



# PROVITA

## The University Faculty for Life Newsletter

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### UFL Updates

- **2020 Life and Learning Free ZOOM Conference June 6<sup>th</sup> from 2:00-4:30 EDT** Our conference focuses on the groundbreaking analysis of abortion, culture, rights, conscience, feminism, law, morality and faith offered 25 years ago by John Paul II in his *Gospel of Life (Evangelium Vitae)*. Due to Covid-19 restrictions, our conference will feature four keynote presentations:

- 1:45 pm EDT: *Opening social*
- 2:00 pm EDT: **George Weigel** “*Why Evangelium Vitae? A Biographer’s Reflections*”
- 2:30 pm EDT: **Rev. Dr. Joseph Koterski, S.J.** “*Evangelium Vitae and Catholic Social Doctrine*”
- 3:00 pm EDT: Coffee break and ZOOM social
- 3:30 pm EDT: **Teresa Collett, J.D.** “*Women, Abortion and Covid 19*”
- 4:00 pm EDT: **Kevin Miller, Ph.D.** “*Our Ailing Culture: John Paul II’s Diagnosis and Prescription.*”
- 4:30-5:30 pm EDT: *Concluding Social with Fellowship Successes*
- Socials via Zoom can be either vocal or, if the group is too large, we can use the chat function to greet everybody or to converse privately with an individual--whatever feels comfortable. More details can be found on the [program](#).
- These speakers will crack open John Paul II’s Gospel of Life (*Evangelium Vitae*) and provide inspiring insights to spark our own reflections on the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of this [document](#).
- We are anticipating publishing what would have been conference papers on *Evangelium Vitae* or our key topics (abortion, infanticide, euthanasia) in this year’s *Life and Learning*. Please send—as soon as possible—your

working title to our editor, **Fr. Joseph Koterski** at [Koterski@Fordham.edu](mailto:Koterski@Fordham.edu). Deadline for finished papers is July 1<sup>st</sup>.

- This conference will be accessible only to those with the meeting number gained by pre-registering with **Fr. Joseph Koterski** at [Koterski@Fordham.edu](mailto:Koterski@Fordham.edu). Deadline is June 1<sup>st</sup>. Logistics *may make late registration impossible*; so don't delay in sending Fr. Koterski an email right away.
- *Life and Learning*. For more information see [www.uffl.org](http://www.uffl.org).

## Letter from the President

Hello Everybody,

The silver lining to the Covid-19 cloud is that not only have we been spared the inconvenience and expense of travel, but we have also learned to ZOOM. So we can laugh at the virus and our masks while meeting face-to-face via the camera.

Our free zoom conference consists of hearing 20 minute presentations from leading experts on John Paul II followed by 10 minute Q&A in which I read questions posted in Zoom's chat function. In addition, we will have three Zoom socials: an opening welcome meet and greet from 1:45-2:00; a half-hour coffee break to converse with presenters or to show off our coffee cups and reconnect either as a large group or in breakout rooms; and a concluding social at 4:30 in which we can share our successes this year as we normally do, because UFFL is a fellowship where the success of one is a success for all of us.

I hope not only to see you then but also to see you publish your would-be conference paper in this year's *Life and Learning*. Do this by submitting a paper directly to our editor, Fr. Koterski. Topics on our basic concern with ending the horrors of abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia as well as on *Evangelium Vitae* would be most welcome. Working titles are due to Fr. Koterski by June 1<sup>st</sup> and the final paper is due by July 1<sup>st</sup>.

In addition, I am pleased to alert you to this issue's excellent legal analysis of current

developments by Richard Myers, JD, the insightful analysis of the Catholic Bishops' Fact Sheet on contraceptives by Christopher Kaczor, Ph.D.; and the perceptive book review of John M. Rist's *What Is a Person? Realities, Constructs, Illusions* by Fr. Koterski. Our ProVita editor, Margaret Hughes, Ph.D. has also done an excellent job assembling significant prolife news and making our newsletter a vital way to keep you informed of our continued fight for life through research and education in truth.

May God bless you and keep you and yours safe during this pandemic. Thank you for all that you do for the cause of life.

Mary

*R. Mary Hayden Lemmons, Ph.D., President of UFFL, Associate Professor of Philosophy, University of St. Thomas, St. Paul, MN.*

## Reminders

- *Lifetime membership* UFFL offers Lifetime Membership. Five hundred dollars will enable you to support our mission more easily throughout your golden years. More details are posted on our [website](#).
- *2020 Dues Reminder* Be sure to pay your dues. On-line payment is possible through PayPal and our website, as well as by mailing them to **Fr. Joseph Koterski, S.J.**, University Faculty for Life, Dept. of Philosophy, Fordham University, Bronx, NY 10458. Dues are important for receiving the print copies of our peer reviewed *Life and Learning*.
- *Be sure to keep your email address updated.* Updates can be made either by the online [membership renewal form](#) or by contacting Fr. Koterski at [Koterski@Fordham.edu](mailto:Koterski@Fordham.edu). Updated email addresses enable one to receive our ProVita electronic newsletter as well as important messages about UFFL.

- **Social Media** UFFL is on Facebook and LinkedIn. On Facebook, you can “like” the “University Faculty for Life” page. Our blog can be found at [www.uffl.org/blog/](http://www.uffl.org/blog/). There is also an active “University Faculty for Life” subgroup of the “Pro-life Professionals” group on LinkedIn.

