



# Aid for Women

Empowering Women to Choose Life Since 1978

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Summer 2007

## Mutual Inspiration

The value of volunteers – PRICE-LESS! From the time Aid for Women was founded, 29 years ago, those most generous in working to fulfill the mission of our ministry have been our volunteers. Their willingness to serve our clients with loving dedication provides the best examples that offer so much to admire and inspire.

New volunteers often remark about the inspiration that influenced them in their personal decision to serve with us. We need to know their perceptions of the image we project at all times.

Frances Jimenez, a volunteer counselor and mentor who participated in her first Aid for Women volunteer training program in 2005, expresses well what her experience has been.

“Growing up in St. Louis, I was always surrounded and influenced by people who believed in the sanctity of life and the unborn. Moving to Chicago as a single woman in my early 20’s, I met many people who held different values and found myself keeping silent about my own for many years.

“That voice in my heart grew louder and louder while I was pregnant with my son, who is now 3. After experiencing pregnancy and his birth, I knew that I had a calling to support life and to help mothers and their children. It was so easy to put off making time for volunteer work since I was a new mother who worked full-time. I finally called Aid for Women on the recommendation of Birthright, another support group.

“I was immediately welcomed at the center and truly believe that God had guided me there. It has been extremely fulfilling to work with the wonderful staff and volunteers, whose spirituality and passion for helping others are part of their daily lives.

“Most of all, I am inspired by the young women who come to Aid for Women for help. As a counselor I see their pain and helplessness and only hope that I can channel the love and peace of God into their hearts as they face the most critical choice and journey of their lives.”



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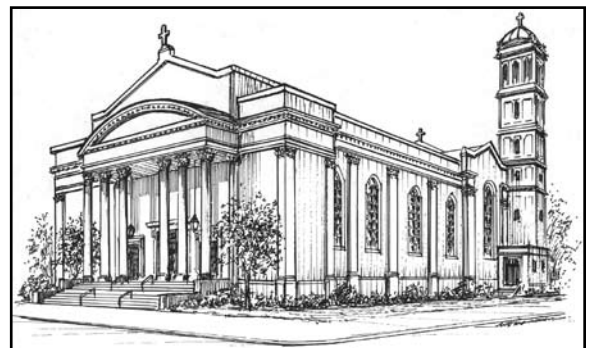
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## Upcoming Event

Please join us on September 30<sup>th</sup> for our second annual Historic Church Tour. This year’s event will be held at St. Ignatius Church in the Rogers Park neighborhood. Some of our board members were pleased to join in an architectural tour sponsored by that parish a few months ago. The church is stunningly beautiful, and we are thrilled it will be the site of this year’s event. We will honor Patricia Daily with the Presidium Vitae award for her 25 years of service as a pro-life champion. The Eucharistic Liturgy will be celebrated by Most Rev. Francis J. Kane, with Rev. Richard Simon and Rev. Joseph Jackson concelebrating. The Willows Chamber Choir will lead us in liturgical song. Call our office for reservation information.



**Mutual Inspiration** *continued from page 1*

As Frances was inspired, so she now inspires. After a relatively brief time, Frances is recognized as an exemplary volunteer counselor. Recently she was encouraged to mentor clients because her personal qualities are exactly right to establish and maintain ongoing, supportive relationships with women in greatest need. For staff and other volunteers, Frances demonstrates the valuable results of selflessly sharing beautiful, God-given talents.

To Frances, and to all our volunteers serving in any capacity, we want you to know that we appreciate your incredible worth and offer you our **WHOLEHEARTED THANKS!**

## Bonanza Boutique 2007

Preparing to parent successfully is so important that Aid for Women provides great incentives and assistance for clients committed to the worthy endeavor. Our Mentor Angel Program and Client Bonus Program help significantly.

Clients participating in the programs are especially serious about keeping their prenatal, doctor appointments and attending hospital, parenting classes. With the “bonus bucks” they earn for doing so, they purchase the most practical and necessary baby items from our Client Boutique.

