



Aid for Women

Empowering Women to Choose Life Since 1978

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Families Reunite to Spread Christmas Cheer

On December 6th, the Aid for Women Auxiliary hosted its annual Client Reunion Party, chaired by Auxiliary member, Madge Garvey. Despite the cruel weather, everyone was warmed by the great spirit of the afternoon. Twenty-five clients and their families, including many fathers, came out for the joyous festivities. At registration, each client received a gift card to help pay for groceries during the holiday season.

With delicious food for all, many came back for seconds. As families ate, we enjoyed the lovely melodies of Christmas led by Mary Rita Clifton on piano and accompanied by Stephanie Klatt on violin and vocals by Elizabeth Blanke. Many children and family members gathered around the piano to sing along.

Then, as a surprise to many, Santa arrived ringing sleigh bells. He was immediately greeted with hugs and smiles which he gladly returned. After settling in, Santa visited with each of the children, and gave each one a small toy to take home. We thank his helpers from the Auxiliary for assisting with the gift giving.

After Santa left, carols continued and families spent the rest of the time enjoying the spirit of the season. As we celebrated the end of a successful year, we were given the chance to see our hard work come to fruition. We celebrated the lives of the little children who may not have been. We honored the mothers for their courage and their ability to stand up in the face of adversity. It truly was a day to be grateful for the invaluable gifts from above.



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Trusting in God's Plan

In the bitter cold of January 2008, Aid for Women met Asha. She had a spunky personality and many goals set before her. She was accepted into graduate school, and she anticipated getting her degree in the next couple of years. She came to us because she suspected that she might be pregnant. As she feared, her pregnancy test came back with a positive result.

Although an ambitious and goal-oriented woman, Asha did not feel ready to take on the responsibility of parenthood while trying to finish school. At the end of her counseling session at Aid for Women, she was undecided on what to do. Since she was abortion vulnerable, we gave her a referral for a free ultrasound exam.

As is standard procedure at Aid for Women, we followed up with a phone call to Asha. She said that the counsel-

ing session changed her life. She said she felt very supported and that she was even going back to church. A couple of things she remembered from the session were that her counselor told her this was her time to make things right, and that God will make a way for all she is going through. Those two things stuck with Asha and helped her to persevere through her pregnancy.

Asha decided to join our Bonus Program. She said this was the best part of her experience with Aid for Women. She said the staff made her feel better about the whole experience. She felt ready to become a mother.

Asha also said something that resonates with the staff. She told us that what Aid for Women does is "undeniably moral." These kind words have helped to motivate us to continue help-



ing women throughout their difficult pregnancies.

As of now, Asha is engaged to the father of her daughter, Elise, who was born on September 8th of this year. She said that things are going very well, and she is taking her time figuring out everything in her life, trusting in God and His will. Not only has Asha's life changed dramatically in the past year, but she has shown us at Aid for Women how a true woman of character faces challenges with grace and fervor.



Susan Couri is recognized as the volunteer who has the most experience counseling and mentoring Aid for Women clients. Susan has been generously serving pregnant teens and women who come to us with remarkable understanding and compassion for more than seven years. Being a devoted wife, married to her husband, Phil, for forty-six years, a dedicated mother of their six children, and a loving grandmother to their twenty grandchildren, explains her well-established, personal, pro-life record that is superlative.

Susan makes no secret of what helps her, which is the spiritual strength that she nourishes and depends on, as well as the loving support of those near and dear to her. The happiness she radiates is so beautiful that she is admired by all those privileged to know her.

SUPER Role Model

As Susan states it, "Being part of the Aid for Women family has been God's great gift to me. Having been active as a pro-life coordinator in my parish for many years, I was searching for a more hands-on approach. When Mary Anne Goldberg invited me to be a member of the Board of Directors and asked me to consider volunteering as a counselor, I was drawn to give it a try. Working with such prayerful, dedicated women, who are passionate in their defense of life, supported my passion for life and helped me to grow in so many ways. My greatest gift, however, has come from the women we serve at our center. I am continually amazed at the courage and resilience of these suffering women when offered love through a listening heart and tangible support. They have indeed opened my heart and convinced me that Pregnancy Resource Centers are the best possible way to help women and reduce abor-

tions. Thank you, Aid for Women, for all you have given to me!"