## In Memoriam

Please pray for the repose of the soul of **Mark Latkovic**, a long-time member of University Faculty for Life, who passed away on May 6, 2020. Dr. Latkovic taught Moral and Systematic Theology at Sacred Heart Major Seminary in Detroit, MI, since 1990.

## Member News & Publications

*In which we highlight the activities of our organization, members, and chapters, including publications, talks, and consultations.*

*Note: all names in **bold** are members of UFFL.*

- **Helen Alvaré, J.D.** (Law, George Mason University) published “Personhood: Law, Common Sense, and Humane Opportunities” in *Washington and Lee Law Review Online*, 76.2 (April 2020): 99 – 105.
- **Prof. Alvaré** also wrote “Beyond Moralism: A Critique and a Proposal for Catholic Institutional Religious Freedom” in the *Connecticut Public Interest Law Journal*, 19.1 (2019): 149 – 198.
- **Gerard V. Bradley, J.D.** (Law, University of Notre Dame) published *Unquiet Americans: US Catholics, Moral Truth, and the Preservation of Civil Liberties*. South Bend, IN: St. Augustine’s Press, 2019.
- **E. Christian Brugger, D.Phil.** (Theology, St. Vincent de Paul Regional Seminary) wrote “How Should Catholic Teaching Be Taught to

Seminarians?” *Nova et Vetera*, 17.4 (Fall 2019): 979 – 992.

- **Dr. Brugger** reviewed Lawrence Masek’s *Intention, Character, and Double Effect* in the *Review of Metaphysics*, 73.2 (December 2019): 378.
- **Peter J. Colosi, Ph.D.** (Philosophy, Salve Regina University) was appointed to the editorial board of *The Linacre Quarterly*, the journal of the Catholic Medical Association as a Contributing Editor.
- **John Crosby, Ph.D.** (Philosophy, Franciscan University of Steubenville) wrote “What Newman Can Give Catholic Philosophers Today,” as well as the “Preface to Special Issue: The Philosophical Legacy of John Henry Newman” for the *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, 19.1 (Winter 2020): 5 – 26 and 1 – 3.
- **John Finnis, D.Phil.** (Law, University of Notre Dame) wrote “The Unconstitutionality of the Supreme Court’s Prorogation Judgement, with Supplementary Notes.” University of Oxford Research Paper 6/2020; Notre Dame Law School Legal Studies Paper 200304.
- **Anne Barbeau Gardiner**, (English, John Jay College CUNY) published “New Light on Dryden’s Conversion (Invited Commentary)” in *Studies in Religion and the Enlightenment*, 1.2 (Fall 2019): 1 – 5.
- **John M. Grondelski’s, Ph.D.** (Theology, Seton Hall University) interview of Pastor Clenard Childress, Jr., “The Most Dangerous Place for an African American Is in the Womb,” appeared in *The Human Life Review*, 45.4 (Fall 2019): 73-77. Recent pro-life blogs for The National Catholic Register include “[All Members of ‘Family Production’ Are Not Created Equal](#),” (November 5, 2019) and “[The Problem of Human Dignity](#),” (October 3, 2019).
- **Christopher Kaczor, Ph.D.** (Philosophy, Loyola Marymount University) published

*Disputes in Bioethics: Abortion, Euthanasia, and Other Controversies.* Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2020.

- **Fr. Joseph Koterski, S.J., Ph.D.** (Philosophy, Fordham) reviewed *Pursuing the Honorable: Reawakening Honor in the Modern Military* by Justin M. Anderson and Kenneth W. McDonald in *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 60.1 (March 2020): 117 – 118.
- **R. Mary Lemmons, Ph.D.** (Philosophy, University of St. Thomas, MN) published “Brain Death: From Mistaken Assumptions to Legal Fiction and a Threat to the Living” in *Life and Learning* XXIX (2019): 87-105.
- **Dr. Lemmons** presented “Hylomorphism, Brain Death and the Law: New Developments” at a meeting of the Society for Thomistic Personalism, Minneapolis, MN, November 2019.
- **Melissa Moschella, Ph.D.** (Philosophy, Catholic University of America) published “The Human Organism is not a Conductorless Orchestra: A Defense of Brain Death as True Biological Death” in *Theoretical Medicine and Bioethics*, 40 (2019): 437 – 453.
- **Duncan G. Stroick** (Architecture, University of Notre Dame) was appointed to the US Commission of Fine Arts in December 2019 for a four year term.

## Upcoming scholarly opportunities

- The [Society of St. Sebastian](#) is accepting [submissions](#) to their *Journal of Bioethics in Law and Culture Quarterly* and their weekly column, *Sebastian’s Point*.
- The [Sisters of Life](#) are looking for students and researchers interested in the history of the pro-life movement or the history of abortion, euthanasia and other life issues who might make use of an extensive collection of books,

periodicals, newsletters, academic articles, news clippings, audio and video cassettes, legal briefs and documents, unpublished letters and personal papers, and records of pro-life organizations from around the US and the world.

Please respond directly to Sr. Mary Margaret Hope, S.V. She would be happy to share more about the contents of the collection with interested persons. Email: [stantonarchives@sistersoflife.org](mailto:stantonarchives@sistersoflife.org); Phone: 845-558-4951

**Please note:** The Sisters are **not** accepting additional life issue related collections or materials at this time.

- The [2020 Educational Conference of the Catholic Medical Association](#), whose theme will be “Reclaiming the Doctor-Patient Relationship,” will take place in San Diego, CA from September 24 – 26, 2020.
- The Catholic Medical Association will also host its [Medical Resident and Student Boot Camp](#) from June 18 - 20, 2020 online.
- The [2020 LifeTech Conference](#) will take place on Oct. 24 at Cedarville University in Cedarville, OH.
- The [Society of Catholic Social Scientists](#) will host its [28<sup>th</sup> annual national conference](#) at Franciscan University of Steubenville from October 23 – 24, 2020. [Paper proposals](#) are due on July 1, 2020.