At our third annual Bonanza Boutique, held on June 23<sup>rd</sup>, the mood was one of excited anticipation. All who were there – clients, clients’ families and friends, and Aid for Women helpers – had the privilege of sharing in the joy of those getting ready to welcome precious, new daughters and sons.

## Spring Luncheon



*Sue Barrett, Kathy Shinkle, Mary Doherty, Mary Anne Goldberg, Suzanne Dawson and Bob Castagna*



*Bob Castagna, Diane Sc lze, Joni Benson, Katie Bredemann and Cindy Morales*



*Bob Castagna, Sheila Liaugminas and Mari Heavey*



*Julie Unruh, Elizabeth Powell, Beth Engels and Molly Goldberg*



*Pat Godfrey, Mariellen Lakin, Patti Purcell and Nancy Belda*



*Mary Ellen Cooney-Higgins, Laima Braune and Patricia Bellock*



## Reflections

Mary Hallan FioRito, Esq.

# TALES FROM THE FRONT

After a number of years off the speaking circuit, a few months ago I was asked to represent the pro-life position in abortion debates against an attorney from NARAL (the National Abortion Rights Action League) headquartered in Washington, D.C. It sounded like a good idea at the time, although when I told my husband I'd agreed to debate twice in one month, he looked at me as if I'd completely lost my marbles.

Debating can be fun, especially when you have the truth on your side, but it is also exhausting and a lot of work. One needs to prepare for questions that range from the sublime ("How do we know when a soul enters the body?") to the ridiculous ("How can you be so sure that a fetus is a human life?"). And the spiritual component of putting oneself "out there" in battle is not to be taken lightly, as we know that the abortion question deals most fundamentally with good and evil.

But the most wonderful thing about the pro-life family is that, no matter where you go, you have an automatic group of supporters who will make an effort to come out and cheer you on! At the first of the two debates, held at Adelphi University in New York, I looked up as I was about to begin my opening statement to see about a dozen of the Sisters of Life, in their beautiful blue, floor-length habits, walk in and take seats near the front rows. The second debate, held at the University of Tennessee, was widely publicized by the University, and brought representatives from Tennessee Right to Life, a few priests from the Diocese of Knoxville, and a few Nashville Dominican Sisters. (My friend from NARAL must have the impression that nuns in full habit follow me wherever I go.)

And having those friends in the audience made a huge difference. After the Tennessee debate, a lovely older lady from TN Right to Life told me that she started to pray for me as I was speaking, then "realized [I] didn't need it" and started to pray for the audience instead!

You'll probably be glad to hear that the "other side" really has no new arguments. What they do assert essentially boils down to this: "I appreciate and respect that you think that a fetus is a human life, but other people don't think the same way you do and what we really need is earlier, more explicit, more 'comprehensive' sex education and lots of artificial contraception for everyone."

I suppose we should take heart in the fact that the abortion lobby generally has to resort to lies and scare tactics in order to try to win people over. My opponent concluded our second debate by asserting that, "Any country that can tell you NOT to have an abortion can tell you to HAVE an abortion." I mean, have you ever heard of anything so ridiculous? Aside from the fact that the only country in the world where abortions are forced on women (China) is a country where it is also LEGAL, it's akin to saying, "A country that can tell you NOT to drink and drive can MAKE you drink and drive."

But that's the nature of a debate: you have to listen to a lot of nonsense, quite literally, in order to be able to share the truth of the pro-life position with those who might not have considered it yet. And, I have to keep reminding myself, the truth does set us free. So let's remember to pray for all those who are hearing the pro-life message for the first time, that God may set them free from the notion that "choice" is more important than life.

## A Friend In Need

"How did you find out about Aid for Women?" The answer to this question from those coming to us for help is very frequently a friend or relative told them. Such a response is, at once, encouraging because it indicates a positive attitude that usually means a confident beginning to whatever communication follows.

