

December 2011 – Advent and Christmas Edition

St. Raymond's Respects Life Newsletter

*The newsletter of the Respect Life Committee of St. Raymond's Parish
Springfield, VA*

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Have a Blessed Advent! Merry Christmas! These expressions are moving toward extinction in an American society that appeals to diversity. May I suggest that as you greet someone during shopping or any other encounter during this holy season, don't be afraid to wear your faith with a hearty, "**Merry Christmas!**" This month not only features the season of Advent and the start of the Christmas season, but also two important feast days in our lives as Catholic Americans – The **Immaculate Conception** (Patroness of the United States) on December 8th and **Our Lady of Guadalupe** (Patroness of the Americas) on December 12th. As a spiritual reflection, I am providing a link to Father De Celles' [homily on December 8th 2011](#), a [homily given by Bishop Loverde](#) in 2000 as he spoke of the Feast of Our Lady of Guadalupe while celebrating Mass prior to praying before an abortion facility, and as a foretaste of Christmas, Father De Celles' [homily from last Christmas](#). On the pro-life front, there is an [action alert](#) to support the Abortion Non-Discrimination Act (ANDA); some [information about Marjorie Dannenfelser](#), our February speaker; and some news about HHS's restricting the [Morning-After-Pill](#) for minors. You will also find the [parish calendar](#) of Respect Life events.

This month's newsletter is packed with information.

[Support for the Abortion Non-Discrimination Act \(ANDA\)](#)

[Marjorie Dannenfelser, President of Susan B. Anthony List, our February Speaker](#)

[Good News with regard to Plan B \(Morning After Pill\) for Minors](#)

[Parish Calendar of Respect Life Events](#)

Father De Celles' Respect Life Homily of October 2nd:

Other Significant Respect Life Articles and Activities this Past Month:

1. Our friend, Mike Taylor, the Executive Director of the National Committee for the Human Life Amendment (a lobbying arm of the bishop's conference) sent to us an important legislative alert to support the Labor/Health and Human Services appropriation bill (not yet numbered) containing the Abortion Non-Discrimination Act (ANDA). It is critical that this conscience protection bill remains as part of this legislation. **Please take action immediately by going to the NCHLA website and sending a letter to our representative and senators.**

ANDA strengthens existing federal conscience protection laws and affirms the principle that no health care entity should be forced by government to perform or participate in abortions.

The need for ANDA is clear from recent increased threats against pro-life health care providers. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services has begun discriminating against grant applicants that will not do abortion referrals, claiming that current conscience laws forbid this form of discrimination. The University of Medicine and Dentistry of New Jersey recently threatened the jobs of twelve nurses who would not assist in abortions, saying the nurses have no right to sue them in court because existing conscience laws do not clearly permit such lawsuits. In California, state officials are demanding that even Catholic organizations provide abortion coverage, arguing that current federal laws permitting organizations to not pay for coverage that they are morally opposed to do not apply. Furthermore it stated that the federal government would never deny California all its Medicaid and Medicare funds as a penalty for infractions as currently mandated under the Labor/HHS bill. These threats will only grow unless ANDA is enacted now.

Here's the log in information again to send your message.

<http://actions.nchla.org/link/target/nchla/5tb8bzqg.aspx>

2. We are pleased that Marjorie Dannenfelser, President of Susan B. Anthony (SBA) List, will speak in our parish hall on February 9th as the third presenter for the St. Raymond's 2011-2012 Speaker Program. You can find much more about Marjorie and her personal background in her [biography on the SBA website](#).

Susan B. Anthony List carries out part of the mandate in [*Faithful Citizenship*](#) by identifying and supporting political candidates who believe that "The direct and intentional destruction of innocent human life from the moment of conception until natural death is always wrong and not just one issue among many." (#28). The Susan B. Anthony List, and its connected Political Action Committee, the SBA List Candidate Fund, are dedicated to electing candidates and pursuing policies that will reduce and ultimately end abortion. To that end, the SBA List will emphasize the election, education, promotion, and mobilization of pro-life women. Please visit their website at www.sba-list.org to learn more about their work.

3. The Secretary of Health and Human Services (HHS) has rejected a Food and Drug Administration (FDA) decision to provide over the counter Plan B (morning after pill) to all women without a prescription. She limited the over the counter sale of the pill to only those women who were over the age of 17. We, as Catholics, should be outraged that the Pill is available for anyone, especially over the counter. Plan B can be an abortifacient if taken around the time of fertilization (woman's egg meets man's sperm). It also has shown to have many side effects – similar to the side effects that the FDA also reported this week about the more recently approved birth control pill. This is another slippery slope issue that Catholics and others have been following for years. It all began at the beginning of the Obama Administration when he announced that Plan B would be provided over the counter for women 18 and older. While there was much said about it at the time, nothing could be done because it was a unilateral presidential ruling. Now, the FDA was ready to make it available to anyone – including 15 year olds – without a prescription and without parent consent. Stay tuned, actions have consequences. As with many of the birth control pills on the market, the side effects have been devastating to relationships, marriages, and the health of the woman. The birth control pill

makes a woman's reproductive system "sick" by altering a healthy major functioning part of her body.

Parish Calendar of Respect Life Events:

- December 17th 9:00 a.m. Bishop Loverde celebrates his monthly Respect Life Mass at St. Philip Church in Falls Church and then prays at a local abortion facility.
- January 22nd Life is Good Youth event at Hilton memorial Chapel, Woodbridge. Reservations are required. Contact Kristin Smith, St. Raymond's Director of Youth Apostolate at 703-440-0535 or stracyo@gmail.com.
- January 23rd Early Morning Youth Mass at Verizon Center followed by March for Life. Reservations required. Contact Kristin Smith.
- March for Life – Buses will depart from St. Raymond's Parish after a special 10:00 a.m. Mass. Sign-up sheets will be available in the Narthex in January.
- 3rd Annual Welcome Back Chili Dinner for marchers and others not able to attend March for Life, Parish Hall. Offers to help would be welcomed by Julie Bailey at Julie@baileypeople.com.
- February 9th 7:30 p.m. St. Raymond's Speaker Series – [Marjorie Dannenfelser](#), President, Susan B. Anthony List, Parish Hall.
- February 22nd Spring/Lenten 40 Days for Life Campaign begins
- March 2nd/3rd St. Raymond's Commitment for 40 Days for Life (plus each Friday during Lent)
- March 8th 7:30 p.m. (after 7:00 p.m. Mass) Project Rachel Holy Hour for the Diocese POC Diane Spinelli, Church
- March 24th 10:00 – 4:00 p.m. *Making Abortion Unthinkable – The Art of Pro Life Persuasion* Seminar/Training day, Parish Hall
- April 26th 7:30 p.m. St. Raymond's Speaker Series – Attorney General Ken Cuccinelli, Parish Hall
- September 22nd 9:00 a.m. Mass and then lecture. Kick off the 2012 St. Raymond's Speaker Series with a return of Father Tad Pacholczyk, Ph.D., Director of Education at the National Catholic Bioethics Center