

Roe v. Wade Memorial: January 22, 2012

3:00 pm – 4:00 p.m.

In front of Planned Parenthood Abortion Clinic

On Sunday, January 22, 2012, Kalamazoo Right to Life will host a memorial service on the 39th anniversary of the infamous 1973 Roe v. Wade decision. As we have done in recent years, our program will entail a short prayer service in front of the local Planned Parenthood abortion clinic. Pastor Fred Betcher of Schoolcraft Assembly of God will conduct the memorial service. We will meet in the lower level of the Alternatives of Kalamazoo Pregnancy Care Center (4200 W. Michigan Ave) at 3 pm and begin to move across the street about 3:15 pm. Light refreshments will be served afterwards.

Choose Life

President's Corner

By: Rob Karrer

Happy New Year! As we enter 2012, many political, legislative, and judicial events will take center stage, all relative to the future success (or failure) of the pro-life movement.

1. The presidential election in November 2012 will pit pro-abortion President Obama against a pro-life challenger. As I write this on the eve of the Iowa Caucus, former Massachusetts governor Mitt Romney and Texas Rep. Ron Paul share the lead. Former Speaker Newt Gingrich has fallen back. Former Pennsylvania senator Rick Santorum, a strong pro-lifer, is gaining ground, especially in Iowa. The pundits and Republican insiders believe that Romney will win the nomination. As I have said on numerous occasions: "Let the voters decide." Who ever wins in November 2012 will most likely have at least two, maybe three opportunities to reshape the Supreme Court. Several justices are in their seventies and may want to retire in a few years. President Obama would most likely nominate pro-choice candidates. I would hope that a Republican president would nominate either someone who is pro-life, or at least open to reconsider the constitutionality of Roe v. Wade. It seems that every four years the pro-life movement faces the same two situations: who is president and possible vacancies on the Supreme Court. It is imperative that a pro-life president win in November and get the opportunity to nominate pro-life judges and (possibly) sign pro-life legislation into law with a pro-life Congress.

2. The pro-life legislation that began in 2011 following the mid-term elections in Nov. 2010 will continue this year at the state and federal level. At the top of the list will be the continuing effort to defund Planned Parenthood. Admittedly, that legislation will not pass given the current make-up of the Senate, but will if the Senate becomes more pro-life after the Nov. election.

3. The Supreme Court has agreed to hear oral arguments on the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act (more commonly referred to as ObamaCare by its detractors). Arguments will be heard in March and a decision by the summer, well before the election. Overturning the law will help eliminate the pro-abortion portions of the bill. I await the decision with fear and trembling, but also with anticipation.



The Top Five Pro-Life News Stories of 2011

By: Rob Karrer

1. **Presidential Politics:** The biggest story of the year has been the race for the Republican nomination for president. And while the candidates have debated and campaigned in places like Iowa, New Hampshire, and South Carolina, abortion as a campaign issue seems to have remained below the radar. All the Republican candidates are pro-life, a fact that allows voters the opportunity to select a candidate on other issues. Former governor Mitt Romney of Massachusetts is the only candidate that has changed his position on abortion. As recently as 2003 he was pro-choice. A bill crossed his desk when he was governor that he could not support, a pro-abortion bill that defined when human life began (or when it did not begin). Romney vetoed the bill. It forced him to re-evaluate his position on abortion. In December, former Arkansas governor Mike Huckabee hosted a forum on abortion. All the candidates participated. It remains to be seen if abortion becomes a larger campaign issue in 2012. Clearly the Republican candidate will expose President Obama's pro-choice positions to help solidify the pro-life voting bloc. Given the economy and unemployment, don't expect too much on our issue.

2. On November 14 the Supreme Court agreed to hear oral arguments on President Obama's Affordable Care Act. Arguments are planned for March and a decision expected by summer. Many aspects of the Act are controversial including parts that involve abortion coverage on health care plans. Although President Obama signed an executive order that would exclude abortion in his health care bill (action that convinced about two dozen pro-life Democrats to vote for the overall bill) abortion remains a part of the Act. Repeal of the Affordable Care Act may result in removing abortion coverage from national health care. That is the pro-life movement's hope. A defeat for the President's health care plan may also embolden his opponents during the election year.

3. One of the most important results of the 2010 mid-term elections was the election of many pro-life legislators in state governments. This past year some 460 pro-life bills were considered by state legislatures. In the end, 70 of these bills were enacted, a huge victory for the pro-life movement as it flexed its new found muscle. In Kansas, Governor Sam Brownback signed six such pro-life bills into law this year.

No doubt most of these bills will be challenged in court by pro-choice organizations, thus the future of all these bills rests with the courts. Here in Michigan, the legislature passed a bill banning partial birth abortions, a bill that had been passed but vetoed by Governor Granholm. This time Governor Snyder signed it into law.

