



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

**July-August
2010**

A Mighty Army for a Mighty Cause by Patsy Gonzalez, JDS volunteer

The only thing one can expect is the unexpected at the St. Juan Diego pregnancy center. Though the days that come and go may unfold some strange and marvelous surprises, one day in May proved to be more unusual than others.

It began with the appearance of a young woman at the door on a Friday morning that had never come to our center before, never knew it existed, never had any intentions of coming but felt compelled to drop in when she saw the sign at the back entrance of the building when she was on her way to another appointment. Perhaps, she felt, a "woman's center" might have some information she needed for a friend who was carrying a baby she didn't want.

Marta inquired about our services and heaved a sigh of relief when she found out that we provided support for mothers who were troubled by their unexpected pregnancies. After taking some brochures in Spanish, she made an unusual request. Would it be possible to have someone who spoke Spanish call her friend, Elisa, to encourage her to have her baby? Would it be possible to call her without revealing who gave her number away? Elisa's abortion was in 4 days on the following Tuesday --- she was almost 12 weeks pregnant which would put her at greater risk for a 2nd trimester abortion if she waited much longer. We had little time to lose. Simple as the request sounded, our Spanish-speaking counselors were either out of the country or unavailable.

It wasn't long before the dilemma of who might take on the case was solved when Beth, a Juan Diego volunteer walked in with a friend, Dolores Yee, who was interested in knowing more about the center and it's mission. Dolores was the Comitium president for the Legion of Mary in San Jose and was interested in exploring pro-life involvement as an active work for their Legion members. The Legion of Mary is a mighty spiritual army founded by Irishman Frank Duff in the 1920s to be a leaven in society to evangelize it and infuse it with spiritual values through its members. It has since grown into a phenomenal number of members worldwide. (continued on page 2)



Dolores Yee

**Juan Diego Women's Center
is in urgent need of:**

- Diapers**
- Formula**
- Baby Clothes**
- Blankets**
- Cash**

Building a Culture of Life and Love by Sheila Palazzo, JDS Volunteer

On January 22, 1973, 37 years ago, the U.S. Supreme Court legalized abortion. Over 50 MILLION lives have been taken since that day by surgical abortion. Countless lives have been taken over the years through the use of contraception and other artificial drugs. We do not have statistics for chemical abortions. These lives are not accounted for by any scientific data, yet we know that each and every precious life is known to God, our Creator. What have we learned from all of this violence against our most innocent and defenseless brothers and sisters? What is ahead for us as a human family? How do we grow into becoming a people that love more and defend life, not take life?

Truth: a human life begins at conception. **Lie:** It is just blood and tissue, not a human person until born. **Truth:** Life is sacred. **Lie:** Life is disposable. **Truth:** Abortion kills. **Lie:** Abortion is a right. **Truth:** Abortion causes great damage to women, men, children, families, and society. **Lie:** Abortion is safe, legal, and good for all. **Truth:** All human life is created in the image of God. All human life has great dignity because of this truth. The foundation of a culture of life is built on this truth. The foundation of a culture of death is built on lies. God's Word tells us in Deuteronomy 30:19-"I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. Choose life, so that you and your descendants may live."

One out of every four women has had an abortion. We are hearing from these women hurt by abortion. Silent No More is a movement that began out of the pain of abortion. www.silentnomoreawareness.org Women are called to bring forth life, nurture life and protect their children. God stamped in the feminine soul the maternal instinct. When we take the life of our own children, we damage our own souls, our very psyches. Due to the sin of abortion, and repressed grief from the loss of life, tremendous spiritual, psychological, and emotional devastation occurs. How do women go through with this? One of the primary ways is through denial, a powerful force that allows a person to live through painful events. Dissociation is another way. Dissociation is disconnecting the body from the emotions or feelings. People can live this way for decades. It is commonly seen in people who have survived great traumas- war, abuse, violent events, torture, etc. It is one of the many negative effects of abortion. (Continued on page 2)



Sheila Palazzo



A Mighty Army for a Mighty Cause (continued from page 1)

There was something else that was motivating Dolores. Her deep grief over the recent loss of her beloved sister brought the infinite value of human life foremost to her mind. She had been helpless to preserve her sister's precious life, but perhaps she could find some way to save another.

Dolores was a perfect fit to take on Elisa's case that she took on without hesitation. Shortly after she left the center armed with the telephone numbers, she set to work --first with the call to Marta for more information on Elisa's situation and then a call to Elisa herself. She left a message on her voicemail.

It is never likely that a message from a total stranger on voicemail over such a personal matter is ever returned, but the grace from the prayers of Dolores and her Legion members moved Elisa to return the call.

Over an ensuing lunch date, Elisa was very touched by Dolores' sincere concern over her difficult situation with three daughters from a prior marriage, an abusive boyfriend, a recent abortion and another unwanted pregnancy. She saw hope in the serene demeanor of Dolores who offered to see her through her pregnancy and to help her work through the complicated details of her personal life. Elisa was so moved by the conversation that she insisted on paying for lunch and invited her home to speak to her daughters.

