

# YOUTH MINISTRY

## ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST

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### March for Life

Volume 1 Issue 3

Month of the Holy Name 2011

#### A RESPECT FOR LIFE FROM CONCEPTION TO NATURAL DEATH

#### Stand Up for What You Believe!!!

#### The Sacredness of LIFE!

On the bitter cold, snowy morning of Saturday January 22, 2011 eleven of us from St. John, Essexville joined 400 others from the Diocese of Saginaw and more than 400,000 other participants from across our Nation in the March for Life held in Washington, D.C. to defend the rights of the unborn. Those attending from St. John were:

Erin Campau,  
Jessica DeWyse,  
Jane Grzegorzcyk,  
Andrew and Kim Harvey,

*Psalm 139:13-16*

*"For it was You who formed my inward parts; You knit me together in my mother's womb.*

*I praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made.*

*Wonderful are your works; that I know very well.*

*My frame was not hidden from you, when I was being made in secret, intricately woven in the depths of the earth. Your eyes beheld my unformed substance.*

*In Your book were written all the days that were formed for me, when none of them as yet existed."*

Father... Thank you for the gift of life. Thank you for the virtue of love, Your gift to us. Decrease our fear. Increase our understanding. Help us to know we have a choice. Help us to know we are not alone. In Your limitless love and mercy show us how we can help. Teach us to show mercy to others. In Jesus' holy name. Amen.



## Let the Light Shine

When Lisa, my 15 year old daughter, informed me she wanted to attend the March for Life 2011, I didn't flinch. I obtained all the information we needed. Adult chaperons would be needed as well. Even though I didn't know exactly what I was in for, I knew I was in God's hands.

What I was most impressed with was how well the students behaved from the beginning during Mass at the Diocese until the very end when we arrived home. Knowing each and every student is filled with the Holy Spirit makes me happy.

A good shepherd is willing to do anything—even die—to protect the sheep under his protection. Jesus describes himself as just such a shepherd, who cares not for sheep but for people. May I take this time to thank two wonderful shepherds from St. Stanislaus who took our group into their sheepfold, Mary Roth and Jeri Sinicki. I cannot thank them enough for all they did to make all of us feel comfortable throughout the whole trip. I thank Jane Grzegorzcyk, our Director of Youth Ministry, for organizing for us the opportunity of a lifetime!

I wish each and every one of you could have shared in the Sunday Mass with Bishop Cistone presiding with more than 2,000 people (400 from the Diocese of Saginaw) at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception along with the other clergy from our diocese.

*"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light" (Isaiah 9:2a) and on Sunday, January 23, 2011 a great light radiated before thousands around the country who were joining in the March for Life. A moment my daughter and I will never forget.*

The members of Congress who marched along with 400,000 others on the frigid but prayerful day set a new attendance record this year. Fifty-two members of the House of Representatives, along with one Senator, came to express their deep concern for legislation that will overturn Roe v Wade.

*"NOW CHOOSE LIFE, SO THAT YOU AND YOUR CHILDREN MAY LIVE <sup>20</sup> AND THAT YOU MAY LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD, LISTEN TO HIS VOICE, AND HOLD FAST TO HIM. FOR THE LORD IS YOUR LIFE, AND HE WILL GIVE YOU MANY YEARS IN THE LAND HE SWORE TO GIVE TO YOUR FATHERS, ABRAHAM, ISAAC AND JACOB." DEUTERONOMY 30:19-20*

See you back in D.C. on January 23, 2012.....**AMEN!**

Sharron Rochow

## Highlights of the March for Life

The highlight of the trip for me was the Mass and rally before the march at the Verizon Center in Washington D.C.

Sharing Mass with approximately 20,000 was amazing.

The rally was fun and upbeat. I didn't know I could be that upbeat at 7:00 in the morning!

*Lauren Koziatek,  
Senior, Garber*

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I really enjoyed my experience in Washington D.C during the March For Life. My favorite things were the Mass at the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception and the March itself.

It was also neat to get to know Bishop Cistone too! I can't wait to go again next year!

*Lisa Rochow  
Garber Sophomore*

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When I heard we were going to the March for Life, I had no idea what to expect at all.

