



NEWSLETTER

January 2010

We wish all our readers a
Happy New Year!!

News from Luton Good Counsel

All at Luton Good Counsel extend their greetings and good wishes for 2010 to everyone who supports the work in any way. Your interest and concern mean a great deal to us, not least that we know we are part of a local community who share a common mind.

These are tough times for the pro-life cause but we take heart from the knowledge that our witness, in whatever form it takes will bear fruit in due season. It may be helpful to remind ourselves of the special Apostolic Blessing (*the insert in the last newsletter*) sent by Pope Benedict for the Walsingham Pilgrimage in which he “recognised that in practice defending human life today has become more difficult because a mindset has developed, entrusted to the opinion of the individual, which has gradually debased its value.” Nevertheless, he affirmed the need to “assert the fundamental values of the right to life from conception, of the family founded on the marriage of a man and a woman, of the right of every human being conceived to be born and brought up in a family by his parents.” We pray for the strength to continue to witness to these values, and not lose heart.

We were very glad to be able to welcome Bishop Peter to the centre in December and are grateful for his support and warm encouragement. After a short time of prayer he blessed each of the rooms and spoke briefly, linking the work of Luton Good Counsel with the words of Christ, “I have come that they may have Life and have it to the full.”

We mentioned in the last newsletter that it has become increasingly difficult to reach women who are considering an abortion, in part because of fast and easy access to abortion services. For this reason we are actively looking at other ways to further the work and fulfil our obligations to the unborn. We hope to report more fully on this in the March newsletter and ask for your prayers as we consider new pathways.

Three young women come to mind from the past few weeks, who have come to us with different needs. The first phoned for an appointment because she was considering an abortion. As usual we contacted the prayer circles as soon as that appointment was booked and also contacted the convents who pray for the work. Sometime later the young woman cancelled the appointment because she and the partner had decided to keep the baby. We have been in touch with her since – the baby is due in May, and she has been very grateful for the support.

We also had a call from a young woman with a four month old baby – she is living in one room with the baby, in a house shared with four men. The house is not in good condition but the council will not re-house her until the baby is a year old. We have been able to link her up with the Good Counsel centre in London, since she lives in Enfield, and they will work with her to improve her situation.

Finally, we were asked to help a young woman from Kenya who has a three month old baby, and lives with a friend in Northampton. She was in need of baby clothes which we were able to supply through the generosity of local parishioners. She said she had been tempted to consider abortion but her friend had been so supportive that she was given the strength she needed to continue the pregnancy – and her son is now very precious to her. She was very grateful especially for the gift of a box of chocolates – she said it was the first Christmas present she had received in the 7 years she had been here.

Reminder of Important Dates

<i>When</i>	<i>What</i>	<i>Where</i>
7 th & 21 st Jan, 11 th & 25 th Feb, 11 th & 25 th Mar 8 th & 22 nd Apr	Eucharistic Adoration 10:00 am - 07:00 pm Please contact Janet on 01582614791 if you would like to spend an hour in Adoration	Luton Good Counsel Centre
20 th Feb & 17 th Apr	Acts of Witness 12:00 pm – 2:00 pm	Outside the Luton and Dunstable Hospital
Last Sat of each month, & 1 st Weds each month,	3-4pm 12 – 1pm	St. Anthony of Padua church, Headley Road, Oxford Entrance 4, Stoke Mandeville Hospital, Main Road, Aylesbury,

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY 2010

January

- 7th **Eucharistic Adoration at the Centre 10am-7pm**
- 8th Team meeting at the Centre 7.30pm
- 16th/17th **Appeal – Holy Ghost, Luton**
- 18th LGC management Committee meeting
- 21st **Eucharistic Adoration at the Centre 10am-7pm**
- 22nd Team meeting at the Centre 7.30pm
- 23rd/24th **Appeal at Holy Family & St. Johns, Luton**
- 30th/31st **Appeal at St. Margaret's, Luton**

