

STOPP International's

# RYAN REPORT

Behold the Lord, Jesus Christ, who tries so hard to get our attention

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## New PP chaplain

The Reverend Monica Corsaro has been appointed chaplain for Planned Parenthood in the state of Washington. She will give pastoral counseling to the abortion provider's customers and staff. The United Methodist minister is the first full-time, statewide chaplain for PP.

"It's important to have someone (on staff) who can speak as a person of faith, speaking from her faith, for the people of faith," Corsaro said. "And it's important to have a religious voice for choice" (*Seattle Times*, 3/30/02).

Elias Galvan, a Methodist bishop, appointed Corsaro to the Planned Parenthood position. *The Life Advocacy Briefing* of April 8, 2002, published Bishop Galvan's mailing address and other contact information: Pacific Northwest Conference United Methodist Church, 2112 3rd Ave. # 300, Seattle, WA 98121; telephone: 206-728-7462 or 800-755-7710; fax: 206-728-8442; e-mail: bishop@pnwumc.org. STOPP supporters should consider politely asking Bishop Galvan to revoke his appointment.

In the past, Planned Parenthood has made an effort to reach out to clergy. The Planned

Parenthood's 2000-2001 *Annual Report* (p.17) states:

*The PPFA Clergy Advisory Board leads a national effort to increase public awareness about the spiritual, ethical, and moral dimensions of reproductive choice and to encourage clergy and lay religious leaders to support the Planned Parenthood mission and programs by joining the PPFA Pro-Choice Religious Network. The network has more than 2,000 members who receive the newsletter Clergy Voices three times a year.*

*Last year, for the first time, PPFA participated in a nondenominational convention to inform members of the clergy about our educational programs and to encourage them to join the Responsible Choices Action Network. Another first—made possible by a grant from the Planned Parenthood Foundation—was a collaboration between the PPFA Clergy Project and Planned Parenthood of Metropolitan Washington to provide training for seven affiliates that are committed to building partnerships with religious institutions in their communities.*

Obviously PP would like to get clergy on their side because, of course, PP is hoping the clergy will lead others to accept PP. How any member of the clergy could simultaneously purport to serve God and promote Planned Parenthood boggles the mind. Pastors should be preaching and protesting

against the evils of PP and urging the members of their flocks to oppose this pillar of the Culture of Death.

## STOPP president leads Fla. PP protest

STOPP's founder and president, Jim Sedlak, led about 40 pro-lifers in a two-hour protest in 90-degree heat on March 20, outside of Planned Parenthood of Collier County's new building in Naples, Fla.

The Naples Pro-Life Council brought Jim to town the day before the protest so he could give a talk about the evils of PP to pro-lifers gathered at St. William Catholic Church.

The protest preceded the \$3.5 million, 11,000-square-foot building's open house. Picketers marched on the sidewalk at noon carrying large posters in an effort to educate the public. Jim said, "It's clear from the design and size of this building that they intend to perform surgical abortions here" (*Fort Myers News-Press*, 3/21/02).

PP claimed that it is not their intent to provide abortions at the facility, but Jim pointed out that the Sarasota, Fla., PP affiliate had said it would not provide abortions and then later changed its mind. "They (in Sarasota), like this facility, were denying their plans to do abortions...They (here) will open and say they don't plan to do abortions to get all the permits and then

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discover a need for abortion services in the community" (*Naples Daily News*, 3/21/02).

A month after the protest, Joe Hennessy, past president of Naples Pro-Life Council, told STOPP that pro-lifers are present at the new facility three times a week. The Rosary is prayed at the facility on Saturday mornings at ten o'clock. STOPP urges its supporters in the region to attend. (The address is 1425 Creech Road.)

STOPP thanks Joe and the rest of the Naples Pro-life Council, as well as all the other pro-lifers who made Jim's trip to Naples a memorable and productive experience. May God bless their efforts to oppose the evils of Planned Parenthood.

## Fr. Weslin out of prison

Fr. Norman Weslin was released from prison on April 3, 2002, after serving his entire five-month sentence for praying in front of an abortion facility in western N.Y. (See *Ryan Reports* Dec. 2001 and Feb. 2002 in which STOPP urged supporters to write to Fr. Weslin in prison.) The day after Fr. Weslin's release, STOPP's national director, Ed Szymkowiak, spoke with him by phone.



