



Dedicated to: Our Lady of Guadalupe, Patroness of the Unborn

St. Juan Diego Society Women's Center NEWSLETTER

Website: <http://www.jdswomenscenter.org>

We welcome any comments or suggestions that will improve this newsletter.

Published by:

Juan Diego Society

12 North White Road # 5
San Jose, CA 95127

Editor: Patricia Gonzalez

Phone: (408) 258-2008

November - December
2009

Miracle at the Sidewalk by Patsy Gonzalez, JDS volunteer

Weeks had gone by without turning a woman around from an abortion outside Planned Parenthood in San Mateo. The 40 –Days Campaign had come and gone but the sidewalk faithful had persisted in coming out to pray and counsel— thanks to the tenacious soul, Sandy Dillon of ProLife San Mateo who had pursued the efforts to keep the sidewalk presence organized. The wonderful campaign brought out new faces that have never been outside, much less, seen an abortion mill. They had felt the gentle “call” to stand and pray at the killing place for the troubled women who hadn’t the courage to have their babies.

The familiar temptation to discouragement after a long, dry spell started to creep up. “Why is it so hard to save a baby? Why aren’t we turning anyone back? Are we not praying enough? Are we making a difference? A million and a half babies aborted a year, and we can’t save even one?” My faithless thoughts continued on with a litany of questions that I *knew* were unproductive. Hadn’t I been at clinics long enough to see countless miracles unfold, even when it looked fruitless? Once again, it seemed time for the good Lord to intervene. Centuries ago, He asked His Disciples, “ How long must I put up with you?”. It seems after 2,000 years, He is still asking His disciples the question--- at least, of this one.

She was coming down the street walking between her mother and boyfriend. Usually, cars bound for the clinic park in the parking lot behind the property where escorts can successfully steer the women into the facility shielded from the proliferators on the sidewalk. This little group parked across the street on the far side of the street undetected by the escorts.

I casually approached the girl and said, “If you are planning to have an abortion today, we are here for you. We can help”. She turned to her mother and then answered, “It is too late. They put in the laminaria yesterday”. Laminaria is a seaweed product inserted into the opening of the cervix (continued on page 2)



Life And My Mother by Nuong-Minh-Ngoc (Rosa) Nguyen, JDS volunteer

2009 has been a year of changes and uncertainties for me, and probably for many people too. What can I be thankful for, this year ? Somehow the answer is easier than in “normal “ times. This year I can be thankful for something simple yet so special, something very precious but so often taken for granted: LIFE. I am thankful for LIFE, now more than ever. After losing my job I began to volunteer at the St. Juan Diego Society Women’s Center where we are trying to save one life at a time. I am reminded everyday that life can be lost so easily, especially when it has just started, and is not visible enough to show the wonders it already has, and could have in the future.

LIFE begins for all of us with someone very special: a mother. We celebrate her on Mother’s day, but for me, an even more important day to honor my mother is my birthday. To mark the day she brought me into LIFE in a more meaningful way, I started a new tradition while my mother was living with us: my birthday would not be so much a celebration about me, but rather a special day to show gratitude to my mother with a gift. Was she not the one who had the toughest “job” on the day I was born? My mother really loved the idea of making a birthday an opportunity to show appreciation to our mothers and to all who have been there for us in our lives.

My mother, Theresa Bernadette, also brought me into another life, the life of a Christian . She gave me the chance to have more than just the natural life I started with, taking me (and my siblings) along with her, in her journey to a new faith. French nuns introduced my mother to Catholicism and she was overjoyed, but it was very challenging, and at times painful, for my mother to live as Catholic when relatives and friends were not. Catholicism was often seen as the religion of the colonialist French, as a faith not allowing people to continue some Vietnamese traditions (such as offering of food to the deceased) that were part of the wonderful ways the Vietnamese venerate their ancestors. My mother’s kindness, her courage and her faith helped her overcome many obstacles and difficulties, and she became a passionate witness to God’s love for many, from close relatives to complete strangers.

(continued on page 2)



Rosa and her mother

She was there for the mothers as a gentle friend, a caring counselor or a shoulder to cry on when needed.



