

The purpose of this newsletter is to help educate, update, and inspire those interested in pro-life issues.

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CATHOLICS SADDENED AND CONFUSED BY COMMENTS FROM THE ITALIAN CONFERENCE OF BISHOPS

<http://www.lifesitenews.com/news/cardinal-reportedly-said-i-dont-identify-with-pro-life-protesters/>

Catholic people around the world are saddened and confused about what came from the Italian Conference of Bishops. This conference is not to be confused with the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB). Many of us were hoping what we read and heard was a mistake. Unfortunately, it was not. An interview with the bishop who deals with the day to day affairs of the Italian conference (Monsignor Nunzio Galantino) appeared in an Italian newspaper on May 12th. The bishop reportedly said –

“My wish for the Italian Church is that it is able to listen without any taboo to the arguments in favour of married priests, the Eucharist for the divorced, and homosexuality ... In the past we have concentrated too much on abortion and euthanasia. It mustn't be this way because in the middle there's real life which is constantly changing ... I don't identify with the expressionless person who stands outside the abortion clinic reciting their rosary, but with young people, who are still against this practice, but are instead fighting for quality of life, their health, their right to work.”

Many peaceful demonstrations take place outside of abortion clinics where pro-life Catholics and others will pray the Rosary. These are more than just “expressionless” people. They are brave men, women and children who bravely send a very public and powerful message about the tragic reality of abortion. Their prayers are of course saving lives as well - the impact they have on saving lives is measurable and very real. This is shocking coming from a Bishop. But, it is also a good reminder for Catholics to remain faithful to the constant teaching of the Church and to not worry about the world's approval. We need to pray for this Bishop.

A ST. PAUL PARISHIONER'S ABORTION STORY – PART 1, THE DECISION

I am a St Paul parishioner. This is my story – told in the way I want it to be told. It's an abortion story, and comes with all the anguish, disappointment, fear, and intense sorrow from one who's gone through the abortion process. This chapter of my life will never be relegated to the background of my consciousness - to be remembered occasionally, and to quickly be hidden away again. It is with me every day of my life. I decided to present this story for two reasons. First, I'm hoping that it may help other women to know what lies ahead in the event that an abortion is being considered. Secondly, it helps me to better manage the emotional burden that I still carry, almost 25 years later. Here goes.....

I was 22 years old. I had been raised in a small town, the youngest child in a large Catholic family, and had always been under the protective care of my parents, grandparents and siblings. I attended Mass regularly and had been educated in Catholic schools through high school.

When I first found out that I was pregnant, I didn't know quite what to feel, but shock and fear (of the unknown) were right up there. I couldn't tell anyone right away - I just didn't know how to explain it and was not ready to face the disappointment I was sure to receive. As the reality of the situation began to sink in, a deep, protectiveness of the child (yes, I truly believed it was a child from conception) took over, and pretty much guided my immediate actions. I can't fully explain this protectiveness that I felt, except to say that I believe it's instinctual and very, very intense. The bottom line here is that I loved my child from day one and vowed to protect him/her at all costs. In the end, I broke that sacred vow and that's something for which I'll never be able to forgive myself.

I told the child's father first about the pregnancy. He wanted nothing to do with the child, and was pressuring me to have an abortion and make the whole uncomfortable situation go away. At this point in the pregnancy, abortion was not an option. I was planning to have the baby and raise him/her myself. This reaction from the child's father, however, did serve to raise my level of protectiveness for my baby even higher, and very soon after that, the father and I parted ways.

I really needed to tell my parents. They would know how to handle the situation and help me through it, but I was dreading their responses. My mother would be the reasonable, compassionate one. My father would be the tougher one to deal with. So I decided to tell my mother and let her break the news to him in her own way. I remember the two of them sitting down for breakfast one morning. I was in another room, trying to overhear how the conversation was going. It was very quiet and I couldn't pick up much of the discussion. But afterward, my mother told me that when she broke the news to my father that I was pregnant, he put his head down and put his face in his hands and was very, very quiet. I was glad to not have witnessed that. To this day, he cannot talk to me about this whole thing.

As time went on, I was very conscientious in caring for my baby. I went to the doctor regularly. I watched what I ate, and avoided caffeine and alcohol. I tried very hard to do what was right for my child. It was at one of the early ob/gyn visits that I heard my child's heartbeat for the very first time, and a few visits after that I learned of the baby's sex - I wanted to know so that I could give my child a name. It was a boy and he would be named Christopher. My son had his identity – and he was mine.

Once the initial excitement of the pregnancy simmered down, I began to think about the life I felt I needed to provide for my son. And that's when things started to become frightening for me. I was living at home. I had a job, but it didn't pay well enough to allow me to live on my own, let alone support someone else. I had no car. I had a high school diploma, but no further education and no real skills. How was I ever going to achieve and manage this new life for us? So, then I began to panic and question my ability to be a good mother – the kind of mother that my child deserved. And along with that questioning and doubt, other options began to creep into the picture. Should I have the child and then give him up for adoption to a more deserving and capable family? Should I consider (Lord forgive me) an abortion? And as these new options came into the equation, the pressure to make the right decision – quickly - became more and more intense, since there were now timing issues that would need to be addressed if I opted for an abortion. Plus, I had become so attached to this child by this time, that I could never accept giving him away to another family and not have him as an integral part of my life. The pressure at times was overwhelming, and as I look back now, I wish that I had talked with more people and actively sought their thoughts and suggestions.

I thought that my mother, being an active Catholic with a very deep faith, would adamantly steer me away from the abortion option. I was wrong. She told me that I was an adult and needed to make my own decision in this important matter, but that she would support any decision I made. My father could not accept abortion, so did not offer any type of guidance. In my heart, I knew that my parents just wanted the whole thing to be resolved and go away. I did not seek counseling from the clergy – it just didn't enter my mind as a way to go. Of course, my friends supported me, yet not one offered advice or suggested what they thought was the best way to go. Everyone left it up to me – a 22-year-old woman-child. As I look back, it was much easier for them to say "I'll support you in whatever you choose to do", than to give advice and guidance about something so uncomfortable and seemingly threatening to them. So, the world was on my shoulders, and was becoming very, very heavy.

So, as time for making this crucial decision was drawing short, my thinking became ever more irrational, unfocused, and flustered. In my confused mind, I would never be able to be the responsible mother that my son deserved, and yet I could never give him to another family and live my life knowing that I had a son with whom I was unable to have a true mother/son relationship. The only option left to consider was abortion – and the thought of that option was tearing me apart.

Finally, I took the 'easy' way out and decided to have an abortion. The decision was a last minute one, and has been, by far, the most difficult decision I've ever had to make. I loved and wanted Christopher from the moment I discovered that I was pregnant. I still want him today. But I really felt that I had no other options open to me. And as much as I knew he was a child in God's likeness, in my turmoil, I still chose the wrong path. I had promised my son that I'd always be there and that I wouldn't allow anyone to ever hurt him. I had promised him that I'd be the best mom and that we'd have the best lives together. I broke all those promises.....and that's something that I'll regret for the rest of my life.