## On Campus

- An extensive list of available jobs and internships for college students and recent graduates is available at the [Students for Life](#) website.

## Book Reviews

*UFFL Members are invited to submit book reviews for consideration for publication. Please email the editor at [provita.editor@gmail.com](mailto:provita.editor@gmail.com) for more information and to submit a review.*

*What Is a Person? Realities, Constructs, Illusions* by John M. Rist (New York NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 2020). 288 pp.

The question at the heart of John Rist's new book is how our culture reached a position where so many thinkers seem unsure whether being a person really matters.

After tracing the emergence of the concept of "person" from the time of the Greeks through the High Middle Ages, Rist turns his attention to the diverse attacks on this notion carried out in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, and then to the savage distortions unleashed by the nihilist movements of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

For scholars engaged in the defense of the right to life of the unborn, the aged, and the disabled the third part of the book will be of special interest. Many of the debates on human rights and on our moral duties to defend the vulnerable turn on the very notion of personhood.

For Rist, the eventual slide of the idea of personhood into moral irrelevance was inevitable once the Enlightenment presumed that ethics would still be possible without any reference to God. In many ways the present book is a continuation of his masterful *Real Ethics* (Cambridge Univ. Press, 2002), where he argued that ethical theories either have a transcendent grounding (sometimes explicit, sometimes implicit) or inevitably fall into contradiction and incoherence.

Rist examines at length the expectations of Kant and those who followed him that somehow the moral landscape would remain unchanged for those who are agnostic about God's existence. It is not only with the outright atheism of Marxist materialism that ethics finds no place for the protection of the person or the moral dignity of the innocent. There is also none to be found in the softer rhetoric of utilitarianism and its ruthless reduction of all ethical questions to a calculation of values.

Despite Mill's kind words about the social Gospel, he tolerates no morally relevant differences among the kinds of things that exist, and thus offers no grounds for any respect for persons.

By the volume's end Rist has provided a detailed taxonomy of the ways in which secular thought has proposed a variety of surrogates for God as the ground for ethical reasoning and for arguments about the intrinsic dignity of human persons. His mastery of texts that many scholars skip over as virtually unreadable offers invaluable aid for those who recognize the need to engage with the champions of secularism and to fight the intellectual battles for the right to life.

Reviewed by **Joseph Koterski, S.J., Ph.D.**  
(Philosophy, Fordham University)

## Legal Realities

*Richard S. Myers, J.D. (Professor of Law at Ave Maria School of Law, UFFL Vice-President) provides a brief overview of significant legal developments since the last issue of ProVita.*

As of this writing (early May 2020), the most important legal news concerning abortion is the pending Supreme Court decision in the *June Medical Services v. Russo* case. *June Medical Services* involves the constitutionality of Louisiana's law that requires doctors who perform abortions to have admitting privileges at local hospitals. In 2016, the Court invalidated a similar Texas law in *Whole Woman's Health v. Hellerstedt*. In September 2018, in *June Medical Services*, the Fifth Circuit distinguished *Whole Woman's Health* and upheld Louisiana's admitting privileges law. On February 7, 2019, the US Supreme Court stayed the Fifth Circuit's ruling. The grant of the stay was by a 5-4 vote.

On October 4, 2019, the Court granted review in *June Medical Services v. Gee* (the case is now denominated [June Medical Services v. Russo](#)). The Court heard oral arguments on March 4, 2020 and a decision is expected by the end of June 2020.

As noted, the case involves the constitutionality of Louisiana's admitting privileges law. The case also involves another important issue:

Louisiana challenged the abortion clinic's standing to assert the constitutional rights of women seeking abortion, and the Supreme Court heard oral arguments on that issue as well.

The oral arguments in March did not directly involve the legitimacy of *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*. Most observers believe that the Court's disposition will be narrow. There is some speculation that Chief Justice Roberts, who dissented in the *Whole Woman's Health* case in 2016, might join with Justices Breyer, Ginsburg, Kagan, and Sotomayor and invalidate the Louisiana law. Perhaps more likely would be for the Court to change direction and not invalidate the Louisiana law. That might be due to a ruling rejecting the standing of the abortion clinic (which would eliminate the need for the Court to rule on the constitutionality of the Louisiana law) or a narrow ruling that follows the Fifth Circuit's ruling, which concluded that the facts in the Louisiana case were sufficiently different from those that existed in Texas in the *Whole Woman's Health* case and that those differences warranted a ruling that the Louisiana law did not create an undue burden on access to abortion. It is also possible that the Court might overrule the *Whole Woman's Health* case. The Court could, instead, revisit *Roe* and *Casey*, [as some members of Congress have urged](#), but that seems exceedingly unlikely.

The case will likely offer clues as to how the newest Justices (Justices Gorsuch and Kavanaugh) view the constitutional right to abortion that the Court created in 1973.