ALL's president, Judie Brown, and Fr. Norman Weslin.

He was in excellent spirits and told Ed his case would soon be up for appeal. He laughed when Ed asked him what would happen if he were to win the appeal, since he had already served the sentence. Ed joked that maybe they'll give him five months credit toward his next conviction.

A few days before, on Holy Saturday, Fr. Weslin wrote a letter to Ed Szymkowiak and Judie Brown, president of American Life League. ALL had also urged its supporters to write to Fr. Weslin. Here are some excerpts:

*Just a note of profound thanks for all you have done for your jailbird priest. It was incredible!! Because of your posting my situation in your mailings, I received over*

*1700 letters of support from your very pro-life community. (I received 181 letters on the day after Christmas Day alone!!) God was using you, as He always does with you, in a very beautiful and powerful way. Those people really believe in what we are doing to stop the killing...*

*Yes, I'm saying that prayer for STOPP, Ed. Keep up that powerful work!! We will celebrate at our fire-side chats in purgatory. Now we suffer with Christ!! Our Easter Alleluia is tomorrow!! Alleluia!...*

Mary Quinn, a supporter of Fr. Weslin, noted that Fr. Weslin was right back out at the scene of his "crime" on April 6, 2002, praying outside a Buffalo abortion clinic. As we wrote in the February 2002 *Ryan Report*, while Fr. Weslin was in prison the injunction that put him there was found unconstitutional by the 2nd Circuit U.S. Court of Appeals. When Father Weslin directly asked the local police on April 6 if his behavior was legal, the police replied, "yes."

Father Weslin was recently a guest on *LifeTalk*, a pro-life television show. If you would like a videotape copy of this program, send \$3.50 (includes shipping and handling) to Life Dynamics, Inc., P.O. Box 2226, Denton, TX 76202, or call 1-800-800-LIFE to purchase a copy with your credit card. Ask for the May 2002 show featuring Father Weslin.

STOPP thanks all supporters who wrote to Fr. Weslin while he was in jail. Fr. Weslin visited STOPP in person at our offices in Stafford, Virginia, on May 3 to say "thanks." All pro-lifers should also thank God for giving us the courageous defender of life, Fr. Norman Weslin.

**STOPP**  
international

STOPP INTERNATIONAL'S RYAN REPORT is named for John A. Ryan, T.O.P., who was one of the first to speak out against Margaret Sanger, the founder of Planned Parenthood.

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## **STOPP in western New York**

On April 3, STOPP's national director, Ed Szymkowiak, was in Buffalo, N.Y., to give a presentation on Planned Parenthood to about 90 pro-lifers, who were gathered for a dinner in the St. Anthony of Padua Church Hall on Court Street. Buffalo Regional Right to Life Committee, Inc., headed by Attorney Stasia Zoladz Vogel, sponsored the event. Dinner music was provided by BRRTLTC's vice president, George L. Kraus (pictured holding a crucifix in front of U.S Supreme Court on 1/22/01). The Buffalo region is plagued by two distinct PP affiliates, Planned Parenthood of Niagara County (PPNC) and Planned Parenthood of Buffalo and Erie County (PPBEC).

In February 2002, PPNC started providing abortions at its new 8,200-square-foot facility at 6591 Williams Road in the town of Wheatfield. The concrete killing center has bulletproof glass, only one entrance, and a complex security system with several cameras. A black iron fence surrounds the entire compound.

PPNC president and CEO Shelley Stuchell said PP expects to provide 400-500 first-trimester abortions at the new facility in the first year and doesn't expect the number to exceed 1,000 per year thereafter. She said, "I'm so proud of what we're doing, offering abortion services to complement the services we already offer." Stuchell also said that since she became CEO in 1989, offering abortions has been her goal. PPNC offers first trimester abortions at a cost of \$425 (*The Buffalo News*, 3/10/02, p. c-1).

According to the same article, in 1999 Niagara County had 859 abortions and Erie County had 4,734. The 1992 Spring of Life protests in the region targeted five killing centers in Erie County. Since

then, the number of such centers dropped to two, but recent news indicates that the Evil One is working to reverse this trend. In addition to the new PP clinic, abortionist Steven C. Brigham has announced plans to open an office in western N.Y. as well.