Miracle at the Sidewalk (continued from page 1)

to dilate it, making it easier to use abortion instruments with less complications. The abortion would have to be done within 24 hours or risk infection. Her mother, who spoke no English, was making decisions for Evelina, who was only 14. Girls at that age are most at risk for abortions because they are so young. For many parents, it is the logical thing to do. With the laminaria in place, it didn't seem hopeful that they would be willing to go to the emergency room at the local hospital to have it removed.

Letty, a Spanish speaking prolifer, who "happened" to linger later than usual, immediately stepped in to convince Beatriz, Evelina's mother, to rush her to the emergency room, to remove the laminaria. The little group happily returned to the mill hours later after the successful procedure. That was miracle no. 1.

Saving the baby, with God's grace, turned out to be the *easy* part. Call after frustrating call to the different pro-life doctors in the area proved unsuccessful; none accepted Medi-Cal and to make matters worse, the laminaria removal put her in the "high risk" category that the doctors were inclined to refuse. Only the New Life Center in Daly City would take her, but it was quite a distance to drive her to appointments, specially if an emergency came up. At her age, she would be needing countless appointments, particularly as she came closer to delivery. With her mother busy at work, I would have to drive her to most of her appointments. It narrowed our choices down to two hospitals—San Mateo County General and Stanford Hospital in Palo Alto. I decided to call Stanford first.

Interviewing the Obstetrics Department's receptionist was going to be a challenge. If she sounded even a little disapproving of the 14-year old's pregnancy, we would go elsewhere. I opened with a question that brought a miraculous response. "I have a 14-year old girl in my care who has just changed her mind about an abortion, is it possible to have her see a doctor at your clinic?" The receptionist inquired how the girl was in my care, then asked if we were the center on White Road in San Jose? (She was referring to the CPC down the street). Then she responded, "I was thinking about doing the same thing 9 years ago, and those wonderful people changed my mind. My son is 9 years old now. Get her paperwork in order—I will be happy to schedule her appointments." The Lord was opening doors for us. That was miracle no. 2. (continued on page 3)

Life And My Mother (continued from page 1)

A flyer at Our Lady of Peace Church introduced me to the St. San Juan Diego Women's Center but I believe that it was my mother who guided me there because she wanted me to start being involved in pro-life activities. LIFE has a special meaning for my mother. Looking back I can see that my mother firmly believed in the Sanctity of Life. This conviction guided all her decisions in spite of adverse consequences.

My mother lived most of her life in Vietnam. Being a midwife in a society and at a time where many babies were delivered by midwives, my mother was certainly in an unique position to see how wonderful LIFE is. Since I was separated from my mother by the war for 37 years, I do not know much about her career, but the little information I got from her and people who knew her helped me realize that my mother, as a midwife, was not just delivering babies. She was there to bring love to both the baby and the mother at childbirth, and sometimes even years later. I have been surprised to find people who still remember my mother as a midwife, bringing their adult children to see the lady who delivered them some 40-50 years ago. My mother was there for all these new mothers as a gentle friend, a caring counselor or a shoulder to cry on when needed.

One of the stories my mother shared with me was of a lady who had only daughters, and too many of them. At the birth of another daughter, the husband was very disappointed and even angry. My mother consoled the desperate wife, helping her see that every life has value and could lead to a wonderful future. And in that case it did: the daughter became a blessing for her family, specially for her mother.

That was one of my mother's good memories. There were bad ones too. After the Communist takeover, while working in a public maternity clinic where abortions were done, my mother courageously refused to perform abortions. As a punishment, she was sent to a remote clinic, in a poor area where pregnant women were often peasants, working hard in rice paddies or vegetables gardens, with no time to take care of their health. My mother reached out to them by going to their work location and trying to find there a place with enough privacy to give them some prenatal care. She remembered with emotion receiving a chicken egg in gratitude from some of those poor women. Provided with just one syringe and needle she did her best to sterilize it, boiling it in a sauce pan, over a hay fire. It must have been a daunting task for someone like her: a city lady, a doctor's wife who was used to having servants.

