



## PENNSYLVANIANS FOR HUMAN LIFE

Education Services

# NEWSLETTER

May 2020

Dear Friends of Life:

We are certainly living in “interesting times,” to borrow a proverb from the land which bequeathed us the COVID-19 pandemic. I hope, pray and trust that the recipients of this letter are doing their best to stay as healthy as possible, spiritually as well as physically.

While debate swirls around which services qualify as “essential” during this crisis, PHL’s certainly are. Our mission is one of calm and compassionate witness to the sanctity and beauty of all life, from conception to natural death. Both ends of that spectrum – and all interim stages – are implicated by this pandemic. The values for which PHL stands for are also those most desperately needed now.

On one end, the attempted political subterfuge in deeming abortion services “essential” through federal legislation underscores the need to point out the logical contradictions in that very premise. On the other, this virus attacks the old and the infirm most lethally. It is therefore critical to remember these segments of our population as the most in need of our compassion. Having buried my father and uncle a year ago, I will testify to the need for love and humanity for those at the end of their life cycle. They are not expendable, as an implicit cultural narrative may sometimes suggest. PHL has always vigilantly countered that narrative through its speaker presentations. Its message remains especially vital now.

How do we conform that message to state-mandated “stay at home” directives? While our speakers cannot present to classrooms at this time, we have already begun scaling those presentations to delivery through the Internet. The online catalogue of one of our best and brightest speakers, Pete DeMaio, should be available soon to serve these ends. Throughout this crisis, our Executive Director, Karen Kopecky, and Manager, Mary Ellen Devlin, have worked tirelessly to keep our mission going, calibrating it for both online and live transmission when this pandemic subsides.

Speaking of the Banquet, your continuing generosity made it another rousing success. It seems like it was the last public gathering I can remember! As I noted from the rostrum, our Speaker Scott Klusendorf, Hoffner honoree Dr. Monique Ruberu and Lifetime Achievement Award winner Brad O’Brien all testified in different ways to the virtues that PHL epitomizes – education, compassion and witness.

If you continue to believe in these values, please help to support the PHL mission at this time of crisis. I realize that among the galvanizing side effects of this pandemic are unemployment and fiscal uncertainty. As I said at the Banquet, please remember that “supporting” our mission need not be solely financial. Helping our mission in whatever way you can – by donating your time or expertise to accomplish the above goals – is just as greatly appreciated.

I thank you in advance. God bless you all. Stay safe!

Christopher Eric Paul Pushaw, Esq.  
President, Pennsylvanians for Human Life



FEATURED SPEAKER

DIANE  
EICHLER

Diane is a graduate of St. Bernadette and Archbishop Prendergast in Drexel Hill. After studying special education at La Salle University and earning a Masters Degree from Arcadia University, Diane taught special education for 36 years at the Wallingford-Swarthmore School District. She has been a member of St. Charles Borromeo parish for 36 years and currently serves as a lector and a member of the St. Vincent de Paul Society.

She has been married to Tom for 39 years and they are parents to Maureen, 38, Beth Ann, 34, and Tommy, 32. Diane considers herself very fortunate to have met Tom back in '79 and to know that all three of her children have terrific spouses. They are the proud grandparents of Marie Rose, Benny, Lily, Nate and Jake. Diane enjoys jogging, biking, swimming, traveling and reading, but her favorite times are those spent with family and close friends.

Diane recalls the infamous day in 1973 when one of her teachers at Prendie announced that the Roe vs. Wade decision had just made abortion legal across the United States. She was dumbfounded - her parents, Betty and Gus Grewy, had always been pro-life. Diane’s family had many friends with amazing special needs children; she had always been taught that human life, at any stage, was precious and valuable. How could this awful ruling stand? She and her fellow Respect Life Club members attended the first March for Life in 1974.

Since then, Diane has been involved in pro-life work. She considers Kathy Coll, founder of the Delaware County Pro-Life Coalition, her mentor. She has spoken at churches and schools throughout Philadelphia and the surrounding five counties. Diane has hosted women in crisis pregnancies, prayed and counseled at vigils in Philadelphia in order to bear witness to the irreplaceable babies, and she volunteers at Amnion Pregnancy Center in Drexel Hill.

Diane’s work with Pennsylvanians for Human Life began in 2016; she believes that education is the key to promoting the dignity of life at all stages. “Many of our young people today have never heard of the intrinsic value of life, nor the specifics of a baby’s remarkable development. They have not been taught the damaging effects of abortion and euthanasia. Our culture of death has unfortunately been widely accepted and many individuals are afraid to challenge it.”