Lower courts continue to hear cases involving various state restrictions on abortion. A number of states have passed laws prohibiting abortions based on a diagnosis that the unborn child has Down Syndrome. In April 2018, the Seventh Circuit struck down Indiana's law and the US Supreme Court refused to hear the case in May 2019. Justice Thomas wrote a separate opinion in the Indiana case in which he argued that states have "a compelling interest in preventing abortion from becoming a tool of modern-day eugenics." The constitutionality of Ohio's Down Syndrome Non-Discrimination Act has also been challenged in the courts. That law prohibits abortions when the woman is seeking abortion due to a diagnosis of Down syndrome. By a 2-1 vote on October 11, 2019, a panel of the Sixth Circuit held Ohio's law unconstitutional. Judge

Batchelder's dissent echoed many of the themes expressed by Justice Thomas in the Indiana case.

The full Sixth Circuit agreed to re-hear the case and on March 11, 2020 the full Sixth Circuit heard oral arguments in the case. Importantly, the US Department of Justice filed an amicus brief in the Sixth Circuit case [in support of the constitutionality of the Ohio law](#).

Other state restrictions on abortion have also been challenged, and the more aggressive state efforts have been invalidated by the federal courts. For example, in the last six months, two Mississippi laws, one involving a ban on abortion after 15 weeks and the other involving a ban on abortions after the detection of a fetal heartbeat, were struck down by the [United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit](#). The decision on the 15 week ban was notable for a concurrence by Judge Ho. His opinion stated: "Nothing in the text or original understanding of the Constitution establishes a right to an abortion." Judge Ho went on to critique the district court opinion because, as Judge Ho explained, that opinion "displays an alarming disrespect for the millions of Americans who believe that babies deserve legal protection during pregnancy as well as before birth, and that abortion is the immoral, tragic, and violent taking of innocent human life."

There continues to be litigation about the Trump Administration's efforts to defund *Planned Parenthood*. A positive development was the February 24, 2020 decision by the United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. By a 7-4 vote, [the Ninth Circuit rejected a challenge to HHS Regulations](#) implementing Title X of the Public Health Service Act. Title X prohibits grant funds from being used in programs where abortion is a method of family planning.

There has also been much recent litigation about laws that restrict abortions (along with other non-essential medical procedures) due to the Covid-19 crisis. For example, the [Fifth](#) and [Eighth](#) Circuits have both allowed state restrictions to stay in place; other courts have reached different results. These cases are certainly important but they do not deal with the legitimacy of the *Roe* and *Casey*.

## A Scholar's Analysis

**Christopher Kaczor, Ph.D.** (*Professor of Philosophy at Loyola Marymount University at Los Angeles, Consultant to the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops*) engages recent scholarship on life issues. A longer version of this article appears in *National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly*.

In February of 2020, the Secretariat of Pro-Life Activities of the United States Catholic Conference of Bishops released a Fact Sheet entitled, “Greater Access to Contraception Does Not Reduce Abortions.”<sup>1</sup> Their text provides a response to a common objection: those who oppose abortion are inconsistent if they do not also support contraception to limit unwanted pregnancy which leads to abortion. How do the authors of the Fact Sheet defend the thesis that greater access to contraception does not reduce abortion?

First, they note that, “Contraception is already widely available, and experts have reported that ‘contraceptive use in the United States is virtually universal among women of reproductive age,’ at times when many millions of abortions were performed.”<sup>2</sup> In every state and in every city, public schools, family planning clinics, pharmacies, grocery stores and gas stations provide contraception. According to the Center for Disease Control, “The most common contraceptive methods currently used in the overall age range 15–49 were female sterilization (18.6%), pill (12.6%), LARCs [Long Acting Reversible Contraceptives] (10.3%), and male condom (8.7%).”<sup>3</sup> Despite accounting for only 8.7% of contraception use, there are about 450,000,000 condoms sold yearly in the United States alone.<sup>4</sup> More than 99% of sexually experienced women have used contraception at some time in their lives. Yet, despite the ubiquity of contraception, millions and millions of abortions

<sup>1</sup> USCCB Secretariat for Pro-Life Activities, “Fact Sheet: Greater Access to Contraception Does Not Reduce Abortions” 2/7/2020 <http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/contraception/fact-sheets/upload/Contraception-fact-sheet.pdf#page=6>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db327.htm>

(more than 61,000,000 since 1973) have been performed. Although contraception is widely available and used, abortion remains one of the most common surgeries performed in the United States.

Secondly, the Secretariat’s text emphasizes that with typical use, contraception often fails to prevent pregnancy. In arguing for this proposition, they draw on research from providers of abortion, such as the Guttmacher Institute, the research arm of Planned Parenthood and the British Pregnancy Advisory Service, the leading provider of abortion in the United Kingdom. The authors of the Fact Sheet note that about half of those who get abortions in the United States and in Great Britain were using contraception in the month they conceived. Surprisingly, “a quarter (24.2%) had used methods considered ‘most effective’ (hormonal contraception or ‘long-acting reversible contraceptives’ such as implants or the IUD).”<sup>5</sup> A chief executive of the British Pregnancy Advisory Service noted, “Our data shows women cannot control their fertility through contraception alone, even when they are using some of the most effective methods.”<sup>6</sup> The high failure rate of contraception is partly explained by cumulative probability. In their *The New York Times* article “How Likely Is It That Birth Control Could Let You Down?,” Gregor Aisch and Bill Marsh explained:

When failure rates of contraceptives are mentioned, they usually refer to a given year of use. Less understood is that the risk of failure is compounded over time. The longer any method of contraception is used, the greater the probability of unplanned pregnancy—the same way that any small risk, taken repeatedly, grows in likelihood. This is true for all contraception methods, even in the

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.elitedaily.com/p/9-condom-facts-you-didnt-know-that-will-actually-blow-your-mind-8449566> Of course, some of these condoms are not purchased for purposes of contraception, at least if contraception is defined as any action before, during, or after sexual intercourse which is intended to make the sexual act non-procreative (Pope St. Paul VI, *Humanae vitae* 14.).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

highly unlikely event that they are used perfectly, every time.<sup>7</sup>

Even a contraceptive with a 99% rate of preventing pregnancy is highly likely to fail over time. As John Ross noted, “That one percent risk taken monthly over ten years, accumulates to a 70% probability that an unwanted pregnancy will occur during that period.”<sup>8</sup> That quotation is worth considering. Over time, the use of contraceptives, even those considered highly reliable, leads to unwanted pregnancy, and unwanted pregnancy leads to abortion.

Third, and perhaps most importantly for their thesis, the Fact Sheet points out that, “Studies of contraceptive use, sexual behavior and STD transmission raise a concern about ‘risk compensation,’ that is, the greater likelihood of engaging in potentially risky sexual behavior when one believes risk has been reduced.”<sup>9</sup> Risk compensation occurs when the perception of risk shifts behavior. For example, when cigarette filters were introduced on a widespread basis in the 1970s, people learned that smoking a filtered cigarette was less risky than smoking a non-filtered cigarette. Unfortunately, in reaction to this news, as the Surgeon General pointed out, “smokers changed the way they smoked these cigarettes, resulting in no meaningful reduction in either the total dose of smoke received or in the risks of diseases caused by smoking.”<sup>10</sup> For this reason, “safe cigarettes” did not lead to less death from smoking. Risk compensation leading to behavioral disinhibition may also occur when “safe sex” programs promote contraceptives. For example, economics professor David Paton

found “no evidence” that “the provision of family planning reduces either underage conception or abortion rates.”<sup>11</sup> According to Paton, “It is clear that providing more family planning clinics, far from having the effect of reducing conception rates, has actually led to an increase.... The availability of the morning-after pill seems to be encouraging risky behaviour. It appears that if people have access to family planning advice they think they automatically have a lower risk of pregnancy.”<sup>12</sup> In other words, safe sex programs may lead some people to take more risks in their sexual behavior which leads to more sexually transmitted infections, more unwanted pregnancies, and more abortions.

Fourth, the Fact Sheet argues that there is evidence that programs promoting emergency contraception (EC) do not reduce abortion rates, “Twenty-three studies published between 1998 and 2006, analyzed by a research team headed by Dr. James Trussell at Princeton University, measured the effect of increased EC access on EC use, unintended pregnancy, and abortion. In all but one study, increased access to emergency contraceptive pills was associated with greater use. However, no study found an effect on pregnancy or abortion rates.”<sup>13</sup> Dr. Trussell reaffirmed this finding in 2013, and other studies have reached similar conclusions.”<sup>14</sup> Moreover, if emergency contraception prevents implantation of the human embryo,<sup>15</sup> then emergency contraception cannot be said to *reduce* abortion because to use emergency contraception is to *cause* abortion, the ending of a prenatal human life by means of preventing implantation.

In its last section, the Fact Sheet pushes back on claims that lower numbers of abortions in

<sup>7</sup> Gregor Aisch and Bill Marsh, “How Likely Is It That Birth Control Could Let You Down?” *The New York Times* September 13, 2014  
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2014/09/14/sunday-review/unplanned-pregnancies.html>

<sup>8</sup> John A. Ross, “Contraception: Short-Term vs. Long-Term Failure Rates,” *Family Planning Perspectives* 21, no. 6 (1989): 275.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. See too, M. Cassell et al., “Risk compensation: the Achilles’ heel of innovations in HIV prevention?”, 332 *British Medical Journal* (11 March 2006) 605-7.

<sup>10</sup> US Department of Health and Human Services, *The Health Consequences of Smoking: 50 Years of Progress: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Atlanta, GA: US Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for

Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, Office on Smoking and Health; 2014. P.158

<sup>11</sup> D. Paton, “The Economics of Family Planning and Underage Conceptions,” 21.2 *Journal of Health Economics* (March 2002) 207-25 at 207; abstract at <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0167629601001151>.

<sup>12</sup> Quoted in K. Ahmed, “Abortions rise in under-age sex crisis,” *The Observer* (London), 17 March 2002; [www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2002/mar/17/medicallscience.socialsciences](http://www.guardian.co.uk/uk/2002/mar/17/medicallscience.socialsciences).

<sup>13</sup> USCCB, “Fact Sheet.”

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> C. Kahlenborn, R. Peck, & W.B. Severs, (2015). Mechanism of action of levonorgestrel emergency contraception. *The Linacre quarterly*, 82(1), 18–33



recent years in the United States are best explained by greater use of contraception. For example, in the essay, “New Clarity for the U.S. Abortion Debate: A Steep Drop in Unintended Pregnancy Is Driving Recent Abortion Declines” Joerg Dreweke wrote, “The abortion decline between 2008 and 2011 was driven by a steep drop in unintended pregnancy, which in turn is most plausibly explained by more and better contraceptive use. . . . These findings have major implications for the U.S. abortion debate as, among other things, they validate that supporting and expanding women’s access to contraceptive services leads to a lower incidence of abortion.”<sup>16</sup> The Fact Sheet, however, argues that the reduction in rates of abortion, especially teen abortion, cannot be attributed to greater use of contraceptives but rather is more likely caused by lower rates of teen sexual activity.