Nothing could stop my mother in her crusade to protect life because for her, all life were precious: the life of the poor as much as the life of the rich, the life of a pregnant women as well as the tiny life inside her womb.

My mother spent the last years of her life here, in the United States. She became a pro-life "activist" in a different way. She kept reminding young people about chastity before marriage so that there would never be a need for terrible decisions such as abortion. She encouraged married couples not to delay having children just to get a better job or a better house, to not risk missing their chance to give life, when they are at their best, health wise.

Sometimes when I go to the St. Juan Diego Women's Center, I "bring" my mother with me, because I know she would be happy to be there. She passed away more than two years ago, so it's only a photo of her that I carry, but I can feel her there with me, closer to me than ever, and always reminding me to be thankful for LIFE.

Editor's Note: Rosa's mother, Theresa Bernadette, is one of the special intercessor for the JDS Women's Center. We ask for her help and prayers when faced with a difficult life or death situation. Her tireless devotion to LIFE was exemplary.

Things were going quite smoothly with Evelina’s appointments until her first ultrasound. Her baby girl was diagnosed with an anomaly called Gastroschisis, a condition whereby the tiny digestive organs grow *outside* the baby. The condition was treatable, a team of doctors would be on hand to perform the delicate surgery on the baby at birth but the newborn would have to be in the hospital for a couple of months. The doctor reading the ultrasound offered another option—a late term abortion.

I was devastated at the news as I sat in the waiting room and asked the Lord, “You brought us this far only to put this baby back at risk again?” The response was swift, “You want to save only *perfect* babies”? It seemed but a thought in my mind, but I knew it was genuine.

Miracle no. 3 was not long in coming. Beatriz, Evelina’s mother, who played a key role in responding to the negative prognosis, responded simply, “ God inspired us at the last minute to have this baby, are we going to reverse our decision because this baby has a condition? We will keep her”.

Everything is moving along smoothly and the joy surrounding the birth of this precious child is palpable. Both sets of grandparents, now on board with the coming of the baby, have set up a room full of baby paraphernalia and clothing fit for a princess. The San Mateo Prolife group threw an enormous baby shower for Evelina, proving that their commitment to life goes beyond the abortion clinics.

The baby’s birth has been set for Dec. 28, the Feast of the Holy Innocents. How fitting that this beautiful child, destined for slaughter, would be born on the feast of the babies that lost their lives for the Savior.

Evelina’s journey to motherhood is also mine as we walk this together. I continue to be reminded that when we step out in faith, we must also learn to step aside and let God unfold His miracles without questioning *how*. He, who sent the grace to save the baby, will also provide the means to carry it through. We need only to be willing and He makes us *able*.

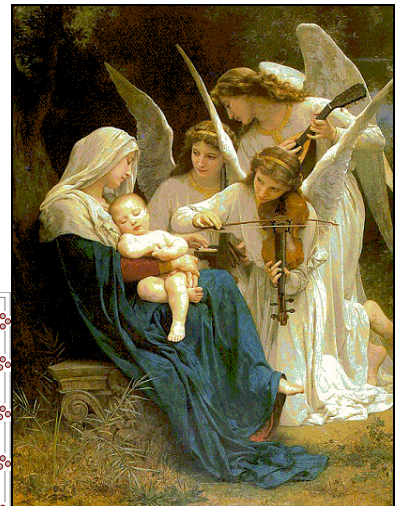
In the spirit of Christmas, as we anticipate the coming of the Christ Child, we lift up our hearts in gratitude as we also anticipate the coming of the unborn babies, saved from an abortion, who will live out His plan in this world. They are precious offerings at the manger for His greatest gift of Salvation.

Special Tribute

Evelina’s story is written in tribute to the members of Prolife San Mateo who been instrumental in saving five babies outside Planned Parenthood San Mateo since the spring of this year. Sandy Dillon and Jessica Munn were successful at keeping a sidewalk presence outside the facility in the aftermath of the 40 Days Campaign for Life. Evelina’s baby is one of the fruits of San Mateo Prolife’s commitment to defending life. It has been the St. Juan Diego Women’s Center’s privilege to participate in their efforts to save lives.

