

Family & ProLife News Briefs

November 2020

Cultural Conflicts Continue

Violent Pro-abortion Protests

Pope Francis encouraged Christians in Poland to keep standing strong for life as riots continued across the country. "I ask God to inspire in the hearts of all, respect for the life of our brothers, especially of the most fragile & defenseless, and to give strength to those who welcome it, even when it requires heroic love," Pope Francis said.

Riots have been occurring since the nation's high court issued a ruling that protects unborn babies with disabilities from abortions. Authorities have arrested at least 76 people for disrupting church services and vandalizing church buildings, the AP reports. On Oct. 22, Poland's constitutional court struck down one of the few exceptions allowed in its 1993 abortion law – abortions on unborn babies with disabilities, saying that the exception violates the constitution because it discriminates against humans with disabilities. Mikolaj Pawlak, Poland's commissioner for child rights, said: "The decision of the Constitutional Court declaring eugenic abortion incompatible with the constitution is a victory of life over death. It is a restoration of equal rights for every human being, including those who have not yet been born."

In the city of Poznan, dozens of pro-abortion protesters broke into a church service, shouting, "We've had enough!" and "Barbarians!" as they held signs up in front of the altar, the Daily Mail reported. [Pope Francis Condemns Abortion..., *LifeNews.com*, 10/29/20] [Ed. note: Poland's govt. has delayed implementation due to protests.]

New York Threatens Adoption

Agency New Hope Family Services, a faith-based adoption agency based in Syracuse, won a victory for religious freedom last month when a U.S. District Court judge granted a temporary injunction, saying the state had shown evidence of hostility toward New Hope's religious beliefs.

Over the last 50 years, the agency has placed 1,000 children for adoption, but in 2018, the NY office of Children and Family Services ordered New Hope to place children with unmarried or same-sex couples - or face closure. This month the U.S. Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in a case involving an adoption agency supported by the Archdiocese of Philadelphia. We pray that these organizations will be able to continue their mission without having to compromise their First Amendment rights. [*Our Sunday Visitor*, 10/25/20]

This free monthly newsletter is used by dozens of churches as a bulletin insert, and has over 30,000 readers. To receive a copy in your inbox, email editor Frank Tinari, Ph.D. at tinarifr@shu.edu

Did Catholics Vote as Catholics?

Catholics who take citizenship seriously paid attention to the US Bishops' **voting guide** called *Faithful Citizenship*, to help form our consciences by looking at the following goals or issues and acting accordingly. The first three goals are:

1) *Sanctity of life from conception to natural death*

The preeminent requirement to protect the weakest, innocent unborn children, by restricting and bringing to an end their destruction through abortion, & providing women in crisis pregnancies the supports they need to make a decision for life.

2) *Not to resort to violence to resolve issues*

Support policies that stop: a million abortions each year, euthanasia and assisted suicide to deal with the burdens of illness & disability, the destruction of human embryos in the name of research, the use of the death penalty to combat crime, and imprudent resort to war to address international disputes.

3) *Sanctity of marriage between a man and a woman* Protect the fundamental understanding of marriage as the life-long and faithful union of one man and one woman and as the central institution of society; promote the complementarity of the sexes and reject false "gender" ideologies.

Ardent Feminist Becomes Supreme Court Justice

The confirmation process is a grueling examination of a nominee's life. Yet, we saw a role model for women, someone who rose to the top in school and in her career while choosing to have the husband, family, and spiritual life she dreamed of. "I never let the law define my identity or crowd out the rest of my life."

We witnessed newly-appointed Supreme Court Justice **Amy Coney Barrett**, a devoted mother whose family was the first thing she talked about at her confirmation hearing. She and her husband have five biological children and two adopted children. One of her children was detected with Down Syndrome while she was pregnant but the couple refused abortion. Justice Barrett is the oldest of seven children, and attended Catholic grammar and high schools. She graduated at the top of her **Notre Dame** Law School class.

During the hearings, her opponents distorted her record, launched bad-faith attacks against her religious views, and even attacked her family and her decision to adopt children from Haiti. We saw her compassion as she recounted struggling through the death of George Floyd with her black daughter. We also got a glimpse of Justice Barrett

continued on page 2

Ardent Feminist (continued from page 1) the mentor, who went out of her way to take care of her students and help them launch impressive careers of their own. During her three years on the Seventh Circuit bench, Judge Barrett authored approximately 100 opinions that bolstered her reputation as a textualist and originalist in the mold of her mentor, Justice Anton Scalia.