Diane strongly endorses the curriculum offered by Pennsylvanians for Human Life. It contains astounding pictures and beautiful images of life at all stages; and best of all, the presentations encourage student interaction. The students enjoy learning new information, asking questions and then demonstrating their new knowledge. When Diane’s students respond with comments that begin with, “I never knew that \_\_\_\_\_,” she realizes the power of change that PHL promotes. Diane reveals a message of hope:

“As a teacher with Pennsylvanians for Human Life, it is important to never give up! I never know the influence my words may have on a person’s future!”

# PROTESTANT SPEAKER PROVES PRO-LIFE ISN'T JUST FOR CATHOLICS

By Lou Baldwin, Catholic Philly (Photos by Sarah Webb)

When one attends pro-life events in the Philadelphia area or even the annual March for Life in Washington, D.C., it is easy to come away with the impression that the pro-life movement is just a Catholic thing and no one else cares. That is not as widespread as one might suspect.

Take Scott Klusendorf, an Evangelical Christian who was the main speaker at the 32nd annual Celebrate Life Banquet held by Pennsylvanians for Human Life at the Springfield Country Club on Feb. 23.

A graduate of UCLA who holds a master's degree in Christian apologetics from Biola University in Southern California, he has been a fighter for human life for three decades.

Now 59 and living near Atlanta, Georgia, he and his wife Stephanie are parents of four children, Jeffrey, Tyler, Michael and Emily — “all pro-life,” said their dad.

Among the high schools he speaks at, probably 80 percent are Catholic, he estimated. But even among Catholic schools, not all welcome a pro-life speaker. “They give lip-service to pro-life but won't allow speakers,” he said.

Interestingly, in this post-Vatican II era when the different denominations, including Catholic, have been more open to ecumenism and dialogue, Evangelicals have been more wary of this than most.

Has this mutual opposition to abortion helped Evangelical-Catholic relations?

“As a Protestant, I am grateful for my Catholic friends who were in the forefront on this issue before Protestants were,” Klusendorf said. “Let's face it, without the Catholic influence the pro-life movement would have died. We can disagree on theological issues without demonizing each other. We can



Participants of the 32nd annual Celebrate Life Banquet, held by Pennsylvanians for Human Life on Feb. 23 at the Springfield Country Club, applaud a speaker on the program.



Scott Klusendorf, an Evangelical Christian pastor, speaks at the annual banquet of the Pennsylvanians for Human Life on Feb. 23.



Local ob/gyn physician Dr. Monique Ruberu (center) receives the Margaret Way Hoffner Award on Feb. 23 from the Pennsylvanians for Human Life, represented by Deacon Alvin Clay (left) and Tom Stevens, president and CEO of the Pro-Life Union of Greater Philadelphia.

He has been a pro-life speaker for 30 years and credits his own Christian commitment to his Chaucer professor at UCLA, who exposed him to the Christian theology underlying the works of J.R.R. Tolkien and C.S. Lewis.

More specifically, his own awakening to the pro-life issue came while he was an associate pastor at a church in Los Angeles and he heard a talk given by Gregg Cunningham, the founder of the Center for Bio-Ethical Reform.

“It changed my life and I felt I had to do something about it,” Klusendorf said. “I felt I can't just pass on the other side of the road like the priest and the Levite did. I went home and told my wife my career was about to take a dramatic change. Six months later I started a ministry helping pro-life people making a difference in the public square.”

Since then he has spoken at more than 80 colleges and universities, countless Protestant and Catholic high schools and written extensively on the issue. As a matter of fact, the day after his talk at the Pennsylvanians for Human Life dinner, he gave talks at three archdiocesan Catholic high schools – Archbishop Carroll, Msgr. Bonner-Archbishop Prendergast and Cardinal O'Hara.

discuss them over beer and cigars then roll up our sleeves to help defend life.”

While Klusendorf has been teaching pro-life especially to mostly young people for three decades now, he admits he sometimes gets discouraged.

“But I am persuaded I am required by God to speak truth whether the people are listening or not,” he said. “God told the prophet Jeremiah to go preach against child sacrifice (Jer. 19-5), and he told him ‘nobody is going to listen to you then.’”

“My job is more encouraging than the one he was given,” Klusendorf said. “My job is to put a pebble in their shoe, something to think about after I am gone, maybe when they are facing a crisis, or a friend is considering an abortion. My job is to speak the truth and let God do the work.”

It is the same as the work of Pennsylvanians for Human Life, which has been celebrating life for decades.

At this, their 32nd annual banquet, Dr. Monique Ruberu was honored with the Margaret Way Hoffner Award and Bradley V. O'Brien received the organization's Lifetime Achievement Award.