A major factor in this trend is a significant decline in premature sexual activity among teens. “Having sex went from being the majority experience for high school students (54% of 9th-12th graders in 1991) to the minority experience (41% in 2015)”<sup>17</sup>; this trend was found in all regions of the U.S. and among both white and black students. U.S. researchers, using data from the national Youth Risk Behavior Survey regarding 15- to 17-year olds, found that from 1991 to 2001 “53% of the decline in pregnancy rates can be attributed to decreased sexual experience.” A 2015 British study of declining teen pregnancies in England found that the promotion of LARCs had played “a very minor role,” with much of the decline due to higher educational achievement as well as demographic change, such as an increased number of young non-white immigrants “from communities that are at lower risk of very early pregnancy (for example due to relatively high religious observance).”<sup>17</sup>

A question then arises, what has caused this great decrease in sexual activity? I suspect the lower rate of sexual activity, and thereby abortion of unwanted pregnancy, is due to massive increases in the amount of time young people spend on line, and

so away from the face to face, body to body, contact that gives rise to unplanned pregnancies.

Psychologist Jean M. Twenge in her book *iGen* documents that young people today are in no hurry to grow up and are in fact delayed, in comparison to previous generations, in terms of many behaviors, from having sex and drinking alcohol to getting a driver’s license and moving out on their own.<sup>18</sup> It is not the condom but the iPhone that has reduced the number of abortions.

There is, of course, another response to the common objection that those who oppose abortion are inconsistent if they do not also support contraception. This response does not depend on empirical data, but rather on ethical principle. It may seem advantageous for attaining a noble goal to lie, to cheat, to steal, or to murder. But if we accept the ethical principle that intrinsically evil acts ought never to be done, then we hold that an illicit means ought never to be used to attain even the most legitimate end.<sup>19</sup> No one charges pacifists with inconsistency if they do not use violence against those serving in the armed forces in order to stop a war. Pacifists oppose both war and the use of violence (even to stop war). Catholic teaching opposes both abortion and contraception (even to stop abortion). If you oppose abortion, it does not follow that you are inconsistent if you don’t use all available means to oppose abortion, since some of these means are themselves ethically objectionable. So, another way to answer the charge of inconsistency is to question the permissibility of contraception in itself in addition to or in lieu of answering the numerous empirical questions that arise about what means are most likely under what circumstances to obtain the end of reducing abortions.

<sup>16</sup> Joerg Dreweke, “New Clarity for the U.S. Abortion Debate: A Steep Drop in Unintended Pregnancy Is Driving Recent Abortion Declines” *Guttmacher Policy Review*, Volume 19, Issue 1 (2016) <https://www.guttmacher.org/gpr/2016/03/new-clarity-us-abortion-debate-steep-drop-unintended-pregnancy-driving-recent-abortion>

<sup>17</sup> USCCB, “Fact Sheet.”

<sup>18</sup> Jean M. Twenge, *iGen: Why Today's Super-Connected Kids Are Growing Up Less Rebellious, More Tolerant, Less Happy--and Completely Unprepared for Adulthood--and What That Means for the Rest of Us*. (New York: Atria Books, 2017).

<sup>19</sup> St. John Paul II, *Veritatis splendor* 67.

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Please begin to think about items for next issue, which will come out over the summer. We need:

- Notices of member's publications, presentations and other activities,
- Calls for papers and notices of upcoming conferences.
- Citations of relevant significant research in any discipline, whether from a pro-life perspective, neutral, or the opposing perspective.
- Useful online and print resources.
- Reviews of promising prolife publications.

Please submit all contributions for the Summer 2020 issue by August 1<sup>st</sup>. Any contributions should be sent to [provita.editor@gmail.com](mailto:provita.editor@gmail.com).

## 2020 Life and Learning Conference

	<b>30<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL CONFERENCE VIA ZOOM</b> <b>JUNE 6th, 2020; 2-4:30 PM EDT with KEYNOTE SPEAKERS</b> ALSO PUBLICATION OPTIONS FOR <i>LIFE AND LEARNING 2020</i> Zoom Chat Socials at 1:45-2:00 EDT; 3-3:30; 4:30-5:00	
	<b><i>EVANGELIUM VITAE: IMPACT AND SIGNIFICANCE</i></b>	
<b>2020 Smith Award Recipient</b>  <b>Teresa Collett, J.D.</b> Founding Director University of St. Thomas Law School ProLife Center		<b><i>John Paul II, Women, Abortion, and Covid 19</i></b>  Online at 3:30 pm EDT
<b>KEYNOTE SPEAKERS</b>		
		
