



SEMINARIANS FOR LIFE

As some of you may already know, Fr. William Shea (Epworth) leads a group called "Seminarians for Life." This national organization promotes the Gospel of Life as proclaimed by Pope John Paul II. The following article by Fr. Shea explains more about his work:

Divine Word Seminarians for Life is a student sponsored club whose membership is voluntary. No formal meetings, no dues. We are part of a larger group from all around the country that is trying to promote the Gospel of Life as proclaimed by Pope John Paul II and support by Pope Benedict and millions of pro-life people from every race, language, country and religion. We believe that life is sacred, created by God and ought to be respected from the moment of conception to natural death. Toward that end, the students (seminarians and others) at Divine Word College--through prayer and action--try in some small way to bear witness to the sanctity of life at all stages.

What do we do to promote the pro-life cause? Very briefly, we have a monthly Holy Hour with a pro-life theme that is open to all students. We have participated in a number of activities sponsored by the Dubuque County Right to Life movement, such as witnessing silently and prayerfully at abortion clinics in Cedar Rapids and Iowa City. We have joined in the Life Chain on Hwy. 20 on the first Sunday of October.

Also in October, we plant some 400 white crosses on the front hill of our campus. Each cross represents ten abortions each day in our country. We are part of a larger following in the Dubuque Walk for Life on Jan. 22, the anniversary of Roe v. Wade. We sponsor two or more students to travel by bus with their peers in Dubuque for the annual Right to Life March in Washington, D.C.

Most recently, we have made our presence known at the relatively new Planned Parenthood facility in Dubuque. We hope that the experiences of our students here at Divine Word College on behalf of life will be an important part of their total formation and remain with them long after they have left our seminary. Finally, it should be pointed out that we have a Justice and Peace committee in the college which extends the sanctity of life principle by promoting an end to capital punishment and addressing other social justice concerns.

HEALTH CARE DEBATE

Many of us have been keeping abreast of the health care debate, especially as it relates to the funding of abortions. In a column that appeared in the Denver Catholic Register, Archbishop Chaput has taken the stance that health care reforms needs to take into consideration access for everyone and with special concern for the poor, elderly, disabled and immigrants. (Archbishop Chaput's column)

According to a recent New York Times article, "the bishops' backlash reflects a struggle within the church over how heavily to weigh opposition to abortion against concerns about social justice." This struggle is reflected in a letter written by Bishop William F. Murphy of Rockville Center, N.Y., to President Obama and Congress: "Health care is not just another issue for the Church or for a healthy society. It is a fundamental issue of human life and dignity." In order to help reduce the number of abortions in our society, we need to have adequate health care coverage for all people not just a few. (New York Times)

- Actions:**
1. Support Bill Shea and the Seminarians for Life through prayer.
 2. Read the Colorado Independent's take on Archbishop Chaput's column at: <http://coloradoindependent.com/35788/wary-of-abortion-funding-denver-archbishop-supports-health-reform>.
 3. Read the full New York Times article at: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/28/health/policy/28catholics.html?bl&ex=1251691200&en=7d293a145d8a733a&ei=5087%0A>.
 4. Here are some other resources for further information: 1) <http://www.faithfulamerica.org/> (faith leaders) 2) <http://www.chausa.org/> (Catholic Health Association, linked with USCCB brochure) 3) <http://www.usccb.org/sdwp/national/brochure1.pdf> (Office for Domestic Social Development, United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Health Care for All" brochure)

Please feel free to contact the JPIC Commission to respond to ideas expressed here.

Do you have any stories from your parishes or ministries about the immigration issue?

Please contact us at: JPICSVD@yahoo.com