In his talk, Ed pointed out that despite this bad news, there are many things that a community can do to limit Planned Parenthood's influence, save lives, and, with enough persistence and prayer, even get PP to leave town. He reviewed



the basic tactics of peaceful, prayerful picketing, letter writing to local papers, the importance of praying the Rosary, reading Matthew chapter 10, and giving the battle to God. In addition, he pointed out the close links between sex education, contraception and abortion and the fact that many of the drugs and devices PP sells as contraceptives sometimes kill an already conceived human being by preventing him or her from implanting in the mother's womb.

Ed brought along the 2000 IRS form 990s for both of the region's PP affiliates and shared the following shocking news: PPBEC had a total income \$2,413,361 with \$1,429,370 (line 1c) coming from government sources. That's an incredible 59.2 percent! PPNC had a total income of

income of \$2,656,662 with \$1,286,336 coming from government sources (lines 93f-g). That's 48.4 percent. He pointed out that the western N.Y. PPs were being subsidized by the government at a far greater rate than the 30 percent reported for Planned Parenthood Federation of America as a whole. That's our tax money, and our local, state and federal officials need to hear from us that we want such funding stopped.

To emphasize his point that PP targets teens, Ed read an attachment to PPBEC's 2000 IRS Form 990 (such forms are available for free at [www.guidestar.org](http://www.guidestar.org)) that reads, in part:

*We currently utilize (and intend to expand) our successful teen-only times and walk-in hours. PPBEC emphasizes special times for teens that are on select medical service days, designated to serve the teen population. The teen times incorporate fun and interesting games and teaching tools. These times also provides (sic) a comfortable environment for our youngest clients, many of who are coming for their first GYN exam. The teen-only hours creates (sic) a safe and confidential place for teens, ensuring they will receive the ultimate in friendly and personal care. Since we started our program in May 2000, we have seen steadily increasing numbers in our clinics during our teen times.*

*The teen times are staffed with peer educators who have been trained in comprehensive sexuality education. The peer educators complete an intensive training program either through the agency's Teen "Reality" Theater, Circle of Friends, or Male Responsibility Program. They are present at the teen times to provide peer-to-peer support and counseling, as well as to act as patient advocates...*

During Ed's talk, someone complained that D'Youville College, a local Catholic institution, was hosting a Planned Parenthood event. In fact, *The Buffalo News* ran an announcement for the event which was slated to take place on April 4. It was a leadership summit for girls between the ages of 13 and 17. Ed suggested that this be protested, and Hetty Pasco volunteered to do so.

As it turned out, some other pro-lifers joined Hetty, and one even got into the event. Calls were made to the college and the bishop was contacted. When Ed called the office of President Sr. Denise A. Roache, he was told that the PP speaker had been cancelled. However, further investigation indicated that material promoting a program (Buffalo PLAAN), which Planned Parenthood initiated, was given out. The pro-lifers provided material to STOPP that included a statement that PLAAN is coordinated by PP, and that PLAAN (Partners Linking to Address Adolescent Needs) offers "free family planning and reproductive health services to teens."

STOPP called the college back and was put in contact with Mr. Robert Murphy, vice president of Student Affairs. Ed confronted Murphy with the evidence and the complaint that even though the PP speaker was cancelled, there was still the issue of objectionable material being given out at a Catholic institution.

Murphy admitted that what the college did was wrong, and said the employee responsible for violating college policy had been reprimanded. Murphy said he (Murphy) had been on vacation. He told STOPP it would not happen again, and there would be no presentations promoting contraception, abortion, or Planned Parenthood.

STOPP thanks Buffalo Regional Right to Life Committee, Inc., for a great dinner and the opportunity for Ed to meet so many committed pro-lifers in western

N.Y. BRRTLC's Stasia Zoladz Vogel is also one of the leaders of The National Congress for the Protection of Human Life ([www.lifecongress.org](http://www.lifecongress.org)). The Congress is a coalition of like-minded pro-life groups dedicated to protecting human life without exception or compromise. STOPP's president, Jim Sedlak, STOPP's national director, Ed Szymkowiak, American Life League's president, Judie Brown and other leaders in the pro-life movement, have endorsed the Congress. For more information, visit [www.lifecongress.org](http://www.lifecongress.org), or call Stasia Zoladz Vogel at (716) 947-9126.