It would take pages to write the intricate details and events that have followed since their groundbreaking conversation over lunch. Dolores has become friend, counselor and mentor to Elisa, her boyfriend and to the children. She has spiritually adopted the baby. There is a new spirit among these people who will surround this little child when he comes into the world. Yes, the news of a son has brought so much joy. There is still so much ground to cover but Dolores is not in hurry for she knows that God is patient --and He will in time send the grace to bring order, healing and peace to the little family. She is sowing the seeds for a new faith that will end a cycle of abortion and abuse and will redirect these souls into a brighter future.

There is no doubt that Frank Duff would have sent his spiritual army to the frontlines of the battle that is claiming life in unprecedented numbers. This is the greatest spiritual battle of the times---a war between good and evil, a vicious attack on the family that provides the building block for society. It has become clear to Dolores that her new mission will be defending these unborn babies and their mothers from a terrible fate. Her Legion spirit has equipped her to be an effective instrument in the cause and it is her hope that she can muster her mighty army for this mighty cause.

Building a Culture of Life and Love (continued from page 1)

Today we know much more about PAS-Post abortion syndrome or post abortion stress. Effects include: guilt, anxiety, anger, psychological numbing, depression, thoughts of suicide, frequent crying, nightmares, feelings of hopelessness, re-experiencing the abortion, alienation from God, preoccupation with becoming pregnant again, repeat abortions, anxiety over fertility issues, interruption of the bonding process with present and-or future children, severed relationships, survival guilt, development of eating disorders, alcohol and drug abuse, and other self-punishing behaviors. Studies have been done with men, siblings, as well as the extended family. We now know how far the deadly effects of abortion reach.

If you or someone you know is experiencing pain and unresolved guilt from an abortion, there is help. It is critical to receive healing as half of all abortions are repeat abortions. Our Catholic Church offers the Sacrament of Reconciliation, for healing and forgiveness, with God, others, and self. Rachel's Vineyard www.rachelsvineyard.org Rachel's Vineyard offers weekend retreats for men and women suffering from abortion.

All people are created with a conscience. We all know abortion is wrong. We know abortion damages mothers, fathers, grandparents, siblings, the nurses, and doctors. Oftentimes when a couple becomes pregnant, they know that abortion goes against their morals, yet they choose to go against their consciences anyway. At least 70% of women having abortions say they believe it is immoral. Many choose abortion due to pressure from the father of the baby, their parents, teachers, friends, doctors, even their ministers. Most choose abortion out of fear—fear of not being able to raise a child, fear of losing their partner if they do not have the abortion, fear of losing control over their lives, etc. It is precisely because so many women who abort are acting against their consciences and maternal instincts that the psychological and spiritual impact of abortion is so profound.

Our true natures are created by Love. God is love. We are created to love. When we act in unloving ways, such as abortion, the ultimate violence against another human being, we are diminished as a people, both individually, and collectively. From abortion, mothers and fathers do not learn or grow in love. Do not forget that when a new human life is created, at conception, the man and the woman are mother and father, immediately and eternally. A human family is created at that moment. The future of humanity passes through the human family. We must love one another and love hurts. Love requires sacrifice. True love means placing another ahead of ourselves. Love is the highest goal. Love is the answer. How do we grow in love? We must be in relationship with Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior. In order to heal the wounds that have been inflicted on our human family, it doesn't take time; it takes love, mercy and forgiveness.

Pope John Paul II gave us great pastoral direction in the battle for a culture of life. On March 25, 1995, Pope John Paul gave us a gift, the Gospel of Life, a letter addressed to all men and women, clergy and laity, for the entire world. Pope John Paul spoke the truth clearly and lovingly. We are invited to open this gift, learn and embrace the truth. One can find a copy in any Catholic bookstore or www.vatican.va/edocs/ENG0141/INDEX.HTM Our consciences are formed by faith and knowledge. We are accountable to God to continuously form our consciences. Our Catholic Church possesses great resources in truth and knowledge regarding the human family and human sexuality. The Theology of the Body is yet another great resource to help us be formed properly in living out our call to be healthy, integrated Catholic Christians. The theology of the body is a body of teachings from Pope John Paul II on healthy human sexuality. It gives us a vision of an integrated person, mind, body, and spirit. There are many websites where one can read, study and pray with these teachings.

As Catholics, let us turn to Mary, our Mother, to learn more about true femininity, true womanhood, true motherhood, and how to love in greater ways. Praying the Rosary is a good place to begin. Mary always leads us and teaches us how to pray and how to love. Our Lady of Guadalupe can help us in this battle to build a culture of life and end the culture of death, just as she did in Mexico. *"Our Lady of Guadalupe, we ask for your intercession, and for your supernatural help. Help us to grow in love, becoming more like your Son Jesus. Jesus promises us that He is the Way, the Truth, and Life itself. Jesus, our Lord and Savior, lead us in building a culture of Life. Amen."*

Editor's Note: The St. Juan Diego Women's Center is very fortunate to have Sheila Palazzo as a volunteer. Newly arrived from Atlanta, Georgia, Sheila brings with her years of experience in the pro-life movement and a wonderful talent in writing.