February

- 5th Team meeting at the Centre 7.30pm
- 6th/7th **Appeal – The Church of the Transfiguration, Stv**
- 11th **Eucharistic Adoration at the Centre 10am-7pm**
- 13th/14th **Appeal – St. Joseph's Bedford**
- 14th /21st/28th **Holy Ghost Refreshments**
- 19th Team meeting at the Centre 7.30pm
- 20th **Act of Witness –L & D Hospital 12pm-2pm**
- 25th **Eucharistic Adoration at the Centre 10am-7pm**

March

- 5th Team meeting at the Centre 7.30pm
- 7th **Holy Ghost Refreshments**
- 11th **Eucharistic Adoration at the Centre 10am-7pm**
- 13th/14th **Mother's Day Cake Sale Holy Family & St.John's**
- 19th Team meeting at the Centre 7.30pm
- 22nd LGC management Committee meeting (tbc)
- 25th **Eucharistic Adoration at the Centre 10am-7pm**

April

- 8th **Eucharistic Adoration at the Centre 10am-7pm**
- 9th Team meeting at the Centre 7.30pm
- 17th **Act of Witness at L & D Hospital 12noon to 2pm**
- 22nd **Eucharistic Adoration at the Centre 10am-7pm**
- 23rd Team meeting at the Centre 7.30pm

Other News

Marriage and Family

Compulsory Sex Education in Primary Schools

The government has published a bill to make sex education compulsory in all state-run primary and secondary schools in England. The Children, Schools and Families bill which had its second reading on 11th January 2010 sets out the principles under which schools must teach sex education. The principles require that sex education "reflects a reasonable range of...cultural and other perspectives" and promotes "equality", "diversity" and "rights".

It is feared that the bill's principles will be used to ensure that pro-abortion propaganda dominates the content of sex education. Schoolgirls will be told that they have a right to abortion, that abortion is virtually harmless and that pro-abortion agencies provide good sexual health services. 'Equality' and 'diversity' will be used to suppress opposition to abortion. The abolition of parents' right to withdraw older children from sex education classes will ensure that no child leaves state schooling without having been brainwashed with an pro-abortion mentality. Please raise your concerns by writing to your MP. Information is available on www.writetothem.com.

The British government promotes same-sex civil partnerships across Europe. The British Prime Minister has told a homosexual magazine that the British government is working to have British same-sex civil partnerships recognised by the legal systems of all European countries. In January, Spain's Supreme Court ruled that parents do not have the right to opt out of the government's pro-homosexual and anti-family schools programme. In September, the European Parliament passed a resolution against a new Lithuanian law seeking to protect minors from sexualisation by society. According to Pope John Paul II, in a new generation, the normalisation of homosexual relationships through legal recognition of same-sex civil partnerships serves to break that close interconnection between sexuality, love and human life. Such 'normalisation' leads directly to placing pressures on educationalists to give young people a distorted education in human sexuality and thus entrenches a culture of death.

Cherie Blair attacks the Catholic Church's teaching on sexual ethics

In an interview with *Tatler*, the society magazine, Cherie Blair has attacked the Catholic Church's teaching on sexual ethics yet again. Mrs Blair told *Tatler*: "The Church says that sex is not just for procreation and does allow the natural form of contraception. Personally, I think it is better to go for contraception that works,

which is quite different from abortion. Controlling our fertility has been one of the key reasons why women have been able to progress and in Africa it can mean the difference between life and death, in preventing the spread of HIV. I hope the position of the Church will change on this."

Mrs Blair's comments are wrong in so many ways. Mrs Blair says that: "The Church says that sex is not just for procreation". Yes, the Church teaches sex is not just for procreation but it also teaches that every conjugal act must be open to the transmission of life. Mrs Blair claims that: "The Church...allows the natural form of contraception". In fact, the Church does not allow any form of contraception. Natural fertility awareness (e.g. the Billings Ovulation Method) is not contraception because, unlike contraception, nothing is done to close the conjugal act to the transmission of life. Mrs Blair says that: "It is better to go for contraception that works." In fact, the practice of natural fertility awareness (e.g. the Billings Ovulation Method) is more effective than contraception in spacing births (better than 99%, according to clinical trials. Mrs Blair claims that: "Contraception...is quite different from abortion." The Church teaches that contraception and abortion are chained together. As the late Pope John Paul II taught in *Evangelium Vitae*.