# MY DAY WITH SCOTT KLUSENDORF, PRESIDENT OF LIFE TRAINING INSTITUTE

By: David Owsik, PHL Board Member



My day started at 6:50 am picking up Scott for a whirlwind tour of three area high schools representing PHL. I was surprised by his casual dress and fancy Vans sneakers. He remarked from past experiences, he feels the high school students will relate better to him if he looks like them. For a man of 60 years of age, that is no easy task.

To make the most of our time together, I was interested to learn how Scott got his start in the pro-life movement. As an assistant pastor at a church in California, he attended a meeting run by Greg Cunningham, who was a former PA State Representative, where Greg showed an 8 minute video tape of an actual surgical abortion. Scott knew in his heart he had to do something. He said he immediately thought of the Good Samaritan Gospel Parable. In the parable, a man was beaten and robbed and left by the side of the road. A priest and a Levite saw the man and passed by. A Samaritan saw him, stopped, bandaged his wounds, put him on his donkey and took him to the nearest inn and cared for him. Scott told me that he felt that he had acted like the priest and Levite and that he was now going to act like the Samaritan. He went home and told his wife that their life was about to change. In the next 6 months he resigned from his position as assistant pastor and set out to better educate people about the horror of abortion and the dignity of human life from the moment of conception until the moment of natural death. This is what Scott has done over the last 30 years.

We visited three (3) High Schools that day. I had the privilege of hearing Scott share how to engage and defend the pro-life message without being obnoxious. He presented to about 650 students at Archbishop Carroll, 125 at Bonner/Prendie and 100 at Cardinal O'Hara. He did show, with permission of the President of Bonner/Prendie and Cardinal Ohara, a 55 second graphic depiction of the aftermath of an abortion. He masterfully introduced this subject, warning the students it would be difficult to watch and inviting them not to watch at their discretion. He also counseled that anyone who had been involved in an abortion, if they asked for forgiveness, that God in His Infinite Mercy would forgive them. Finally, he took questions from the students and encouraged them to prepare themselves for when they leave the safety of their Catholic high school and enter the secular world in higher education or their place of employment. He told them their faith and pro-life views would be mocked and challenged and gave them a response based upon science and philosophy.

Scott informed me that everywhere he goes, if possible, he tries to arrange his schedule so he can engage with teenagers to empower them to defend the pro-life message. I feel much better prepared and I believe these students will long remember their 45 minutes with Scott Klusendorf.

God Bless,  
Dave Owsik

## DIVIDED HEARTS OF AMERICA

The movie, budgeted at less than \$1 million, features former presidential candidate Ben Carson and Alveda King, the niece of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.



NFL player and Super Bowl Champion, Benjamin Watson, is wading into filmmaking on a feature documentary about abortion due out this September 2020. Watson, a pro-life Christian, is executive producing and partially financing a movie called *Divided Hearts of America* that he started filming in May 2019, prior to the NFL season.

In the movie, Watson interviews about 30 Americans, some pro-life, some pro-choice, about the controversial topic, and the film features several prominent people, such as former presidential candidate Ben Carson and Alveda King, the niece of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

"I never thought I'd be involved in a movie, but so many different laws have passed in New York, Alabama, Georgia, it seems this issue — which has always been a part of our national consciousness — has ramped up recently," Watson told *The Hollywood Reporter*.

"Things are at a fever pitch," he said. "My goal is to unveil the truth about abortion, the laws, the history and where our country is headed. I believe in the sanctity of life, be it in the womb or on your deathbed. That's my conviction. But with the film, I'll engage those who disagree and hear their reasoning. The No. 1 thing I'm looking for is empathy on both sides."



**PENNSYLVANIANS FOR HUMAN LIFE**

Education Services

**Pennsylvanians for Human Life**  
**590 Snyder Avenue, Suite 201**  
**West Chester, Pennsylvania 19382-5511**

# PORTUGAL RAFFLE!

Win the trip of a lifetime to the Western Iberian Peninsula! The lucky winner of PHL's annual raffle this year will enjoy tours of Lisbon and Fatima, including the homes of the Three Children of Aljustrel. Trip includes round-trip airfare for two from Philadelphia to Lisbon and four nights at the 5-star Tivoli Avenida Liberdade Lisbon, which includes a daily breakfast.

The winner will be drawn at our Annual Ladies' Luncheon at Overbrook on November 1, 2020. As a courtesy, due to travel concerns emanating from the COVID-19 pandemic, the travel agency has allowed the winner to redeem the trip for a period of two years from the date the prize is awarded.



# SAVE THE DATES!

**Sun., Nov. 1, 2020**  
Tenth Annual Ladies  
Shopping Luncheon at  
Overbrook Golf Club, Villanova  
(Call the office for an invitation)

**Fri., Jan. 29, 2021**  
March for Life DC

**Sun., Feb. 21, 2021**  
The 33rd Annual  
Celebrate Life Banquet  
at Springfield Country Club

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