*Von Meritt, Stasia Zoladz Vogel, Ed, Hetty Pasco.*

## **Buffalo city council approves \$100 million pro-life shrine**

As the previous story indicates, the Buffalo region has just seen the opening of a new PP abortion clinic and is facing the possibility of another non-PP abortion clinic opening soon. Pro-lifers in the region are fighting back against the Culture of Death with a bold and unique tribute to Our Blessed Mother. On April 3, 2002, the city of Buffalo unanimously approved a resolution supporting (but not paying for) the building of The Arch of Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of

Mary and the International Shrine of the Holy Innocents.

The \$100 million project on the shores of Lake Erie anticipates the coming Triumph of the Immaculate Heart of Mary. It would be the world's tallest monument, measuring 700 feet to the tip of the golden cross that will surmount its peak. Several pro-life leaders, including ALL's Judie Brown, have endorsed the project.

The support resolution was proposed by then non-Catholic, Councilman-at-Large Charley Fisher, who recently made news by announcing his allegiance to the cause of the innocent unborn. Fisher's involvement with the pro-life issue has led him to embrace the Catholic Faith. He is enrolling in RCIA. For more information, visit [www.archoftriumph.org](http://www.archoftriumph.org).

## **Journey with Our Lady**

*Pat Martin of San Diego, Cal., sent the following report to STOPP. It is a "textbook example" of how to organize a community effort against Planned Parenthood.*

**The journey of Our Lady, opening my eyes to the magnitude of abortion, and leading me to organize a prayer vigil for the protection of the unborn and for the millions of babies who have died because of abortion.**

### **Birth of a prayer vigil**

A friend of mine, whom I have known for 23 years, came to me early in February 2002 to ask for the telephone number of a neighbor of mine. I gave it to her and then asked why she wanted it. She said because Planned Parenthood wanted to do a Home Tour fundraiser in our neighborhood.

My friend has volunteered with Planned Parenthood for many years, but we had never discussed this. However, we knew each other's views—she is pro-choice and I am pro-life. As a matter of fact, I have, for the most part, avoided this topic with most of my friends, as it seems that most of them are pro-choice. I hadn't thought much about abortion, but I always knew that it is wrong, especially when the topic of partial-birth abortion was being debated in Congress. I was verbal at that time, but after legislation to ban the procedure was vetoed by President Clinton, I went back to not discussing the issue of abortion.

The first thought that came to me when she answered my question was that I was glad she didn't get me involved in the fundraiser. At the same time, I wondered what I could do against these efforts. Should I create a petition? The question was heavy on my heart. I called Priests for Life and was given the number of STOPP (Stop Planned Parenthood). I spoke with Ed Szymkowiak. He said that a petition was a good idea. He said it might not stop PP, but the effort was a good one. He also suggested that I send a letter to the editor of our city newspaper.

Initially, I had apprehensions, since I am very well known in the neighborhood, and now everyone would know that I am pro-life, and that I am against abortion. Luckily, these feelings passed.

### Five hundred signatures

I made up a petition that stated that abortion is wrong, and that we didn't want PP to raise money in our neighborhood that might go to providing abortions. My goal was 100 signatures. However (and I will often say this), Our Blessed Lady's and the Holy Spirit's goal was 500 signatures.

I had gone to speak to our parish priest, and he was excited to let me get signa-

tures after the Masses. More than half of our parish is Hispanic, so I had my bilingual friend translate the petition and help at the Spanish-speaking Masses.

So in no time we had 500 signatures. Actually, I was quite taken aback by the number of signatures. Right before I got these signatures, I met with a friend from the church who helped me to compose a letter to the editor. He also called the editor of a local lay Catholic newspaper. As it turned out, the lay Catholic newspaper, *News Notes*, wrote an article about what I was doing. The reporter referred me to a lady who has been active in the pro-life movement for several years. He thought she could give me more ideas on what else I could do.

She suggested I submit a letter to the editor in my neighborhood paper, and that she didn't think I had any chance in our city paper. (Our city paper is very liberal and one-sided.)

Again I had apprehensions about putting my name in the neighborhood paper because everyone would know I was against abortion. But these feelings, luckily, once again passed.