“If you can keep in mind that your fundamental purpose in life is not to be a lawyer, but to know, love and serve God, you truly will be a different kind of lawyer.” Amy Coney Barrett

Bishop Michael Olson of the Diocese of Fort Worth, Texas, wrote an opinion piece in the local paper about the prejudicial treatment given to the nomination of Barrett. “Faithful Catholics help many and harm no one; anti-Catholic bigots harm everyone. It is unimaginable that the senators’ harassment be applied to any other religious group. Why is this tolerated? When will it end?”

Barrett is the only mother of young children ever to serve on the high court. She is the only Midwesterner on the court, and the only member of the court who did not graduate law school from either Harvard or Yale. [GianCarlo Canaparo, *The Heritage Foundation*]

A new postage stamp for Christmas shows detail from a gorgeous Peruvian painting of Our Lady of Guapulo from the 1700s. Use it as a Christian witness.

College Pro-Life Group Called “Hate Group”

Students for Life of America President Kristan Hawkins applauded the decision released today from the **University of Northern Iowa** President Mark Nook to allow a pro-life club on campus after student organizations blocked the effort by saying that fellow students wanted to start a “hate group.”

“Viewpoint discrimination is both unconstitutional and undemocratic. The free marketplace of ideas is designed to allow for citizens to share their views. For the Pro-Life Generation, a conversation on the human rights issue of our day – abortion – is demanded of all those who care about how our society has devalued life based on location,” said Hawkins.

Student leader Sophia Schuster had been advocating for a Students for Life club this school year and, with the help of Alliance Defending Freedom attorneys, appealed the NISG’s decision to the school’s Supreme Court, which ruled against the pro-life students. Said Schuster: “They have overstepped their role and tried to use their power to silence us just because they disagree. This is a **direct attack on free speech** & due process of law, an example of abandoning standards that they claim to hold.” [*LifeNews.com*, 10/29/20]

Gene Editing: Big Mistakes in Human Embryos Scientists using the Crispr gene-editing technology in human embryos to try to repair a gene that causes hereditary blindness found it made **unintended and unwanted changes**, frequently eliminating an entire chromosome or large sections of it. This is a very adverse outcome.

In September, an international commission sponsored by the U.S. National Academy of Medicine, U.S. National Academy of Sciences and the U.K.’s Royal Society issued a report stating that the gene-editing technology isn’t ready for such a use because scientists don’t understand how to make precise fixes without also introducing potentially dangerous changes.

Two separate papers published earlier this month indicate that the ethical debate continues over whether and under what circumstances creating genetically modified children could be permissible. Crispr germ-line editing, which involves making changes to eggs, sperm and embryos, is controversial because any changes can be passed to future generations. In her comments on the report, Nobel Prize winner Dr. Jennifer Doudna said the commission’s recommendations reflect consensus in the field that the technology shouldn’t be used for **embryo editing** in the clinic at this time.

The researchers found 96 of the countries already had gene-editing policy documents, such as legislation, regulations or international treaties; 75 of these countries bar the use of genetically modified embryos for the purpose of starting a pregnancy, an indication that it might be possible to create an international consensus on the issue, the researchers said. [Amy Dockser Marcus, *Wall Street Journal*, 10/29/20]

33 Countries Declare “There is No Right to Abortion”

The USA and 32 other nations recently signed the Geneva Consensus Declaration on Promoting Women’s Health and Strengthening the Family, declaring “there is no international right to abortion” and that the family is “fundamental” to society. The Declaration was co-sponsored by the USA, Brazil, Egypt, Hungary, Indonesia & Uganda, & signed by countries representing more than 1.6 billion people.

Geneva Consensus Declaration further strengthens a coalition to achieve four pillars: (1) better health for women, (2) the preservation of human life, (3) strengthening of family as the foundational unit of society, and (4) protecting every nation’s national sovereignty in global politics.

The signers of the declaration agree to “reaffirm the inherent dignity and worth of the human person,” that “every human being has the inherent right to life.” [*www.LifeNews.com*, 11/2/20]