

When Baby Parts Are Worth More Than the Baby¹

By Peter Finney, Jr.

The problem is the child. When you cut through the tortured logic Planned Parenthood president Cecile Richards employs to defend the primacy of privacy over the natural law, what you are left with, unfortunately for the nation's abortion Goliath, is the child. Or, more accurately, 57.5 million children and counting who have died through legal abortion in the U.S. since 1973.

The stain of a sin this big and this unchecked by society for more than 40 years cannot be fully grasped, much less examined. We cannot view directly the revolting truth of abortion because that truth would blind us and maybe even turn our Lamborghinis into pillars of salt. Do not look back. This is a settled issue. In our patriotic fervor to sing "God Bless America" as though it were something more than a children's nursery rhyme, we must avert our eyes to the collateral damage of "choice" and continue living our unexamined lives – from sea to shining sea.

But then, in a country hypnotized by YouTube cat videos, something utterly amazing happened in the last two weeks. Two undercover videos, the product of careful planning by people who have examined their own lives and felt compelled to expose the hidden reality of death before birth, shock the YouTube cyber community. Americans, young and old, stopped and clicked. Amazing. Grace.

The bottom line for me is this: When baby parts are more valuable than the babies who provide them, my God we have lost our way. Perhaps most disturbing was the sheer nonchalance of it all. In their unguarded conversations, Planned Parenthood medical professionals admitted there are ways of modifying surgical procedures, to harvest more intact human tissue per specimen. They also acknowledged there is a Wild Wild West market in baby parts – the Wal-Mart or the Tiffany's price for organs is totally negotiable, depending on the automotive preferences of the abortionist.

In between sips of wine and bites of salad, Dr. Deborah Nucatola, head of Planned Parenthood's Medical Services department, told the undercover operatives from the Center for Medical Progress about how presentation is everything: human hearts, lungs and livers are harvested so much more easily if the baby is delivered feet first, which sometimes takes a little nudging here and there. But what's a breech delivery among friends?

"I'd say a lot of people want liver," said Nucatola, munching on her salad. "And for that reason, most providers will do this case under ultrasound guidance, so they'll know where they're putting their forceps. The kind of rate-limiting step of the procedure is

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calvarium. Calvarium – the head – is the basically biggest part. We’ve been very good at getting heart, lung, liver, because we know that, so I’m not gonna basically crush below, and I’m gonna crush above, and I’m gonna see if I can get it all intact.”

With soft background jazz playing in the second video, Dr. Mary Gatter, who until 2014 was president of the Planned Parenthood Medical Director’s Council, orders a beet salad for lunch at a California bistro – ‘can you throw some chicken on that?’ – before matter-of-factly telling the undercover operatives that the price for baby parts is negotiable. “I want a Lamborghini,” she joked at the end of lunch. Maybe she was, maybe she wasn’t.

Gatter decried the frenetic pace inside her California abortion clinic that sometimes prevents the staff from having enough time to get women to sign the required tissue-donation forms. “The busier you are, the less likely the staff is going to take the time to say, ‘By the way, here’s two more forms for you to sign,’” Gatter said. “Sometimes, poor Heather (a clinic staffer) would be there (and say), ‘Oh, I really need liver today.’ There would be a 17-week (gestation) patient who would be perfect (as a body parts donor), but she wasn’t approached (to sign the consent forms).” Poor Heather. Poor baby.

Another “complication” is that Gatter’s clinic is doing “only 800 surgical abortions a year, which she knows could make her clinic less attractive to tissue-hungry researchers, frustrating her Lamborghini lust. The problem is we’re only doing 60 second-tri’s (second-trimester abortions) a year – that’s one a week,” Gatt said. Maybe Gatt needs to hire a marketing director to pump up business.

In the end, a baby girl or a baby boy is dead, but their liver is worth \$100. God bless America.

A Reflection: A Wake up Call from Pope Francis²

Pope Francis’ first visit outside of Rome was to a small Italian island 180 miles off the coast of Africa where bloated bodies frequently turn up with the tide. Francis learned that more than 25,000 North Africans had lost their lives in their attempts to flee to Italy. During his sermon at the penitential Mass he asked us God’s question to Cain, “Where is your brother?” He also asked if we have become like the Levite and the priest in Jesus’ parable of the Good Samaritan: “We see our brother half dead on the side of the road and perhaps we say to ourselves: ‘poor soul...!’, and then go on our way.”

In particular he denounced the “culture of comfort, which makes us think only of ourselves, makes us insensitive to the cries of other people.” He said we tend to live in “soap bubbles of globalized indifference.” He called for repentance and prayer. He

² This reflection is drawn from Austen Ivereigh’s insightful biography of Pope Francis, *The Great Reformer*, pp. 1-2.

urged us to “ask for the grace to cry for our indifference, to cry for the cruelty in the world, that is in us, that is in those who anonymously make decisions that produce dramas like these.” He made the point that unless our heart becomes engaged, nothing will change.

I read Pope Francis’ comments at the time the Planned Parenthood videos went viral. It was a moment of truth for it struck me as a personal reprimand. Yes, I have always been pro-life. I support pro-life candidates, aid their campaigns, and contribute to pro-life causes, but, honestly, not nearly enough. I have prayed in front of abortion clinics – occasionally. To what degree, I ask myself, have I stormed heaven with prayers to end the slaughter of these innocent babies? Yes, I have prayed about this vital issue, but sadly no storm – just trickle, trickle, drip, drip. It’s tough to face my indifference, but I am determined to listen to the voices of innocent babies who cry out to God: “How long, O Lord!” Prayer must become a priority.