization that Life is precious and deserves protection. The bi-annual 40 Days for Life campaign has begun as of March 6 and vigils are being held in 377 cities in 31 countries. Although not affiliated with the Helpers, the leaders of 40 Days have visited me at the Monastery and received training from me. Many Helpers are involved with this effort. On the first day of this year's Lenten campaign 40 Days reported that a woman decided to keep her child after talking with a female sidewalk counselor in the United Kingdom. What made this unusual was that the sidewalk counselor was all of 12 years old. Praise be to God that this young child used the training provided to her to save the life of someone not all that much younger than she is. 40 Days for Life has accomplished much, but I would like to remind all Helpers that we need to be 365 Days for life. I would like to close by wishing all a Blessed Easter season.

Until We Meet at Calvary,

Msgr. Philp J. Reilly