In January of 2007, a pregnant teenager came to us with her friend, an Aid for Women client who recently gave birth to her son. The client brought her beautiful, six-month-old boy with them. The proud, young mother, only seventeen, introduced her baby in a way that revealed how much she loved him and it was evident she was taking exceptionally good care of him.

The two young women had very much in common.

They shared similar circumstances that made parenting a considerable challenge. They also shared a mature sense of responsibility for the lives of their offspring. The newcomer to our center had already endured and overcome extreme pressure from her family to have an abortion. Her good friend, not surprisingly because of her experience with our services, had been there for her to offer personal counseling and mentoring.

When a client benefits from our services, particularly a combination of counseling, mentoring and the bonus of material goods, it stands to reason she will want the same for others, especially her friends and relatives in need. We are greatly appreciative of such endorsements and consider this the best kind of advertising and public relations.

**Memorial and Honor Gifts** A special gift is a meaningful way to remember a friend or a loved one at the time of his or her death  
– or in life by honoring that person’s accomplishments and character.

*In Honor*

**Kathryn Testa**  
*Ann Patterson*

**Dad**  
*Nancy Donegan*

**Karen Connelly**  
*Georgeana Connelly*

**All Unborn Children & Their Parents**  
*Mr. and Mrs. Richard Chan*

**Ann Patterson**  
*Kathryn A. Testa*

**Mary Anne Goldberg**  
*Eileen Fox*

**Mary Anne Goldberg**  
*Her Children*

**Mary Anne Goldberg**  
*Mrs. John F. Berry*

**Sharnina Starling-Buford**  
*Paul Fischer*

**Cardinal George**  
*Ruth Goldboss*

**Cardinal George**  
*Katheryn H. Stamm*

**Patricia Daily**  
*Rev. Paul T. Lamb*

**Kay McNally**  
*K. McNally*

**Gloria Gusman**  
*Angela Gusman*

**Rosalie Perez**  
*Olg Urbietta*

**Tom Scheckel, Jr.**  
*Tom & Janet Scheckel*

**Kristin Sadie Schwarz**  
*Deacon Mike McClosky*

**Jan Skowronski**  
*Bozena Drzystek*

**Brenda Bissonnette**  
*Rom & Marge Bissonnette*

**John F. & Susan Towle**  
*Philip & Gay Thomas*

**Ofelia Buccat**  
*Ana Maria Jopson*

**Mrs. Mary Hughes**  
*Kris Hughes*

**Dr. & Mrs. L McCathry**  
*Mary Louise Hickey*

**Martha Barton**  
*William C. Jones*

**Maria Wietrzak**  
*Pamela Koszut*

**Martha Perez**  
*Gunter S. Schwandt*

**Rachel Todd**  
*Anastasia Valentine*

**Doma Petrutis**  
*Richard T. Prince*

**Lorine Amison**  
*Melissa Amison*

**Tom & Heather Bresler**  
*Roy & Kay Ellgass*

**Yvette Maxie**  
*Tina Johnston*

**Dan & Jeanne Wingbermuehle**  
*Leslie Patterson*

**Children & Mothers**  
*Anonymous*

**Dorothy Katherine Zach**  
*Jeff & Janice Zach*

**The Schafer Family**  
*The Wilde Family*

**Adriana Ponce**  
*Sylvia Villares*

**Eleanor B. Mills**  
*Mary J. Mills*

*In Memory*

**Gertrude Yee**  
*Teodorico & Elsa Yee*

**“My Big Angel”**  
*Thom Gutierrez*

**Theodore Joseph Gusman III**  
*Angela Gusman*

**Paz Bernabe**  
*Concepcion Bernabe*