<u><b>George Weigel</b></u> Online at 2 pm EDT  <b><i>Why Evangelium Vitae? A Biographer's Reflections</i></b>  Distinguished Senior Fellow, Ethics and Public Policy Center. Author of <i>Witness to Hope: The Biography of Pope John Paul II</i>	<u><b>Rev. Joseph Koterski, Ph.D.</b></u> Online at 2:30 pm EDT  <b><i>Evangelium Vitae and Catholic Social Doctrine</i></b>  Associate Professor, Philosophy Fordham University, Editor, <i>International Philosophical Quarterly</i> and <i>Life and Learning</i> ;	<u><b>Kevin Miller, Ph.D.</b></u> Online at 4:00 pm EDT  <b><i>Our Ailing Culture: John Paul II's Diagnosis and Prescription</i></b>  Assistant Professor, Theology. Franciscan University at Steubenville
<b>ZOOM coffee break</b> 3:00-3:30 Show off your coffee cup and talk with colleagues	FREE CONFERENCE PREREGISTRATION DEADLINE JUNE 1 <sup>ST</sup> EMAIL FR. KOTERSKI koterski@Fordham.edu	<b>Paper Deadlines</b>  6/1 Working title to Fr. Koterski  7/1 Final Submission Due
<b>Schedule</b> 1:45 EDT Social	2:00: George Weigel 2:30: Rev. Joseph Koterski, S.J Ph.D. 3:00: Coffee Social	3:30: Teresa Collett, JD 4:00: Kevin Miller, Ph.D. 4:30: Concluding Social with Fellowship Successes

## Web Resources for research and education

<b><i>Life and Learning</i></b> The Journal of the University Faculty for Life		<a href="http://uffl.org/pastproceedings.html">http://uffl.org/pastproceedings.html</a>
<b>UFFL Blog</b>		<a href="http://www.uffl.org/blog/">http://www.uffl.org/blog/</a>
<b>Member web pages and blogs</b>		
Please forward any other member's web pages to <a href="mailto:provitanews@yahoo.com">provitanews@yahoo.com</a> .		
Beckwith, Francis	<a href="http://www.patheos.com/blogs/returntorome/">http://www.patheos.com/blogs/returntorome/</a>	
Colosi, Peter	<a href="http://peterjcolosi.com/">http://peterjcolosi.com/</a>	
Lemmons, Rose Mary Hayden	<a href="http://courseweb.stthomas.edu/rmlemmons/">http://courseweb.stthomas.edu/rmlemmons/</a>	
Smith, Janet E.	<a href="http://www.janetesmith.org/">http://www.janetesmith.org/</a>	
Bachiochi, Erika	<a href="http://bachiochi.com/erika/">http://bachiochi.com/erika/</a>	
<b>Conferences</b>		
Cardinal O'Connor Conference on Life	<a href="http://www.oconnorconference.com/home/">http://www.oconnorconference.com/home/</a>	Held in conjunction with the annual March for Life in January.
Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture Fall Conference	<a href="http://ethicscenter.nd.edu/programs/fall-conference-videos">http://ethicscenter.nd.edu/programs/fall-conference-videos</a>	Held in November
Prolife World Congress	<a href="http://www.prolifeworldcongress.org/">http://www.prolifeworldcongress.org/</a>	The most recent Congress took place in Guatemala in October 2016. The site is in Spanish.
<b>Online resources</b>		
Academia.edu	<a href="https://www.academia.edu/">https://www.academia.edu/</a>	A place to share research.

<p>Bad Cripple Blog: A Resource for Pro-lifers</p>	<p><a href="http://www.badcripple.blogspot.com">http://www.badcripple.blogspot.com</a></p>	<p>A blog written by William Peace, Ph.D., who advocates for the rights of the disabled.</p>
<p>Before Roe v. Wade: Voices that Shaped the Abortion Debate Before the Supreme Court's Ruling (2d edition, 2012)</p>	<p><a href="http://documents.law.yale.edu/before-roe">http://documents.law.yale.edu/before-roe</a></p>	<p>“In this ground-breaking book, Linda Greenhouse, a Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist who covered the Supreme Court for 30 years for The New York Times, and Reva Siegel, a renowned professor at Yale Law School, collect documents illustrating cultural, political, and legal forces that helped shape the Supreme Court’s decision and the meanings it would come to have over time.”</p>
<p>Culture of Life Foundation</p>	<p><a href="http://www.cultureoflife.org/">http://www.cultureoflife.org/</a></p>	<p>Complex moral issues made simple</p>
<p>Global Health and Human Rights Database</p>	<p><a href="http://www.globalhealthrights.org/">http://www.globalhealthrights.org/</a></p>	<p>“The Global Health and Human Rights Database is a free online database of law from around the world relating to health and human rights. Developed by Lawyers Collective and the O’Neill Institute for National and Global Health Law at Georgetown University, in collaboration with a worldwide network of civil society partners, the database offers an interactive, searchable, and fully indexed website of case law, national constitutions and international instruments.”</p>
<p>Human Life International Truth and Charity</p>	<p><a href="http://www.truthandcharityforum.org/">http://www.truthandcharityforum.org/</a></p>	<p>“The <i>Truth and Charity Forum</i> is an online publication of Human Life International (HLI), dedicated exclusively to the sacredness and gift of all human life, the mission and vocation of the family, and the right to live in accord with our Catholic faith.”</p>
<p>Mirror of Justice</p>	<p><a href="http://mirrorofjustice.blogs.com/">http://mirrorofjustice.blogs.com/</a></p>	<p>A blog dedicated to the development of Catholic legal theory.</p>
<p>Social Science Research Network (SSRN)</p>	<p><a href="http://ssrn.com/en/">http://ssrn.com/en/</a></p>	<p>SSRN (the Social Science Research Network). “Our vision was (and still is) to enable scholars to share and distribute their research worldwide, long before their papers work their way through the multi-year journal refereeing and publication process.”</p>

