Μ

"LORD, WHEN DID WE SEE YOU A STRANGER, AND NOT COME TO YOUR HELP?"

Materi, 2745

No woman should ever feel compelled to choose an abortion. With your help, she won't have to. For more information on how you can make a difference, please call your parish or diocesan pro-life office.

The Natural Choice is Life.

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COMPASSIONATE PEOPLE CARE DEEPLY THAT

ABORTION HAS TWO VICTIMS-

The BABY and the WOMAN

• The baby, an innocent human being, is put to death most often, because he/she was "inconvenient".

• The woman, with social and financial pressures, undergoes a medical procedure which kills her child and often leaves her with emotional and physical scars.

ABORTION VICTIM OLIVIA L. GANS



Church needs expertise in dealings with media

By Helen Alvare **Guest contributor**

Perhaps more ink was spilled over the church's decision to hire communications expertise than over any other business relationship forged in our day. The public and reporters continuously asked: "Is there a relationship between the church's mission on behalf of unborn human life and the media?" The answer is a resounding yes.

An intimate relationship exists between public perceptions about abortion and media presentations. And the church, in carrying out its mission on behalf of life, should use all legitimate, effective means.

Ours is a world of vast networks of media outlets, conveying what is important locally, nationally and internationally. To give "eloquent proof of (the church's) solidarity with the entire human family," (Gaudium et Spes, 42), the church must, therefore, use communications outlets effectively. Such skill is especially important in the context of abortion, where every day the lives of 4,400 unborn children, their families and society are so greatly affected by the media.

By its media presence on abortion, the church aims to increase respect for unborn human life and bring about an end to the practice of abortion. Realizing this goal will require not only changes in human hearts and minds, but also legal recognition that unborn children are worthy of protection.

Media provide many facts about the "politics" of abortion or the activities of the activists on the issue. It is more difficult to find information about the actual practice of abortion or the personal, institutional and societal effects of unrestricted legal abortion.

But the church intends to bring such information to the public eye, and to do so in a persuasive manner. With the assistance of communications professionals, the church speaks directly and indirectly about many abortion-related subjects.

A variety of "direct" methods of informing the public exists. Educational tools are distributed within the church or and information of the National Conferchurch-related structures. They are also ence of Catholic Bishops Secretariat for made available to the general public Pro-Life Activities.

through interested groups, advertisements, and by follow-up responses to advertising.

National and diocesan spokespersons have been trained to speak with the media more effectively, and we aggressively pursue opportunities to speak to groups whose opinions are not yet formed on the subject - especially students, who often are told that the "pro-choice" perspective is the only legitimate choice.

The abortion debate is currently conducted on an immeasurably large scale. The terms of the debate are set largely by the media. To be a part of the debate, the church must participate in the media arena with some media sophistication.

The thrust of the bishops' current prolife campaign includes development of materials that are primarily educational -newsletters, news summaries, fact sheets. brochures, etc. The church's message to respect all human life has not altered with the medium. The medium is being utilized to convey this message ever more persuasively, not to change it.

Members of church media relations and pro-life staffs meet with reporters and editors to discuss both the issue of abortion and the way reporters cover the issue. Prolife news stories are circulated monthly to every reporter covering abortion in the country. Efforts are also made to interest individual reporters in covering particular stories, e.g. abortion alternatives centers, or pro-life speakers. Op-ed pieces and editorial letters are sent to newspapers, and radio and television interviews and debates on abortion are solicited.

The church recognizes the enormity of the problem of abortion in American society. Feelings on both sides of the issue run deep. And the media attention paid to abortion highlights the deepest divisions.

Therefore, it is envisioned that what the church learns at the level of national strategies will be executed locally. Thus, skill in communicating becomes part of every level of the church, as an integral part of its ongoing mission of upholding the value of human life.

Helen Alvare is director of planning

It is the right of every pregnant woman to give birth. and the right of every child to be born."



will share her abortion experience, its effect on her family and the healing she continues to undergo.

Ms. Gans, now Director of American Victims of Abortion, is an experienced international speaker, applauded for being practical, insightful and dynamic in providing understanding of

WHY WOMEN HAVE ABORTIONS THE HELP THEY NEED TO CHOOSE LIFE THE HELP THEY NEED AFTER THEY'VE CHOSEN ABORTION

Rochester Area Right to Life Committee Annual Meeting open to the public Thursday, October 24 at Mapledale Party House 1020 Maple Street

Social Hour: 6:00 Dinner: 7:00 Gans Presentation: 8:15

Reservations required Dinner & Talk: \$20; Talk Only: \$10

For reservations, call RARTL at 621-4690



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