Contraception

UN's anti-life movement

The UNFPA (the United Nations Population Fund) issued a report – state of world population 2009, which argued that climate change should be combatted by reducing population growth through contraception. The Population Division projects fertility in the less-developed regions to drop from 2.73 children per woman in 2005-2010 to 2.05 in 2045-2050. To achieve such reductions, the Population Division states, it is essential that access to voluntary family planning expands, particularly in the least developed countries. One of the UNFPA's existing anti-life strategies is the one-child policy in China, which is implemented by forced abortions, forced sterilisations, compulsory fittings of abortifacient birth control devices, abandonment of children and deliberate killing of orphans through neglect.

Contraceptive pill to teenage girls without prescription

A controversial NHS pilot is allowing pharmacies to supply the contraceptive pill to teenage girls without prescription. The pilot project is likely to attract criticism from those concerned that making contraception more readily available to 16-year-

old girls might encourage them to have sex. Health Minister Lord Darzi said there was strong evidence that better provision of contraception would significantly reduce unintended pregnancies. Mark Haughton, from the Christian Medical Fellowship said "I'm not aware of any evidence to show that this is going to be effective. It may be pouring petrol on the flames. Doctors and pharmacists are at the end of the chain. What we need to do is to work on the whole area of relationships - that is what is effective."

Euthanasia

DPP's Interim Prosecuting Policy is attacked ...

The Director of Public Prosecutions (DDP) states in its Interim Prosecuting Policy that "*it is a 'factor against prosecution' if the victim had a terminal illness; or a severe and incurable physical disability; or a severe degenerative physical condition; from which there was no possibility of recovery*" Archbishop Vincent Nichols in response to the DPP's guidance says that the policy risks creating categories of people who are given less protection in the law and therefore runs the risk of seeing those categories of people as less worthy of the protection of the law" such as those who are disabled, or have a history of suicide attempts.

A group of leading lawyers, peers and former judges including Baroness Butler-Sloss, the former head of the family division of the High Court, Lord Mackay of Clashfern, a former Lord Chancellor, and Lord Carlile of Berriew, the Government's terrorism legislation adviser stand against the changes in the law warning that the plans pose "serious dangers for public safety". The group has signed up to response to the proposals from campaign group Care Not Killing, in which it warns that changes to the law could mean that the lives of stroke-sufferers, disabled people and those with arthritis, could be at risk. Peter Saunders, the director of Care Not Killing, said: "The current law acts as a powerful deterrent against abuse and exploitation of vulnerable people and has been firmly upheld by Parliament. Removing these safeguards could lead to increase in vulnerable and disabled people being pressured into ending their lives."

Caring does not involve Killing

Association for Palliative Medicine of Great Britain and Ireland – an association of doctors who work in hospices and specialist palliative care units in hospitals, reports "as specialists in care of the dying, we have met countless terminally ill patients who viewed death as their solution, only to say weeks or months later that they never realised that life could become so rich and fulfilling again. Doctors cannot go in two directions at once: striving to relieve distress and simultaneously giving up such efforts by assisting suicide. We have seen countless patients whose

situation was viewed as hopeless, but for whom much could be done to restore quality to the end of their life; it did not involve killing them”.

Misdiagnosed for 23 years as being in a coma

The newly-revealed case of Rom Houben who was misdiagnosed for 23 years as being in a coma-like state, challenges the pro-euthanasia mentality which exists regarding severely incapacitated patients. Mr Houben, a Belgian man, was paralysed by a car accident. Until three years ago, Mr Houben had been misdiagnosed as being in a persistent vegetative state. Doctors assumed he was unconscious, when in fact he has near-normal brain function and can hear and understand his surroundings. Following new tests which revealed the misdiagnosis, Mr Houben has been provided with equipment to read and type.

Janet Thomas of No Less Human, a group within SPUC Pro-Life, told the media: "This case highlights the huge dangers in assessing profoundly disabled people as having lives not worth living. Surely, with all the medical resources at our disposal, a truly civilised society would be concentrating on saving and improving life, not terminating it.