USCCB Human Life and Dignity web page	<a href="http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/index.cfm">http://usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/index.cfm</a>	United States Conference of Catholic Bishops
Witherspoon Institute Public Discourse	<a href="http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/">http://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/</a>	Public Discourse is an online publication of the Witherspoon Institute that seeks to enhance the public understanding of the moral foundations of free societies by making the scholarship of the fellows and affiliated scholars of the Institute available and accessible to a general audience.
World Expert Consortium for Abortion Research and Education	<a href="http://www.wecareexperts.org/">http://www.wecareexperts.org/</a>	International research collaboration, Scientific information dissemination, Professional education, Consultation, Expert testimony, Program evaluation, Grant writing
<b>Journals and online publications</b>		
Charlotte Lozier Institute (Susan B. Anthony List)	<a href="http://www.lozierinstitute.org/">http://www.lozierinstitute.org/</a>	The education and research arm of the Susan B. Anthony List
Ethika Politika	<a href="http://ethikapolitika.org/">http://ethikapolitika.org/</a>	Ethika Politika is a publication of the Center for Morality in Public Life. Its purpose is to put the search for wisdom at the service of good practical decisions, and to engage contemporary ethical and cultural issues from an elevated yet common sense perspective.
Human Life Review	<a href="http://www.humanlifereview.com/">http://www.humanlifereview.com/</a>	
Linacre Quarterly	<a href="http://cathmed.org/issues_resources/linacre_quarterly/">http://cathmed.org/issues_resources/linacre_quarterly/</a>	Journal of the Catholic Medical Association.
Post-Abortion Review	<a href="http://www.theunchoice.com/pblresearch.htm">http://www.theunchoice.com/pblresearch.htm</a>	“Documents abortion's injustice and harm to women”
<b>Organizations</b>		
Bioethics defense fund	<a href="http://www.bdfund.org/">http://www.bdfund.org/</a>	Bioethics Defense Fund (BDF) is a public-interest law firm whose mission is to advocate for the human

		<p>right to life via litigation, legislation and public education.</p> <p>BDF provides legal expertise and public education on the issues of healthcare rights of conscience, abortion and its impact on women, human cloning/destructive human embryo research, and end of life issues including physician-assisted suicide and healthcare rationing.</p>
Catholic Medical Association	<a href="http://cathmed.org/">http://cathmed.org/</a>	
Center for Bioethics and Human Dignity	<a href="http://cbhd.org/">http://cbhd.org/</a>	<p>“The Center for Bioethics &amp; Human Dignity explores the nexus of biomedicine, biotechnology, and our common humanity. Within a Judeo-Christian Hippocratic framework, we anticipate, interpret, and engage the pressing bioethical issues of our day. As a center of rigorous research, theological and conceptual analysis, charitable critique, and thoughtful engagement, we bring clarity to the complex issues of our day.”</p>
Feminists for Life	<a href="http://www.feministsforlife.org/">http://www.feministsforlife.org/</a>	
Healing the Culture	<a href="http://healingtheculture.com/">http://healingtheculture.com/</a>	Promotes the Life Principles of UFFL co-founder Robert J. Spitzer, SJ.
The International Center on Law, Life, Faith and Family (ICOLF)	<a href="http://icolf.org/">http://icolf.org/</a>	<p>“The International Center on Law, Life, Faith and Family (ICOLF) was established with a view to producing, compiling and providing a broad range of resources and materials for a number of interested parties working on “Law, life, faith and family” issues on the national, regional and international levels.”</p>
National Catholic Bioethics Center	<a href="http://www.ncbcenter.org/">http://www.ncbcenter.org/</a>	Publishes the <i>National Catholic Bioethics Quarterly</i>
Prolife Center at the University of St. Thomas	<a href="http://www.stthomas.edu/law/academics/prolifecenter/">http://www.stthomas.edu/law/academics/prolifecenter/</a>	Founded and headed by UFFL member Teresa Collett to defend the sanctity of human life by training law

		students and lawyers, by assisting government officials in drafting, passing and defending prolife laws, and developing the necessary legal scholarship necessary to create a culture of life.
Society of Catholic Social Scientists	<a href="http://catholicsocialscientists.org/Content/Organization/">http://catholicsocialscientists.org/Content/Organization/</a>	
Women Deserve Better	<a href="http://www.womendeservebetter.com/">http://www.womendeservebetter.com/</a>	
<b>News</b>		
Bioedge	<a href="http://www.bioedge.org/">http://www.bioedge.org/</a>	Bioethics News around the world
National Right to Life News	<a href="http://www.nationalrighttolifenews.org/news/#.Sp5dWSo">http://www.nationalrighttolifenews.org/news/#.Sp5dWSo</a>	
LifeNews.com	<a href="http://www.lifenews.com/">http://www.lifenews.com/</a>	
LifeSiteNews	<a href="http://www.lifesitenews.com/">http://www.lifesitenews.com/</a>	
<b>Anti-life resources</b>		
Guttmacher Institute	<a href="http://www.guttmacher.org/">http://www.guttmacher.org/</a>	Research arm of Planned Parenthood Federation. <a href="#">Guttmacher Policy Review Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health</a> . <a href="#">International Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health</a>
RH Reality Check	<a href="http://rhrealitycheck.org/">http://rhrealitycheck.org/</a>	Reproductive and Sexual Health and Justice News, Analysis and Commentary

## Masthead

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euthanasia, and infanticide. More information about UFFL can be found on our web site at [uffl.org](http://uffl.org). Editorial correspondence can be sent to the editor at [provita.editor@gmail.com](mailto:provita.editor@gmail.com).