In addition to assisting clients at Aid for Women, Susan has been an active member on our board of directors for seven years, serving as secretary from 1999 through 2006. Her advocacy for the clients, based on her genuine empathy for them, has probably been the most important contribution she has made.

Clients often express their appreciation for Susan's loving help. They ask for her by name when they call. If she has been their mentor, many clients want to continue the special relationship they have with her long after their babies are born. Susan always has time for others, especially when they are in need. Her contribution as a super role model is of incomparable worth to our clients and our ministry

Thank you, Susan, for your devotion and generous love!

Auxiliary Spring Luncheon

Don't miss Aid for Women Auxiliary's fifth annual Spring Luncheon to be held Saturday, April 25th at Drury Lane in Oakbrook. This year's elegant luncheon, book-signing, and silent auction will feature keynote speaker Teresa Tomeo. Teresa is a veteran broadcast-journalist who, after much success and recognition in the secular media,

became disillusioned and disappointed by the trends in the media toward sensationalism, violence, and liberal bias. Six years ago, Teresa decided to leave the secular media to help families and other concerned citizens engage the culture. Teresa Tomeo is now an author, syndicated Catholic talk show host, professional speaker, and media

consultant. Teresa will be available to sign her latest book, *Noise: How Our Media-Saturated Culture Dominates Lives and Dismantles Families*. For reservation information, contact Beth at 312-621-1101.



Medical Advisor Update

Robert E. LaPata, M.D.

As promised in my previous note, an update on the status of the Partial Birth Abortion Ban Act is due. Since the ban has been upheld, there has been no new action to have it reversed. Apparently, when the procedure was described in vivid detail to the legislators, most were appalled by its inhumane nature. Nevertheless, expect proponents of the procedure to reintroduce efforts to legalize this murder of the innocent after a new administration takes office.

As yet, there has been no official response from the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology to prolific objectives from pro-life physicians to the committee opinion regarding "the limits of conscientious refusal" to pro-

vide abortion availability, information and referrals to patients. Unofficially, the ACOG president has suggested that the committee's wording need not be taken literally, meaning that a pro-life ACOG member's standing in the organization would not be in jeopardy for not referring women to an abortionist or for practicing in an area of the country where abortions are not available. The ACOG Ethics Committee reconvened during the past few weeks, so a report should be forthcoming. We hope that it sees its Opinion as providing no helpful guidance to Ob/Gyns, that it lacks adequate ethical theory and analysis, that its considerations to limit conscientious judgments are vague and contentious

and that it proposes unjust, unworkable and harmful practices to medical professionals.

There are other new fronts in the abortion battlefield. Wisconsin is one of four states that still have a pre-Roe v. Wade ban on abortion (except to save the mother's life). A recent Senate hearing on a bill to reverse that ban was held. I have not seen a report of a vote on that bill. In Europe, the Council of Europe is attempting both to reverse anti-abortion laws and to pressure pro-life physicians as ACOG is doing in America. This is occurring especially in Portugal, Poland, Malta and Ireland. I will keep you posted on these developments in the future.

NOW'S the TIME for ACTION

"The first thing I'd do as President is sign the Freedom of Choice Act", declared Barack Obama in 2007.

FOCA eliminates regulations that protect women from unsafe abortion clinics

FOCA forces taxpayers to fund abortions

FOCA requires all states to allow "partial birth" and other late-term abortions

FOCA subjects women to abortions by nonphysicians

FOCA violates the conscience rights of nurses, doctors, and hospitals

FOCA strips parents of their right to be involved in their minor daughters' abortion decision

Act now! Call the U.S. Capitol switchboard to contact the offices of your Representative and two Senators at 202-224-3121 and urge them to oppose FOCA, and sign an online petition in opposition to FOCA at www.fightfoca.com.