One of the great insights of Pope John Paul II is that culture needs to be imbued with the Gospel. As an actor, author, playwright, and poet himself, Venerable John Paul II left many concrete examples of how to do this.

A proud part of my own cultural heritage are the Icelandic Sagas. There is a wonderful story in Njál's Saga about the conversion of Iceland to Christianity which features the warrior-priest Thangbrand. Another great figure of the Sagas, and distant relative of my own, is the warrior-poet Egill Skallagrímsson. Egill was a man who could enter into combat with a dozen warriors and also write poetry so beautiful that it could move the hearts of kings.

As a single Catholic man here in the city named for Saint Joseph I try to live a life of purity and faith. Yet I find that the message of the popular secular culture seems to continually work against me. As I have moved into my forties the message that I should be sexually impure and skeptical of religious belief seems to have grown stronger. And now, it even features the threat that I will be mocked (as in the film "The Forty Year Old Virgin") if I refuse to do so.

As a "Soldier of Christ" through the Sacrament of Confirmation my response has been to write my own sort of "Warrior Poetry." I entitled this poem "My Heart is Pure and I Still Believe" in order to fly in the face of the popular secular culture. It reads as follows:

*My heart is pure and I still believe,
The good, true and beautiful lead to happiness,
The base, false and common lead to enslavement,
The most important relationship is the one with God,
The most important conversation is the one within,
When I was a child my heart was pure and I could fly,
The weight of the world grounded me as I chased after many things,
I sought to heal others but not to heal myself,
I sought to prove my worth yet I was not sure to whom,
In suffering God showed me mercy,
In loss I learned who I truly am,
The enemies of truth and justice project their dark images,
Who will engage them? Who hears the call?
I have met them on the field they dishonored,
Because I was called they were vanquished,
Many do not understand the troubled heart of the warrior,
He is given a quiet place and seeks for peace,
Oh how terrible for his enemies that he might be called out,
Even moreso now that he may exchange his blessing for their curse,
He seeks a pure heart, He seeks a faithful companion,
How will the story now unfold?*

Warrior poetry is designed to show the glory of living a virtuous life in Christ. Many Catholic men today live such lives yet, out of a false sense of humility, do not share the glory of their lives with others. Humility in its essence is about making a truthful appraisal of yourself. Thus if you, despite all your flaws and weaknesses, have done something virtuous and noble true humility calls upon you to share it.

Men by nature seek to live lives of adventure. Give a little boy a stick and you can be sure that in his imagination it will soon become a sword. The problem is that most forms of adventure which are modeled in the popular secular culture have very little to do with true Christian manhood. Often times the "hero" in popular secular culture is more of an anti-Christian figure who engages in senseless violence and sexual impurity almost without a thought.

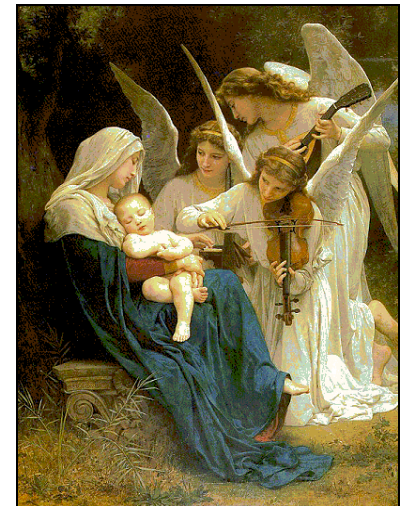
In terms of the pro-life movement it is a sad fact that many abortions come about because men, either actively or passively, fail to take responsibility for their actions and treat women with dignity and respect. Sometimes men actively pressure women to have an abortion. More often they just fail to offer the emotional and practical support a women needs to feel that she can keep the baby.

Warrior poetry is a challenge to good men to stand up and be counted. Unless we start giving our brothers an example of the glory of Christian living who are we to complain about their actions? We all must ask ourselves if we want to be like Cain and ask "Am I my brother's keeper?" or if we want to boldly live out our Confirmation by proudly and openly being a "Soldier of Christ."

John Wilhelmsson



*Feast of the Assumption
August 15th*



*An Encounter with Angels
Tips on Sidewalk Counseling
By Patsy Gonzalez*

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*

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

***THE ST. JUAN DIEGO SOCIETY WOMEN'S CENTER
 IS SUPPORTED ONLY BY YOU!***

The center relies *solely* on the generosity of individuals. We do not receive any subsidy from private, federal, state or local agencies. The St. Juan Diego Society Women's Center can continue to help women in crisis pregnancies **only with your support.**

Please be generous. Together we shall save another baby.

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

All donations are tax-deductible. Make checks payable to the Juan Diego Society.

**St. Juan Diego Women's Center
 CLIENT STATISTICS Year 2010**

Month	Client Served *	Preg. Test	Total Clients	Abortion Bound	Babies Saved
Jan	27	6	33	1	1
Feb	21	8	29	6	4
Mar	21	19	40	2	2
April	23	13	36	1	1
May	17	6	23	1	0
June	30	16	46	3	2
Yr to Date	139	68	207	14	10
Grand Total Since 1986	3148	6602	9750	942	664

* People assisted with diapers, milk, baby clothes and other material needs.