



THE SHIELD

DEFENDERS OF LIFE

Life's Greatest Blessing

By Victor Nieves, President



This most recent Mother's Day was especially meaningful for my family. My wonderful wife, Kaitlyn, is pregnant with our first child. The precious little life growing in her womb is the greatest blessing my wife and I have ever known. As we prepare to welcome our daughter into the world, we have

found ourselves viewing life through an entirely new lens. Every ultrasound, every kick, and every passing week has reminded us of the miracle and beauty of human life.

At the same time, this season of joy has deepened my understanding of the tragedy of abortion. How heartbreaking is it that so many young couples have chosen to take the lives of their own children? Those who have experienced abortion firsthand understand the pain and regret that often follows better than anyone. Their stories should serve as a reminder to all of us in the pro-life movement that abortion harms not only innocent unborn children, but also the mothers and fathers who are left carrying emotional wounds for years afterward.

Tragically, many young couples today have been told countless times that children are the exact opposite of a blessing. The culture of death insists that a child is a burden, a barrier to success, or a problem to be solved. Career ambitions, financial goals, and personal convenience are often elevated above family and parenthood. For this reason, many people have come to view the precious young life in the womb not as a gift from God, but as an obstacle standing in the way of the life they want.

Motherhood itself has also been demeaned and belittled by influential voices in media, entertainment, and politics. Phrases like "she is just a mother" have become common insults directed at women who prioritize raising children over climbing the corporate ladder. Modern culture often celebrates wealth, status, and professional success while treating motherhood as though it is somehow lesser or unfulfilling.

But there is no such thing as "just a mother."

The title of mother is perhaps the greatest title anyone could ever hope to hold. Mothers nurture life, shape the next generation, and pour endless love and sacrifice into their children. Long after worldly accomplishments fade away, the influence of a loving mother continues through her family for generations. There is no corporate office, political title, or public recognition that can compare to the eternal impact of motherhood.

As pro-life advocates, we fight every day to defend the lives of children in the womb because every child is created with dignity and purpose. The abortion industry, on the other hand, exists to rob young families of the blessing of parenthood while profiting from fear, confusion, and despair. Instead of encouraging mothers and fathers to embrace life, abortion advocates often encourage them to see their own child as disposable.

Our society is already beginning to experience the consequences of rejecting family and parenthood. Research has shown that nearly the entire Western world is now falling below replacement rate, meaning we simply are not having enough children to sustain future generations. Nations across the

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globe are facing declining birth rates, shrinking families, and growing loneliness. A culture that turns against children ultimately turns against its own future.

As my wife and I prepare to meet our daughter, I am more convinced than ever that children are not burdens, they are blessings. Life itself is a gift from God, and every child deserves to be welcomed, loved, and protected. The pro-life movement is ultimately about defending that truth and helping create a culture where every mother, father, and child can flourish.

Motherhood Begins Before Birth

By Samantha DeLoach

I vividly remember the moment that the nurse laid my firstborn son on my chest for the first time. Hours of waiting, the pain, the fear, the excitement all led to this. I don't know why, but the first thing I did was count all of his fingers and toes, making sure there were ten of each. I studied his face and tried to memorize everything about him: the color of his eyes, the shape of his nose, how skinny his little heels were. I talked to him, telling him how much I loved him and saying, "I'm your mom. It's me."

But that wasn't the first time I met him.

A Continued Relationship

When doctors and nurses place babies on their mother's chest, it's not to create a bond. They do it because a bond already exists. It's been forming for nine months. The very first person a baby instinctively seeks after birth is their mother. They know her scent, her heartbeat, her voice.

My son and I had been building our relationship long before he was born.

I had heard his heartbeat, and he had heard mine. I had seen him on ultrasounds, moving and stretching. I had sung him the same songs every night, the ones that calmed him the most as a newborn. I had seen his smile in 3D images. I had felt his hiccups and constant little kicks.