**Barbara Rogan**  
*Carol Rogan*

**Lory & Anne Dattoli**  
*Peter Dattoli*

**Shirley Baron**  
*Olga Urbietta*

**Scheckel/Malczewski Family**  
*Tom & Janet Scheckel*

**Yves & Madelaine Rabau**  
*Dorotea Rabau*

**Edwin P. McDonlad**  
*Mr. & Mrs. John E. McDonald*

**Margaret Hayden**  
*Kathy Hayden*

**Rob Jeffers**  
*Rom & Marge Bissonnette*

**Marissa Montero**  
*Maria Sullivan*

**Mildred White & Georgia Smith**  
*Pat Smith & Art Booze*

**Norman Michaels**  
*Eleanor O’Donnell*

**Maria Smith**  
*Byron & Odyssey Kirkwood*

**Jane McCarthy Goodwin**  
*Mary Louise Kurey*

**Mildred Stohr**  
*Janet M. Fiore*

**Felicity**  
*Mary Ann Costello*

**Cresencio & Theresa Martinez**  
*Mariam Martinez*

**John A. Burke Sr.**  
*John Burke*

**Barrett “Bear” Krupa**  
*Kathleen Casey*

**Eugene Collaco**  
*Juanita Collaco*

**Sallye Cook**  
*Robert Johnson*

**Mary LaPapa**

*Tim & Carin Levandoski*

**Tom’ O’Donnell**  
*Dr. & Mrs. John McLaughlin*

**Ana Maria Ortega**  
*Felipe Ortega & Susana Retana*

**Ave McParland**  
*Anonymous*

**Grace Liu**  
*Emile & Connie Liu*

**Catherine C. Houlihan & Mary M. Carney**  
*M. Houlihan*

**Elizabeth Plonski**  
*Mary & Mike Yerkes*

**Jule Whiting**  
*Dave & Grace Whiting*

**Their Parents**  
*Mr. & Mrs. Langton*

**Cynthia Chemler**  
*Dorothy Chemler*

**Mary Margaret Jacobs**  
*Gahan Jacobs McDonald*

**All Unborn Children**  
*Melissa Amison*

**Delaine Gehle & Ken Bruns, MD**  
*Terry & Jo Noetzel*

**Richard Maxie**  
*Tina Johnston*

**D.L. Porth**  
*Mrs. Donald L. Porth*

**Mary Faith Wingbermuehle**  
*Leslie Patterson*

**John William Schafer**  
*The Wilde Family*

**Mahala P. Dade**  
*Arthur R. Thompson*

**Dollie Horn**  
*Bessie Thompson*

**Joseph & Florence Mills**  
*Mary J. Mills*

**Grace Giobba**  
*Don & Karen Giobba*

**Nancy Cieslica**  
*Anonymous*

**Dominick Testa**  
*Ann Patterson*

**Deceased Member of My Family**  
*M.J. Koberstein*

**Dr. Bernard I. Lifson**  
*Thomas Garden*

**George & Mary Pabich**  
*Brian & Wanda Pabich*

**Janet Kroschel**  
*Joseph & Patricia Kroschel*

**Baby Wolff**  
*Linda Wolff*

**Eugene & Helen McCabe**  
*The Fleischer Family*

**Mary Testa**  
*Kathryn A. Testa*

**James Fox**  
*Eileen Fox*

# Junior Auxiliary Overnight

Members of the Junior Auxiliary for Aid for Women came together this past June for its annual overnight retreat. The teenage Pro-Lifers came from Carmel High School, the Willows Academy as well as Regina Dominican High School. Although some of the girls had never met, they came together to support women in crisis pregnancies.

The girls began with Mass celebrated by Fr. Matthew Gamber. Afterwards the girls assembled layettes for the clients of Aid for Women. Leading the members were Susan Barrett and Julie Cooper who so generously donated their time and energy to make the overnight a possibility. To demonstrate the significance of their efforts, they watched a video about Aid for Women, which included a client story.

As they saw and heard the story, they realized that their time spent on the retreat would touch the lives of many women who found themselves in crisis situations.