40 Days for Life



Aid for Women staff and volunteers braved the inclement weather to keep vigil at an abortion clinic on Chicago's North Side as part of a nationwide prayer campaign to end abortion.

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

Sofia Alayo

Carmen Nasarre

All Unborn Children

Mr. & Mrs. Richard Chan

Miranda Anderson

Elaine Frantik

A+N+Y

J. Awad

Maria Elena Aranda

Dolores Gonzalez A

Heather & Tom Bresler

Leroy & Catherine Ellgass

Delaney Bryant

Mike Bryant

Francis Chernaushas

Jean Gagliano

Jesus Christ

The Mulvaney Family

Larry Circosts

Marie Dattoli

Mary Cossarek

Phyllis Cossarek

Sr. Mary Eileen

Tom, Clara & Amy McGinn

Jerry & Ginger Fitzgerald

Grace, Anaka & Kaitlyn Fuller

Pat Fuller

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Lisa Gibbs

Richard Gibbs

Mary Anne Goldberg

Eileen Fox

Tucker & Lexi Hemminger

David & Marla Russo

Genevieve Keane

John Keane

The Kelly Family

Sean Kenny

Robert E. LaPata, M.D.

Richard C. & Margaret Romano

Colleen Mitchell

Kathy Kraemer

Jennifer A. Moore

Joseph J. Giustino

My Little Angel

Enriqueta Soria

Ellen Neary

Nora Brown

Respect Life Arch. of Chicago

James D. Brantman

Mr. and Mrs. David Reynold

Cyndi & Scott Axelrod

Dr. & Mrs. Phillip Roemer

Dave & Mary Roemer

Joseph Rurode

The Matrofski Family

Rose Marie Smyth

Mr. & Mrs. James D. Lorr

John Solmos

Brian Solmos

Frances Testa

Maria Martinson

The Vorak Family

Dave & Carrie Flick

Karen Wittman

Eric Meier

Mrs. Ann Worden

Cyndi & Scott Axelrod

In Memory

Mary Brantman

James D. Brantman

Jim Butler

Mr. and Mrs. Joseph Mulfoletto

Katherine Champ

John Ruffalo

Marian Crannage

Cyndi & Scott Axelrod

William Dillon

Virginia Dillon

Catherine & Margaret Dwyer

Mrs. W.R. Davis

Robert F. Fries

Elizabeth A. Fries

Larry Fuller

Grace, Anaka & Kaitlyn Fuller

Sally J. Garrett

Mr. and Mrs. R.H. Garrett

Cathleen M. Giustino

Joseph J. Giustino

Richard Hosman

Cyndi & Scott Axelrod

James Jacobsen

Kathy Moran

Lydia Kennedy

Mike Bryant

Mitchell & Jean Kirvida

Grace, Anaka & Kaitlyn Fuller

Koopman & Loesch Families

Joseph & Leona Koopman

Catherine LaBrizzi

Maria Martinson

Mary & Dominic Lenzini

Mary Ann Kinzelberg

Michael Maroon

Cynthia Maroon

Rose P. Maul

Walter O. Maul, Jr.

Zohar Merchant

Barbara Merchant

Miscarried Babies

Thomas & Heidi O'Toole

Alana Mulvaney

The Mulvaney Family

My Deceased Parents

Denise L. St. John

Catherine Newhall

The Newhalls

Mr. and Mrs. Casey Nogal

Marcia Coleman

Larry Rauen

Bonnie Rauen

Richard

Felicia Goldin

Nora Rose Roemer

Dave & Mary Roemer

Julie K. Rurode

The Mastrofski Family

James & Theodata Schejbal

Joanne O'Brien

Victor Spilotro

Maria DeLucia

Frances Spinner

Joyce Spinner

St. Gerard for babies

Sean Kenny

Muriel Temple

Roberta J. Culloiton

Molly Varak

Dave & Carrie Flick

Barbara J. Zywicki

Robert A. Zywicki