And The Kicking Didn't Stop

I never had to count my son's kicks. I welcomed them, even the ones that made my ribs ache, because they were a reminder that he was there and he was okay. It's crazy

With Mother's Day fresh in our memories, this month's newsletter highlights three articles each sharing a unique perspective on the importance of mothers, and by proxy choosing life. Each article is written by one of our fantastic Life Issues Institute contributors, and I know they will be a blessing and encouragement to you as they have been to me.

because even after birth, he was still the same little kicker. I'd be trying to dress him, and those same little legs that couldn't slow down in the womb still wouldn't stay still outside of it. When he slept next to me, he'd still be kicking, but now I felt those kicks from the outside instead of from the inside.

I knew those little legs before he was born. I knew him.



Pregnancy is Active Motherhood, Not a Waiting Period

The moment your baby comes into existence, you're a mother. A relationship exists. We owe our children protection and love from their very beginning. Whether they come into existence in your body or in a petri dish, they are yours to care for. But just because it's a responsibility doesn't make it a burden, it's a privilege. Children are a gift.

Accept that gift and be the best mother you can be. Your body does. Your body begins nourishing your baby immediately, providing everything they need. You are their first

home. Your heartbeat soothes them, your womb keeps them safe. Your voice becomes familiar to them long before they ever see your face.

Birth is not the beginning of the relationship. It's the continuation of a bond that was already there. It brings what was once hidden and internal into something visible and external. From womb to arms. From hearing your heartbeat on the inside to now hearing it on the outside. The same bond, just no longer hidden.

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P O Box 785 / Florence, KY 41022
Phone: 513.729.3600. Email: info@LifeIssues.org
Victor Nieves President & Publisher
Kate McAuliffe Editor

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To Murder or to Mother

By James Weigel

Abortion is an egregious injustice against the unborn. This is the chief reason to be pro-life.

However, beyond saying no to murder, we should be asking women to say yes to their natural calling: motherhood.

You won't need me to tell you this, but it is worth noting here that children require an incredible amount of energy. First are the basic needs that must be provided, including food, shelter, protection, and guidance. Facilitating the complete formation of children, however, requires much more. Most importantly, a strong Christian foundation needs to be impressed upon their beings. Their minds need to be formed to be resilient to sin and prepared to cultivate truth, beauty, and goodness. Beyond strict, explicit formation, there will be times when the children will need less of a governess and instead require more pastoral care. Failures, successes, ups and downs—all will demand practical wisdom to meet the precise moment. The mother's approach will be marked by warmth and a particular sensitivity to nuance, among many other characteristic qualities. With all that said, we have only scratched the surface of motherhood.



While the mere thought of such a life might elicit fear from an increasing number of people in our culture today, a proper understanding of human nature will put the nerves at ease.

Mothers are designed for this demanding work—natural, intrinsic tendencies direct both men and women toward parenthood. What is more daunting than the workload is the prospect of inhibiting this end, and the associated built-in frustration of doing so.

For clarity, it might be helpful to consider this analogy: let's say you have a stream of water flowing from two points, A and B. This is representative of our natural tendencies, insofar as our being exists in a certain way (being at point A) and our nature directs us (the water flow) to a more mature place (being at point B). If you allow the stream to move you to point B, as it naturally wants to, you won't have to deal with the trouble that comes with fighting the current. On the

other hand, if you choose to work against the stream, perhaps because of a fear of reaching point B, you are orienting yourself in a direction with built-in frustration—fighting the current, if you will, will be necessary.

Of course, another major issue is never reaching the more mature end, point B. The analogy doesn't illustrate the maturity of the destination, and I won't have space at present to cover it in great detail, but I will say this: nature loves itself, which is to say, nature wills the good of itself. Thus, nature necessarily directs beings toward ends

conducive to their own flourishing. Since we are also natural beings, our tendencies are bound to this same fundamental, ontological reality.

People are wired to be parents. This doesn't mean all will become parents, just as the flow of water can be impeded from A to B. Nor does it mean it always looks the same, as vocations do indeed vary. Furthermore, men and women are different, which will change how these intrinsic realities come to life. But ultimately, for most, parenthood will best be cultivated through the traditional path of getting married, procreating, etc.

On this Mother's Day, let us thank the moms in our lives for everything they do. This includes the countless sacrifices they make, the love they pour into their children, and their invaluable contributions. These wonderful women are worth celebrating today and every day. Through celebrating moms, we achieve a greater understanding of the abortion question. Namely, it's a choice between committing a grave injustice and the beginning steps a woman takes to nourish, not only her children, but her own character. Pro-lifers are, in short, making an argument for her not only to do right by the child, but right by herself.