I wrote the letter using the facts that STOPP gave me about how many abortions PP performs, how much money they make from abortions, and how much their yearly budget is. This information had astounded me and many of my friends.

### To print or not to print

After I gave the letter to the newspaper, I called them two hours later, and they said they weren't sure if they would print it. I couldn't imagine what had transpired in those two hours, but I put it in Our Lady's and the Holy Spirit's hands. If Our Lady wanted it in the paper, it would get in. The newspaper is a part of a community development corporation (CDC), of which I am a

board member. As I was to find out later, therein lay the problem. Three days passed, so I called the neighborhood newspaper back, and they said they were going to print it. They had checked with the chair president of the CDC, and she said that it was a letter to the editor, and therefore it was okay.

The lady who suggested I put the letter to the editor in my local paper, also suggested I give the petition to the homeowners and to picket outside of the houses on the day of the tour.

Picket? Wow, I wasn't sure I was ready for this step. I prayed a lot about it. As a matter of fact, I had my prayer group fasting and praying during this time. There were to be eight homes on the tour, but I only knew the people in four of them. The homeowners open their houses to PP, and PP charges each visitor a fee to see the houses.

I had my friends who also oppose abortion write letters and send them to the PP director, and to the local city paper, the *San Diego Union Tribune*. Again, I figured if Our Lady and the Holy Spirit wanted our views in the city paper, they would get them in.

Two weeks passed since collecting the signatures, writing the letters to the editors and to sending the petition to the director of PP and to the homeowners. So now it was wait and see what happens. Also, I was still praying to know what to do if they went ahead with the home tour.

In the meantime, our neighborhood paper, *The Golden Hill Cornerstone*, came out. Two days later, I received a phone call from my friend who originally had asked me for my neighbor's phone number.

### Why are you such a fanatic?

She couldn't believe that I, who she considered as being so fair with people, could object to homeowners with different views doing what they wanted in

their own homes. She called me a fanatic, and went on to tell me of all the good that PP does, and that abortions are only ten percent of their two-thirds of a billion dollar budget. She then stated that they are the only organization that helps the young and the poor. Good grief. I thought that her statement was another reason for me to get the facts.

I asked her if they are considering not having the home tour. She said, "Of course not." So I called Allyson again. She said that if I had the time and energy, I should continue. The others and I continued to pray.

### One month to go

I got the idea to involve other churches. By this time, the home tour was one month away, April 20.

I spoke with a lady from one neighborhood church who said she was leery of a picket, but said that she should would run it by her congregation. Later, it occurred to me that it should be a prayer vigil. After all, I have been praying with Our Lady's Prayer Warriors at Our Lady of Angels Church for 14 years for a successful end to the drug war. Of course, a prayer vigil! But where? At each house? And, of course, this was a perfect way to involve other churches.

Now the Catholic lay newspaper, *News Notes*, came out and I had the reporter add my telephone number to the article. I did get a telephone call that was a real encouragement to my efforts. This caller reminded me about how important it was to get the facts. Most people like myself just don't know the statistics, like 1.5 million babies are aborted yearly in the U.S.A., that is 4,000 a day, every day. The daily death toll equals the number killed in the World Trade Center attack. The next fact that I had my husband check out was the number of babies aborted worldwide. I was thinking about 4.5 million. Wrong. So when he told me

46 million (1996), I said that he had to be wrong. Well, he wasn't. So more and more, little by little, I was awakened to what was going on. God forgive me. God forgive my friends.

### City newspaper calls

Shortly after the article came out in the *News Notes*, I got a call from the *San Diego Union-Tribune*. A reporter said that she wanted to do an article. I was very open to telling her all that I had done so far to protest against PP. Halfway into the interview, I realized that she might be biased to the other side. So I asked her what slant she was going to put on the story. She laughed.

As it turned out, the article was in the city paper two days later, and it was a fair story. So yes, Our Lady and the Holy Spirit wanted it in the city paper. Not only that, Fox Channel 6 television was at my door one hour after I had read the news article. In the TV interview, I spoke of the 1.5 million aborted babies. Incredible! No press releases, yet the city newspaper and local TV wanted to do, and did, a story.