4. Defunding Planned Parenthood continued throughout the year. Americans United for Life produced a long document detailing many of PP's abuses and urged Congress to launch an investigation. In September, pro-life Rep. Cliff Stearns (R-FL) began collecting data to begin formal hearings. In Kansas, criminal prosecution against the state's largest abortion clinic continued. Forty-nine charges (including 23 felonies) were leveled against the PP clinic. However, on November 9 it was discovered that the cases would have to be dismissed because the documentation for all 49 cases had been shredded in 2005 and 2005. An independent investigation was begun concerning the affair.

5. While the Obama Administration talks of preserving conscience clause provisions, actions speak louder than words. In 2011 it rescinded a Bush-era regulation that provided stepped-up enforcement mechanisms for existing federal conscience protection laws. And this past October, the Dept. of Health and Human Services (under very pro-abortion Secretary Kathleen Sebelius) decided not to renew a grant to the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops to help victims of human trafficking (modern slavery) because the USCCB refuses to provide abortions for such victims. In a related story this past September, 12 pro-life nurses at the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey were told that unless they participated (not "assisted") in hospital abortions they would lose their jobs. At stake is the matter of conscience, the right to refuse to participate in abortion based on religious and moral beliefs. The nurses filed a lawsuit. On Dec. 22 a federal judge forced the hospital to negotiate an agreement with the nurses. In a great pro-life victory, the hospital rescinded its policy, thereby protecting the nurses' jobs.



Why We Need a Protective Conscience Clause

By: Dr. Joe Kincaid

All of us assume, in this country, that you cannot be coerced to do or participate in an act contrary to your faith, beliefs or morals. The one group of people that this statement may no longer hold true for is medical personnel. We used to believe that conscience clauses would protect them from being involved in procedures they found offensive.

Federal statutes on conscience clauses have been enacted by Congress in 1973, 1996 and 2004, and in August and December 2008, the Bush Administration restated the conscience rights of health care providers with a new set of guidelines issued by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS). However in March 2009, the Obama Administration said it was going to rescind those rights in their entirety. At Notre Dame on May 17, 2009 President Obama promised a "sensible" conscience clause but the whole situation is in limbo with no new conscience clause on the horizon.

Recently there have been occasions where groups have acted as if they were testing to see if there were any shreds of conscience clauses left in this country. On August 1, 2011 Secretary Sebelius of HHS issued a directive that this women's "preventative" care package will require all health insurance companies to provide free coverage for all contraceptive pills and devices and the abortion pills RU-486 and Ella. A further stipulation is that religious institutions, such as hospitals and universities, cannot opt out of the regulations for moral and ethical reasons unless they can prove that the majority of their staff and clients are of the same faith as the institution.

Again in October 2011 the University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey told twelve nurses that they were either to assist in abortions or they would be terminated. After the nurses filed a lawsuit, the University has "resolved" the conflict by hiring more nurses who will assist in abortions.

So the Federal conscience clause has been shredded and the State of Michigan does not have a conscience clause protecting health care workers. In 2004 a conscience clause passed the Michigan House 69 to 35 but languished in the Michigan Senate. Locally neither Borgess Health or Bronson Hospital have an "in house" conscience clause.

Two bills have been introduced into Congress that would act as conscience clauses. One is HR1179, the "Respect for Rights of Conscience Act." The other one is the Abortion Non-Discrimination Act (ANDA) which is part of the House version of the Labor/Health and Human Services appropriations bill. The fate of either of these bills is not predictable.

What happens if there is not a protective and adequate conscience clause? OB-Gyn physicians and their nurses could be forced by hospitals, insurance companies or even patients to do abortions or face the other alternative of leaving medicine. The result would be that all OB-Gyn physicians would also be abortionists. Other physicians would not be exempt. They could be forced to be involved in euthanasia or assisted suicide. Even pre-medical students or those interested in nursing could be affected. Admissions to medical or nursing school could hinge on the "proper" attitude toward abortion, euthanasia and assisted suicide.

So is there any question why we need a risk-proof conscience clause?



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Please contact our office (or check off option above if sending in this cut-off membership form) to let us know if you would prefer to change how you are receiving the newsletter or to be removed from our mailing list. The first 2 options help us save on postage costs. **Thank you!**

Yes! I want to help save lives. Enroll me as a member of Kalamazoo Right to Life and Right to Life of Michigan.

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As a member, you will receive the KRTL Newsletter, the RLM News, And you are invited to use the educational materials at our office. Your contributions and gifts to Right to Life are not tax deductible. Please make your check payable to **Kalamazoo Right to Life** and mail this cut-off form to:

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