When we finally got to the D.C. Armory where one of the rallies and Masses were taking place, it was simply amazing and breathless.

We had the longest ordeal with getting on and off the subway, but getting to the rally was all worth it. I have never seen that many people in one place—knowing they were all pro-life!

Just when you begin to wonder what our society has come to, when it seems as if everyone around you is pro-choice, it is the most reassuring thing to see a giant stadium filled with people who are all trying to abolish abortion.

It was even more amazing when you knew there was another stadium filled with approximately 18,000 people who were also pro-life Catholics. That means there were at least 28,000 Catholics at the March.

There were probably many others who couldn't go to the March but are definitely pro-life.

It was very refreshing to see all those who support your opinion and believe abortion to be wrong.

Going to the March was even better. I got to see everyone in one general area; over 400,000!

It was utterly and simply an amazing sight to see.

*Madeline Reyes  
Eighth Grade, All Saints*

My favorite part of the trip was meeting other people from local youth groups. It was nice to know that people had similar beliefs as you and they lived in the same area so you could still keep in touch. Also, I liked the Mass at the National Basilica of the Immaculate Conception and at the Verizon Center (along with the rally). It was a fun quick trip!

*Erin Campau  
Garber Senior*

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The Washington D.C. March for Life trip was very cool! It was powerful having so many people unite for one purpose! If you haven't been to a March yet you might consider it!

*Andrew Harvey,  
19 years old*

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The experience was amazing and life changing. Just to see all of the people attending the March was unbelievable; over 400,000 people! I felt good when we were done, because we were standing up for what I believed in. I can't wait to go again next year!

*Jessica DeWyse  
Freshman, Garber*

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My favorite parts of the trip to D.C. were meeting new people and the rally/mass at the Verizon Center.

# LIFE, Liberty and the Pursuit of Happiness

Jane Grzegorzcyk

We went to Washington, D.C. to protest the thirty-eight year old law in which abortion was legalized. We went in prayer. We went in love. We went in peace. When a law is wrong, we have an obligation to try to overturn it.

*"We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness."*

This is one of the most famous phrases in the United States Declaration of Independence. But what does it all mean? The founding fathers of the United States believed in God. They were people of faith with strong religious beliefs. Our founding fathers believed that God bestowed upon all people—entitlements; entitlements so important that no earthly power, no government, can deny them.

Yet, the law is doing just that; allowing people to deny life to the most vulnerable; to those who not yet have a voice. A few questions to consider might be: Are our bodies our own to do with what we want? To whom does a babies' body belong; to the mother or to themselves? Or do we belong to...God?

We have been given by God, the right to life. When does this life begin? Some say life begins when the heart begins to beat at four weeks gestation. Others argue that life begins when a baby can survive outside of a woman's body; the age of viability, twenty weeks gestation. Still others, when the first breath is taken. ***The Church believes and teaches life to begin at the moment of conception.*** When does conception or fertilization occur? Conception occurs in the fallopian tube. Even before implantation into the uterine wall, life begins. Which gives us much to consider.

Obviously, people have varying thoughts on when life begins. If it *could* be this or *maybe* that, would it not be **prudent** to decide with the Church; never taking a chance in case life had begun?

God created us with free will. We do have the freedom to choose. People did choose abortion even when it was illegal. However, statistics show the number of abortions went up steadily and drastically with legalization until 1994 when they reached a peak. Since then, abortion has been on a decline.

Some will argue that the increase was due to the increase in the degree of safety in procuring them. However, through research, it has been proven that the mortality rate of women from the abortion procedure has not changed. Abortions, whether legal or illegal, are not safe. Still further, the physical and emotional complications on women and men are tremendous.

We are educating and becoming educated. Babies in the mother's womb are indeed living beings. As created beings, they have the unalienable right to LIFE, LIBERTY, and the pursuit of HAPPINESS. We will stand up for our belief that life begins at the moment of conception. We will continue to work to change the law. We are grateful for the support given to us by St. John Sharing Committee, the Essexville K of C's, Father Wolf, Father Pat and the Diocese of Saginaw.