Still praying. Still fasting. Where to have the prayer vigil? Well, I was inspired to call a church two blocks from where I live and across the street from one of the houses on the home tour. As a matter of fact, that particular house is the one that my friend wanted the telephone number to.

The church in mind is Catholic, but it, too (as is the *News Notes* newspaper), is a little on the outs with the diocese. Since I really didn't know why they were on the outs, I felt that Our Lady and the Holy Spirit chose this site. It has a large open parking lot that is on private property. And, as I said, it is directly across the street from the home tour.

### Two weeks to go

Now there were only two weeks until the home tour and the prayer vigil. I had four friends who were very supportive of all that I had done so far, so I thought it was time to form a committee to help with plans for the vigil. Well, two had company coming to town, but they said they would come to the vigil. One was ill and was having to go to the hospital frequently, and one wasn't able to be too helpful until the day of the vigil.

I was telling my friend Melody about my dilemma, and she asked if I had asked God for help. I said "no," as I had assumed I would get help. So that night at our prayer meeting, I asked God for some help. Melody



gave me some numbers to call. One of the numbers was the Diocese of San Diego. Later the next day, I called the diocese.

Jo, the lady who spoke with me, had the voice of an angel. Once she heard my name, she said, "You won't believe this, but I just got an e-mail from someone who saw the article in the paper and said he wants to help." Incredible again.

I told her all that I had been doing, and she thought the diocese could help. I went to her office the next day and her boss said they wanted to help. They said there were 90 pro-life groups in the diocese and they would e-mail and correspond to all of them. Wow, again. Later I understood why I didn't have a committee: Our Lady had bigger plans.

I called Ed again at STOPP. He gave me ideas on how easily an ecumenical service could be done. We would pray the Rosary on the hour, and have other denominations pray on the half-hour. This was important to me, as I still didn't have commitment from other churches. So I didn't know how the vigil would flow.

Also the church where we were to have the vigil said we couldn't use the electricity or the bathrooms. The corner that the parking lot is on is very busy with traffic below, and air traffic above and no shade. So I was getting the sense that Our Lady and the Holy Spirit wanted the vigil kept simple. And we would have to bring our own chairs. Also about this time, it seemed like it might rain. But rain or shine, and God willing, the vigil was going to take place. We started telling people to bring chairs and umbrellas.

As a side note, I would like to mention that several times along the way my husband, Charles, and I were at odds. But because I continued to encourage my friends to keep praying and fasting, we were able to recognize our tussles as from Satan, and to get back on track.

## Personal attacks

On the same day I met with Jo, four letters to the editor of the *San Diego Union-Tribune* came out attacking me. The writers' tenor was that they felt their homes are sacred, and no one should be able to protest what they do in the privacy of their homes. I realized, of course, that they would feel this way—the same way as they feel about a woman's body. That is, that they can do with it what they want. After all, it is their temple (womb).

I responded to these city newspaper letters, as did others. My point was that just as they had a legal right to have abortions, as well as a right to home tours, others also have a legal right to say abortion is wrong, and that abortion kills babies. As it turned out, my (and only mine) letter was published.

As for the neighborhood newspaper (*The Cornerstone*) there was a lot of fuss (conflict of interest) made against my being on the CDC board, of which *The Cornerstone* is a journalistic extension. However, the director ruled that my view was a moral and not a political view, and therefore would be published. Even though the opposition went to the San Diego City Council and to the city attorney asking to revoke the CDC's non-profit status, nothing came of their threats.

## One week to vigil

Then there were seven days until the vigil. Many insights were floating through my mind at night. I couldn't sleep.

Our flyer was not made up in time to get into the church bulletins. I was waiting to find out what time the home tour was going to take place. I never found out, and made up the flyer 11 days before the event. I got the impression that Our Lady's Vigil (I will now refer to the Vigil as Her Vigil) was not meant to

be in the hands of the priest, but from the people. Also, she seemed to be gathering pro-life groups to come together to pray. Also, at this time, I still had no commitments from other denominations. I felt like the protest had become a prayer gathering.

I wondered how long it took for Our Lady to have the sacrificing of humans stopped in Mexico. How long would it take now worldwide to stop abortions? Again, I am reminded that nothing is impossible with God.