I continue to be reminded that when we step out in faith, we must also learn to step aside and let God unfold His miracles without questioning how.

WE NEED HELP in 2010 to make JDS even more welcoming! If you can help with any of these needs, please contact us!
*New Carpet
*Paint/Painting Help
*Monetary Donations



An Encounter with Angels
Tips on Sidewalk Counseling
By Patsy Gonzalez

An Urgent Appeal to All the Friends of the St. Juan Diego Society Women’s Center

We urgently need your help to continue our mission. The survival of the St. Juan Diego Women’s Center rests solely on your generosity.

Your gift will enable us to save another baby.

No amount, accompanied with love and prayers, is too small.

Make checks payable to: Juan Diego Society,
12 North White Road # 5, San Jose CA 95127

Based on her 17 years experience of saving babies; Patsy Gonzalez has written this handbook to help in forming more effective sidewalk counselors.

Now Available

for more information call:
St. Juan Diego Women’s Center
(408) 258-2008

To all our Friends, Benefactors, Prayer Warriors and Volunteers who are instrumental in saving twenty babies this year:

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year !!

Juan Diego Society
(*St. Juan Diego Society Women's Center Newsletter*)
12 North White Road #5
San Jose, CA 95127

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit #4473
San Jose, CA

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Top Ten Pro-Life Gifts to Give this Christmas

by Elizabeth Shearer, JDS Volunteer

For so many, Christmas has become a time to avoid the commercialism and focus on Christ. The good news is that the Christmas season can actually be a great time of evangelizing the Gospel of Life! Here is a list of some life-affirming gifts to teach, encourage and embolden everyone on your list:

- 1) ***Bella*** DVD -- tells the story of love, family, and redemption, while promoting life and adoption as the loving option to abortion. bellamoviesite.com
- 2) ***Angel in the Waters*** -- story of a tiny baby in its mother's womb who explores the waters and talks to his ever-present angel. angelinthewaters.com
- 3) ***Pro-Life Reflections for Everyday*** -- by Fr. Pavone, pro-life devotional for daily encouragement for living the Gospel of Life. priestsforlife.org/store
- 4) **Precious Feet Lapel Pin** -- exact size and shape of an unborn baby's feet at ten weeks after conception, **perfect** for starting the conversation about life's beginnings. prolifepins.com
- 5) **Rosary of the Unborn** -- Rosary with beads containing a tiny model of a pre-born baby to remind us to always pray to end abortion. Rosaryoftheunborn.com
- 6) ***Umbert the Unborn: A Womb With a View*** -- a cartoon pre-born baby who gives the unborn a voice, using humor and truth. umberttheunborn.com
- 7) ***Horton Hears a Who*** Book/DVD -- one of Dr. Seuss' most beloved characters, Horton, takes on the task of saving the Whos, infinitesimal creatures on a speck of dust. amazon.com
- 8) **Pro-life T-shirts, buttons and bumper stickers** -- and like items are a great way to share the pro-life message with someone you love. So many new creative phrases and images to proclaim the humanity of the unborn child. Go to all.org or prolifeworld.com
- 9) **Catholic Saints Dolls** -- A great alternative to the American Girl dolls, the collections includes pro-life inspirations like Our Lady of Guadalupe, Pope John Paul II, St. Maximilian Kolbe and more! softsaints.com
- 10) **The Miracle of Love Rosary Cd** - a musical rosary meditation promoting the sanctity of life from conception to natural death. crossroadsinititive.com

****But wait!** There are even MORE ways to promote Life -- and do it without spending money!

- 1) Make a homemade "Mom Pampering" Coupon book for a mother you love. Include coupons for: free babysitting, help with laundry/cleaning, etc.
- 2) Offer a Holy Hour or Rosary in reparation for those little babies killed by abortion and for their mothers.
- 3) Visit a nursing home, children's hospital or soup kitchen to sing carols, pass out Christmas cards or cookies to those less fortunate.
- 4) Volunteer (or make a donation in the name of a family member or friend) at your local **Catholic** Crisis Pregnancy Center. (hint, hint!)