



S. John Wilkin/Staff photographer
Father Jeremiah P. Moynihan (far right), pastor of Hornell's St. Ignatius Loyola Church, blesses a monument to the unborn during a July 30 dedication ceremony at the Hornell Knights of Columbus Hall Council 243. The memorial (above) is now on display at St. Mary's Cemetery.

Tier pro-lifers choose prayer over violence

By Mike Latona
Staff writer

HORNELL — This event served in stark contrast to the violent anti-abortion tactics employed in Florida just one day earlier.

Rather than invoke bloodshed to get its pro-life message across, the Knights of Columbus Hornell Council 243 opted for a solemn, prayerful ceremony.

Approximately 100 people gathered at the Knights of Columbus Hall on Main Street Saturday, July 30, to dedicate a monument for unborn children. The ceremony included opening and closing prayers by Father Elmer J. Schmidt, pastor of St. Ann's Church in Hornell; and a blessing of the monument by Father Jeremiah P. Moynihan, pastor of Hornell's St. Ignatius Loyola Church.

Also taking part in the program were

Martin Vogt, Grand Knight for the Hornell Knights of Columbus; and Susan Fowler, pastoral associate and campus minister at St. Brendan's Church in Almond and St. Jude's Chapel in Alfred.

The memorial blessed by Father Moynihan is marked with the inscription, "Dedicated to the Unborn Children of the World." It is now on display at St. Mary's Cemetery in Hornell.

According to Vogt, the cement monument — which stands 4 feet high — is valued at \$4,000. Costs were offset by fundraising efforts from the Catholic Daughters of America and Ladies of Columbus, as well as private donations.

Fowler noted in her speech that studies show 1.6 million children in the United States are aborted every year — an average of one every 20 seconds — and that 28 percent of all pregnancies in this country are aborted. She also

acknowledged that New York state has the country's highest abortion rate, and that more than \$20 million has been allotted for abortion services in the state's current budget.

Fowler added that support services are in plentiful enough supply so that abortion should not be an option for pregnant women.

"Lack of help is no excuse for aborting a child today, because every kind of help is available for those who seek it," said Fowler.

Despite her strong stance against abortion, Fowler commented to the audience that she does not "in any way insinuate that violence is the solution."

That remark was directed toward the Friday murders of Dr. John Bayard Britton — who performed abortions at a Pensacola, Fla., clinic — and his security escort, James Herman Barrett. Paul Hill, an outspoken advocate of violence

against those who perform abortions, allegedly gunned down the two men outside the Ladies Center for Abortion in Pensacola. Barrett's wife was injured in the shooting as well.

In an interview following Saturday's ceremony in Hornell, Fowler remarked, "If we are striving for the protection of violent death against children, we have no right to perpetuate violent death upon others. We don't counter violence with more violence."

Vogt pointed out that his organization is "not out to blame anybody. The Knights of Columbus are just out to fix a problem."

Fowler added that the Florida murders were unfortunate not only for their cold-bloodedness, but also because such occurrences tend to steal away media coverage of pro-life efforts by groups such as the Knights of Columbus.

Catholic Relief Services wants Rwandan intervention

Catholic Relief Services has called upon the U.S. government to act with other nations or alone, if necessary, to prevent "further sacrifice of human life" in Rwanda.

CRS made the announcement in a press release issued July 26 from its world headquarters in Baltimore, Md.

The statement outlined the disastrous situation presented by the flight of more than two million Rwandan refugees to Tanzania and Zaire and urged military intervention to stabilize the situation.

"Refugees have settled in areas that are a logistical nightmare to reach," the statement read. "Even if humanitarian assistance such as food, water and basic medical treatment can be provided in the short term, it clearly is not a sustainable solution."

According to the statement, together with the help of private donors and the U.S. government, CRS has provided more than 250,000 people in Rwanda with food, seeds, tools and other relief supplies.

In addition to refugees in Rwanda,

CRS is also coordinating aid efforts on behalf of more than 200,000 refugees in Uganda, Tanzania, and Burundi, and 4,000-5,000 orphans in Zaire.

Such aid comes on top of assistance to Rwandans from other groups. The Society for the Propagation of the Faith, for example, has provided emergency aid of \$220,000 to the church in Rwanda and Zaire.

"While calling for immediate action to provide massive humanitarian assistance to these refugees, CRS strongly urges the international community to take the necessary steps toward a permanent solution to this problem," the statement continued. "The flight of people out of Rwanda must be stopped and the refugees must be encouraged and assisted to return home before it is too late."

The statement urged the United States to provide logistical, financial and material support so that U.N. troops could be deployed in Rwanda.

"A more visible U.N. force will help to stabilize the situation in the country so that Rwandan civilians will feel

safe to return," the statement said. "If U.S. action, alone, or with others, is the only way to prevent further sacrifice of human life, we must be prepared to take such steps to preserve lives and pursue peace including the deployment of peacekeeping forces, military medical teams and technicians."

The United States was also asked to urge the new Rwandan government to cede responsibility for the prosecution of war criminals and those guilty of genocide to an international tribunal.

"This will provide further encouragement for innocent Rwandan refugees to repatriate," the statement read.

The statement also complained that supporters of the ousted Rwandan government continue to broadcast statements designed to sow distrust of the new government and cause people to flee the country.

Catholics and other U.S. citizens were urged to contact their congressional representatives and ask that they support the initiatives outlined by CRS.

In addition to the actions called for by CRS, the U.S. Catholic Conference is urging Catholics to contact their congressional representatives and ask them to cosponsor H.R. 4541, the African Conflict Resolution Act.

The bill's proposed program would draw only on funds already allocated to Africa by Congress, and would direct those funds to the aid of conflict-resolution measures already being taken by the Organization of African States.

According to staff members of the Africa Subcommittee of the House's Committee on Foreign Affairs, H.R. 4541 would direct funding for the OAS toward the purchase of computers for its conflict resolution division; the hiring of 16 new staff members (in addition to the current four assigned to the division); and support training of Africans in conflict resolution.

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EDITORS' NOTE: Those wishing to contribute to CRS's Rwandan relief efforts are asked to please send donations to Catholic Relief Services-Rwandan Relief, P.O. Box 17090, Baltimore, Md. 21203.