"Rom Houben is not the first example of a person diagnosed as being in PVS but in fact being aware of the world around him. Jean Dominique Bauby, former editor of Elle, wrote the book 'The Diving Bell and the Butterfly' while only able to blink an eyelid. Marian Sallery of north Wales spent 11 years unable to communicate although fully aware of the world around. She was not diagnosed with Locked-in Syndrome until after her death. Keith Andrews of the Royal Hospital for Neurodisability found in 1996 that, of 40 people diagnosed as being in PVS, nearly half were completely misdiagnosed.

Abortion

Abortion on the rise in the UK

Figures released by the Department of Health in 2008 reveal that 20,247 women under the age of 25 had a repeat abortion - with 5,000 of those being teenagers. NHS statistics show that around 3,800 women have had four or more abortions, and that about a third of all that year's 195,296 terminations in England and Wales were repeat abortions. In all, 46,336 unattached women of all ages ended a pregnancy for at least the second time in 2008, as did 9,536 married women, of whom 5,774 were under 35 and 3,762 older. The Conservative shadow Health Minister Mrs Anne Milton said "Abortions can be incredibly traumatic for women

and terminating an unwanted pregnancy can have a damaging effect on mental health."

Stem Cells

Man's eye saved by stem cell

A 38-year-old man who was blinded in one eye, 15 years ago, has regained his eyesight due to a groundbreaking new stem cell treatment. The man lost his sight in a chemical attack on his way home following a night out in 1994. On his bus journey home he tried to intervene in an altercation between two men which eventually spilled into a fight. When he attempted to break up the scuffle, one of the men began squirting ammonia around the bus. The chemical hit his right eye, causing great damage to his cornea, leaving him with severely impaired vision - a condition known as Limbal Stem Cell Deficiency (LSCD). LSCD is a painful, blinding disease that requires long-term, costly treatment with frequent clinic visits and intensive hospital admissions. The man described his suffering as "it was like looking through scratched Perspex. My eye was sensitive to light, it was constantly watering. I was unable to drive as any bright light would cause me pain". After undergoing various treatments with creams and washes he became a guinea pig for trials towards his eventual stem cell procedure. He was one of eight patients with impaired vision who had been treated successfully by surgeons at the North East England Stem Cell Institute. The treatment involved using a tiny amount of stem cells from the good eye and growing them in a lab. The growth was then implanted in the damaged eye, which then helped it to begin functioning as normal - eventually restoring sight. Dr Francisco Figueiredo, a consultant eye surgeon, that led the project said: "Corneal cloudiness has been estimated to cause blindness in eight million people world wide each year. This new treatment will alleviate patient suffering and remove the need for long term multiple medications as well as returning the patient to functional and social independence."

International News

United States

In an undercover video, Planned Parenthood employees were caught lying about pre-natal development and encouraging a young woman to obtain an abortion because "women die having babies." Planned Parenthood one of the reproductive health care providers prides itself on being "a trusted health care provider and an informed educator". The counsellor in the video says that a 10-week old unborn child has no heart beat, only "heart tones," which she says begin at 7 weeks. In the video, both a counsellor and an abortionist use a variety of circumlocutions to

avoid referring to an unborn child as a baby, referring to the baby variously as a "fetus," "what's in the uterus right now," "the embryo that's developing inside," "something growing inside your uterus." They continually assure the woman, whom they believe to be pregnant, that the pre-born child is not a baby and variously tell her that it only becomes a baby at 6-7 months of pregnancy or at birth.

Spain

The Press director for the Spanish Bishops' Conference, Isidro Catela Marcos has written a letter on behalf of the bishops reiterating that Catholic politicians cannot support abortion. The letter comes in response to the pro-choice statements made by a Catholic who is head of Spain's Congress, Jose Bono. In an interview with the Spanish Daily, El Mundo, Bono twisted the words of John Paul II's encyclical "Evangelium Vitae" to justify his pro-choice stance. In response, the bishop rejected Bono's reasoning and noted that Catholic politicians cannot vote for pro-abortion policies. The Bishop also commented on the country's abortion reform that is currently in the hands of the Senate. In December 2009, Spain's House of Representatives voted 184 to 158 to pass a reform to the country's abortion laws that would allow for the procedure up to the 14th week of pregnancy and limit the conscientious objections of medical professionals. The Bishops also criticised the law for treating abortion "as a women's right, and because women's health is understood to be 'social well-being', in addition to 'physical and psychological well-being'. It should be condemned because it imposes abortion propaganda on the education system".