Because of the e-mails to all of the pro-life groups I received a call from a lady who had a Chaplet of Divine Mercy prayer group. She was very excited, and she had an eight-foot picture of Jesus' Divine Mercy, and Our Lady of Guadalupe.

So we decided we would have five decades of the Rosary, Chaplet of Divine Mercy, prayer from any other denominations, and music if someone came to sing.

## Six days to vigil

Six days to go, and still no commitments from other denominations. A man, who has been very active in protesting against abortion, called to caution me to be prepared for radicals from both sides looking to cause problems. He suggested that I call the police, and also have a code of conduct prepared to hand out to people coming to the vigil.

After all of the precautions and information he gave me, he said he did notice that usually there were no problems when the Rosary was being prayed. So I took that to reassure me that there wouldn't be any problems.

Also, I was not afraid at all (as to organizing the vigil) as years earlier I had organized my own neighborhood against drug-dealers, and I felt that the latter was more threatening than the former. During that time I was never hurt, nor

were my children, so consciously I was never afraid. That is the reason why Our Lady had chosen me for this vigil.

When I called the police, it turned out that during some of my neighborhood organizing in the past the same officer that I was currently talking to had assisted me and he remembered those past events and me. So for sure I felt that I would be protected.

## Two days to go

Two days to go, and still no other churches and still no cover for the parking lot. So I called Ed (STOPP) again. He helpfully said the main thing was that they (the other churches) had been invited.

## D-day—Saturday, April 20

Saturday April 20 was the day of the home tour vigil. A friend (Carlos) showed up with a 20'x40' tent and set it up. We borrowed and transported 30 folding chairs from my church. They fit inside the tent like a glove.

We brought our own water and lots of information stating adoption is the best choice, chastity is the best choice, etc. In addition, one ministry came with information regarding counseling women who have had abortions.

For the agenda, as no other denominations were physically present (others, we were later told, prayed fervently for our us and our cause at their own churches) so we prayed the 15 decades of the Rosary, the Chaplet of Divine Mercy, read Holy Scripture, and sang sacred songs.

We did this from 10 AM to 4 PM. People, some with their own chairs, kept the 50-person tent full all day as they came in prayer, and left in prayer. This included families with children. My ten prayer warriors remained the entire vigil to pray, pray and pray.

Joy, the daughter of a long-time friend and spiritual adviser, took charge of escorting people for restroom breaks to our house two blocks down the street. It turned out that we didn't need a microphone. We could be heard above the vehicle and air-traffic noise, and we were heard just fine.

At the end of the day, two TV channels came. On one channel one of the vigil participants who was interviewed spoke of the counseling needed for women who had undergone abortions, and of the physical, spiritual, and emotional trauma to which they had been subjected.

On the other channel, I spoke about why abortion is wrong and that abortion kills babies. Praise the Lord, the TV station did not edit out those comments. I personally think that that one small fact is incredible.

## Urban prayers, country dreams

Many of the PP supporters who paid for the home tour (at least six homes, we believe) saw and heard our group praying against abortion across the street

from one of the homes on their tour. Well, now what? For sure the scales have been lifted from my eyes. And I will no longer be silent. I will continue to give the facts to my friends, especially my friends who are against abortion, and who remain silent, as I once was.

But also I will be praying for those of my friends with hardened hearts. I am sure that I can't change their hearts. But I know that God may. And that some day our pro-life urban prayers may be answered, and on that day dawning, God will answer all of our prayers, and wake the living sleeping from their unspeakable country dreams.

*STOPP thanks Pat and all the other people in San Diego who took a stand against Planned Parenthood. When we give the battle to God many wonderful things happen. Readers are encouraged to drop Pat a note of thanks at pat-martin@cox.net or 866 22nd Street San Diego, CA 92102. We hope her story will inspire others to work to STOP Planned Parenthood in their communities as well.*

## This month's action items

- ✓ Contact Methodist Bishop Elias Galvan about his new PP chaplain.
- ✓ Send a note of thanks to Pat Martin. Follow Pat's example and organize your community to oppose PP.
- ✓ To schedule a talk in your community by Jim or Ed, call 540-659-4171.
- ✓ Send a tax-deductible donation today to help us keep fighting PP and sex education.
- ✓ Pray that God will lead us in our work and that we will always have the courage to do His will.