Happy Mother's Day, everyone!

James Weigel is a pro-life advocate who writes and speaks on the issue. You can find more about him here: thejamesweigel.com

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Perspective on Motherhood

By Hannah Faulkner

“The homemaker has the ultimate career. All other careers exist for one purpose only—and that is to support the ultimate career.” — C.S. Lewis

One of the most troubling trends I have noticed within the church is the attitude that older women often display toward younger women.

I have encountered this scenario more times than I can count: an older woman asks a younger woman who is about to graduate high school what her plans are. Most often the young woman responds, “I am not sure I want to go to college or pursue a career, because I’d really like to be a wife and a mom.” The older woman will often reply, “That’s it? Just a wife and a mom? You aren’t going to go to college and get more experience in life?”

This scenario and I am sure anyone who stumbles across this article has encountered it to some degree within evangelical spaces, is proof of how deeply the feminist movement has infiltrated the church.

Pivotal feminist leaders despised the idea of a “homemaker” and of a woman solely devoted to her family. Betty Friedan, author of *The Feminine Mystique*, even compared being a housewife to the experience of a Jewish person during the Holocaust:

“...women who ‘adjust’ as housewives, who grow up wanting to be ‘just a housewife,’ are in as much danger as the millions who walked to their own death in the concentration camps...they are suffering a slow death of mind and spirit.”

Notice the phrase “just a housewife”. The same rhetoric that is being used by many Christian evangelicals. This is a fatal issue, and I believe it has contributed to many of the problems we face today. Feminism has told women that in order to be successful they must push off marriage and children. If the woman gets pregnant, abortion is presented as the solution. The feminist movement killed romance and love by driving a wedge between the sexes. It confused God-given roles by asking women to act like men and men to act like women.

If we truly want to save Western civilization and our Christian heritage, it starts at home—with the family unit of one man and one woman, committed for a lifetime, raising children. We must shift the narrative and encourage young women to pursue their God-given vocation. Young women who choose to embrace this calling are not “just homemakers.” They are being obedient to the call of God.



How dare we as the church belittle this high calling? Titus 2 declares that older women are to train the younger women “to love their husbands and children, to be self-controlled, pure, working at home, kind, and submissive to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be reviled.”

It says that if we fail in this exhortation to younger women, the Word of God will be reviled. This is not something we should take lightly. So when we as Christians belittle women who desire to be wives and mothers, I believe we are literally mocking God’s design for women.

Even further, the idea that they are “just” wives and moms, as if they sit at home twiddling their thumbs doing nothing all day is extremely misguided. They are nurturers, encouragers, lovers, mentors, motivators, guardians, teachers, cheerleaders, life-givers, homemakers, listeners, and the heart of the home. They are shaping the next generation. Their obedience to the Lord is vital to the future of our civilization.

No amount of Fox News interviews, books I write, or stages I speak on will ever amount to the influence of being a wife and mother. Being a wife and mother is what I aspire to be above all else.

My prayer is that one day I can be even a fraction of the wife and mother my mom is. She is the picture of a Proverbs 31 woman. She is meek and humble, yet resilient and prepared for any challenges that may strike our family. This was especially evident when she practically lived in the hospital for eight months with my seven-year-old sister, who was paralyzed in a freak swimming accident. From the time she wakes up until the time she goes to bed, she pours all of her energy into her household and faithfully serves as my dad’s helpmate. Not only does she serve her family well, but she does it joyfully. She is patient and quick to listen, even when my siblings (more specifically me) overwhelm her with a million ideas or philosophies. She stewards the body God gave her well. This brief summary of my mom’s character doesn’t even do her justice, but I am so grateful for her and her obedience to the Lord.

As young single women who aspire to be homemakers, now is the time to cultivate the virtues, character traits, and skills necessary for a fruitful household. Seek godly counsel. Surround yourself with older, wiser women who can pour into you. Be around children often and perhaps offer to help a young mom in the community a few hours a week. Learn to cook and run a productive household. These things can be practiced with your immediate family while living at home before marriage. Above all, seek the Lord and study the women of the Bible.