In Valencia, Archbishop Carlos Osoro of Valencia denounced abortion in a well-publicized sermon as the "worst dictatorship that can exist" and "the greatest injustice in history because it ends the lives of the weakest". The remarks were made on the Feast of the Holy Innocents, which is celebrated in the Catholic Church every year on December 28.

South Korea

Doctors organised Pro-Life groups to discourage rampant abortion in South Korea. A group of Korean doctors are hoping to motivate the people of their country to re-examine the catastrophic pro-abortion culture in which they live. They are hoping to convince the government to enforce the existing abortion laws by organising groups to discourage women from having abortion and to report clinics that perform illegal abortions. Dr Choi Anna and her colleague held a News Conference in November 2009 to ask "forgiveness" for having performed illegal abortions, and have since formed the Group Gynob which calls on other doctors to

declare whether they have performed illegal abortions. She said “we sold our souls for money....abortion was an easy way to make money”. Another similar group has formed to encourage women to carry their pregnancies to birth and to encourage doctors to abandon the practice of abortion.

Egypt

An Egyptian woman has died from a legal abortion that ironically was diagnosed to save her life. The woman had the abortion because of life threatening complications due to an abnormal pregnancy which saw the unborn child attached to her cervix. The woman’s husband said his wife was admitted to the hospital because of vaginal bleeding. Doctors eventually determined that the unborn child who was 18 weeks into gestation had attached to the mother’s cervix and posed a risk of immediate death. However, after they performed the abortion, they realised they were unable to stop the bleeding. The failed abortion resulted in the hospital having to subject the woman to two more surgical procedures including a hysterectomy. Doctors reassured the woman’s husband that the bleeding had stopped, but he sadly found her dead in her hospital bed.

India

An Indian woman has killed herself following an abortion she obtained after pressure from her husband, who did not want children. The woman committed suicide by hanging herself in her home after having the abortion she did not want to have. The woman’s father told police that her husband, 24, and her mother-in-law, 40, had put tremendous pressure on the young woman since their marriage just months ago.

Netherlands

An article in Dutch News has reported that there were approximately 200 more euthanasia deaths in the Netherlands in 2009 as compared to the figures in 2008. This means that approximately 2500 euthanasia deaths took place in 2009 in the Netherlands, but the actual number is unknown because the government acknowledges that only 80% of all euthanasia deaths are reported. In order to have an accurate number of deaths that are directly and intentionally caused by physicians in the Netherlands, one needs to know that assisted suicide is a separate category in the Netherlands. Therefore, one must add the assisted suicide deaths to the number of euthanasia deaths. The number of assisted suicide deaths was not reported in the article but it is most approximately 400 deaths each year. Another category of deaths is deaths without “explicit consent”. The most recent government report (2005) showed that the number of deaths without explicit consent was approximately 550. Many of the 550 deaths are directly and

intentionally caused by the physician but not reported as euthanasia because they lacked consent.

Lithuania

Lithuania is to be admired for standing up to the powers that be and striking a blow for national sovereignty against an attempt by the European Parliament (EP) to condemn their recently approved child-centred legislation. In particular we must admire their willingness to stand firm for parents as the primary educators of their children in the face of an attempt to indoctrinate children and repress parents by trying to impose novel doctrines of human sexuality on their children.

Slovak MEP Anna Zaborska was quoted at the time as saying "Today a national law from Lithuania which aims to protect minors from sexualisation by society is condemned by the EU institutions.

Germany

Christian fathers were sentenced to prison for refusing to allow their children to attend compulsory sex education classes at school. The International Human Rights Group, a Christian legal defense organization that defends religious liberty in Europe, reports that in addition to refusing to allow their children to attend sex education classes, the families also resisted having their children enlisted in a theatre production of "Mein Körper gehört mir" or "My Body Belongs to Me," which informs young children in how to engage in sexual intercourse.

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