The girls gathered to exchange ideas about the value of chastity and waiting until marriage. They also discussed healthy ways to date the opposite sex while still maintaining their self-respect. Most importantly they learned how to deal with real life scenarios while staying true to their beliefs.

Aid for Women benefited greatly from this event. The girls assembled approximately 50 layettes for clients. The gift of their time and effort is beyond measure in the lives of the mothers and their unborn children.



## Community Involvement and Support Vital To Aid for Women's Ministry

One year flies by quickly. Since coming to Aid for Women last August, it seems that each month has been filled with new challenges, surprises and special moments of grace and gratitude. These moments have emphasized the community upon which Aid for Women depends and whose individuals, foundations and parishes are vital to the on-going ministry of Aid for Women.

Last December, thanks to a very generous grant from Our Sunday Visitor Institute, Aid for Women began advertising on Google.com. On July 1, we recorded our one-millionth ad shown in the state of Illinois. With additional advertising begun in April on 25 CTA train stations, we are making substantial efforts to extend a helping hand to women and 50,000 college students studying in the Loop. We are grateful to the Helen Brach Foundation for its support for our CTA advertising campaign.

Foundations and institutional donors contribute a solid base of support enabling Aid for Women to continue its contribution to the community. We are particularly grateful to: the Cashel Foundation, the David F. and Mary Anne Goldberg Charitable Foundation, the Daniel F. and Ada L. Rice Foundation, the Christ Child Society, the Hickey Foundation and the Illinois Club for Catholic Women.

Parishes are the vital link to the Catholic community. Parish support enables us to extend assistance to women in need through parish wide collections. We are very grateful for these efforts at: St. Benedict, Chicago; St. Clement, Chicago; SS. Faith, Hope and Charity, Winnetka; Holy Cross, Deerfield; Holy Name Cathedral, Chicago; St. Joseph, Wilmette; St. Luke, River Forest; Our Lady, Mother of the Church, Chicago; and Our Lady of Perpetual Help, Glenview. To these and other parishes assisting us, we extend our deep gratitude.

Individuals play a vital role in the ministry of Aid for Women. Whether volunteers, benefactors, board and advisory committee members or staff, individuals are the ears, voice, arms and legs of Aid for Women. Providentially, individuals are and have been involved for the past 29 years in the lives of the women and their unborn children who seek out the comfort, support and solidarity of Aid for Women. With God's help, through the people and resources sent to us, the ministry of Aid for Women will continue to be present and available with open arms for those who knock on our door.

## Medical Advisor Update – Robert LaPata, MD

Let me begin with current thinking regarding the long term risks of surgical abortion. It is the contention of American Association of Pro-Life Obstetricians & Gynecologists (AAPLOG) that world medical literature clearly demonstrates a significant association of abortion with subsequent increased risk for very preterm birth. They quote the results of a French study reported in 2005 which demonstrated a 1.5 to 2.5 times increase in preterm births in women who had had an abortion, depending on how many they had undergone. We are talking about babies born anywhere from 22 to 32 weeks gestation. These studies are considered to be "rigorous" and confirmatory of prior smaller studies.

The data from an Australian database of 250,000 births is even more striking: after 1 abortion, there was a 60% increase in extreme premature births (22-28 weeks), a 150% increase after 2 abortions, a 460% increase after 3, and an

800% increase after 4 or more abortions. Apparently, there are over 50 studies showing such an association.

The latest of these studies reported on 61,000 Danish women. Again, the risk of a very preterm birth (before 34 weeks gestation) for these women was almost doubled after one induced abortion and over 12 times increased after 2 induced abortions. It is well-acknowledged that the incidence of cerebral palsy rises as gestational age and birth weight decrease.

Parenthetically, it is doubtful that this risk is discussed in preabortion counseling. Such discussion certainly is not recommended by American College of Ob/Gyn (ACOG). It should also be mentioned that the March of Dimes campaign against premature birth does not include this information.