



THE VISITATION

THE PUBLICATION OF THE NATIVITY HOUSE

MARCH 2023

VOLUME 13 ISSUE 2

Accompaniment in Action

by Annemarie Coman

For the past eight months I worked for a Christian, pro-life organization called Coalition Life. My primary job was as a sidewalk counselor, which means I stood outside of Planned Parenthood, in all types of weather, and tried to provide free resources (in the forms of pamphlets and verbal encouragement) to abortion-bound women, urging them to save the life of their unborn children. Suffice to say, not an easy job.

I learned a lot during those eight months, beginning with a growth in confidence. I had never done sidewalk counseling before, and I wasn't even sure if I would be able to do it. Talking

women out of abortion? Was this even feasible? As a person who usually avoids conflict, this was going to be a big shift for me. Sidewalk counseling requires walking up to a car and unabashedly waving and smiling so that the car will stop and engage in conversation before they pull into Planned Parenthood. Despite my trepidation, after a few weeks on the job, I began to get the hang of it. Soon enough I had my first "turn-around." We use this lingo to mean an abortion-minded woman who has left Planned Parenthood and is seeking life for her child.

Nothing can compare with the feeling of knowing that you
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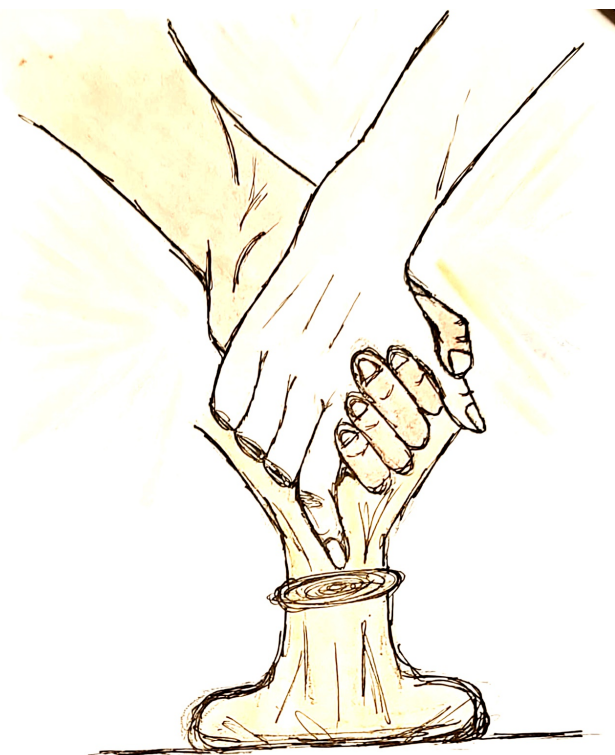
Dreams for a Post-Roe Society

by Venus Wozniak

I knew a young woman. She was passionate, vibrant and full of life. She was zealous when it came to women's rights. She was immersed in a lifestyle of hippish musings: promoting the dignity of the human person, caring for the downtrodden, living a liberated love life. She was wildly intelligent, witty, and outspoken. She found herself in the throes of a passionate love affair. He was a man who would not be tied to conventional romance. He was very open with his common practice, "Women - all I ever thought before was that you take something you need from

them." While he was very dismissive of this young woman, he was equally curious by being pursued rather than being the pursuer. He allowed her to move in with him. There were conditions. She was not to work. Her only duty was to care for him and his needs. Being the passionate, vibrant young woman that she was, she was able to put aside all desires of a future as a journalist and dove in. She was confident if she threw her whole being into pleasing his every whim they would live happily ever after.

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"Our body is a cenacle,
a monstrance: through
its crystal, the world
should see God."

-St. Gianna
Beretta Molla

Accompanying Grief

by Jake DeMarais

*Then they sat on the ground
with him for seven days and
nights. No one said a word to
Job, for they saw that his
suffering was too great for
words. (Job 2:13)*

"It's comforting to be here because we all get it. We all understand without using any words. We all know. We all feel. We all grieve. We all love. We all just get it," Said (in some similar manner) possibly every person who has attended Baby Bereavement Group at one point or another.

For the past three plus years

now, my life partner Stacy and I have attempted to steal away to the local hospital once a month for Baby Bereavement Group. It's not exactly the most "romantic" date night some might say, but it is definitely the most "needed" majority of the time. So when that second or third Thursday of the month approaches, we scramble to ask grandparents, friends, and/or family to watch our four living children so we can go and grieve our fifth child, Patrick, with our "grief partners" - aka: other individuals/couples who

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Letter from the Directors

Dear Friends of Nativity House,

As we move into the new year we are grateful for all the opportunities God gives us. There are many new and strengthening connections among those around us and we look forward to a great season.

Over one of the last cold snaps of winter our guest mom gave birth to a healthy baby girl and everyone here is very excited about her. Supporting moms right around childbirth requires a big effort from the house and extra help from people close to our community.

Our annual coffeehouse was postponed a couple months due to illness, transforming it into a winter event steeped in hot cocoa and music. We had at least four performing groups this year, including many new faces, and we hope everyone enjoyed it. St. Dennis graciously hosted the gathering, in-person for the first time since 2019.

We were gifted a few new chickens late last year and egg production is steady. In the late spring we expect to start milking our goats again, so we will have plenty of cheese with which to practice the art of aging various cheese varieties. Hopefully by the time of Farm to Table in September we will have mastered a few recipes to share.

We have three more helpful community members available to the work of the house (two returnees) and we hope that the broader community will continue to support them.

Nativity House is entering a new year with a great sense of optimism and gratitude for the help we are receiving.

Peace & All Good,
Venus & Justin Wozniak - Founders, Nativity House

Wish List

Stamps
Compost
1 pitchfork
1 hoe
2-3 spades
5 hand pruning shears
10 kid spades/shovels

About The Visitation

This newspaper, The Visitation, is a publication on topics of social justice, spirituality, and theology. It is published four times a year by Nativity House. Submissions are accepted from readers everywhere.

To contact us, email us at:

newspaper@nativity-house.org

Past issues are online at:

<http://www.nativity-house.org>

About Nativity House

Nativity House serves as a house of hospitality for first-time mothers in need of residence in the southwest Chicago suburbs. Nativity House operates an on-site community supported farm (CSA) that provides nourishment for the Nativity House and the greater community. Overall, we envision a healing environment focused on the dignity of each person, the dignity of work, and stewardship of the earth.

Nativity House is administered by a board of directors and an advisory committee of individuals with a broad range of experience. Nativity House has formed positive relationships with relevant local organizations that are extremely helpful in carrying out the mission of the house. Nativity House was recognized as a public charity in August, 2011.

To connect with us, please email Venus Wozniak at:

venusad@nativity-house.org

Postal mail should be addressed to:

Nativity House
17141 W. 143rd St.
Lockport, IL 60441

We extend the sincerest thanks to all.

Roundtable Roundup

by Lydia Finney

On Friday, November 18th, the weather was clear but cold, and yet a bright warmth was present in the house where members of the Nativity House community gathered. Friends old and new collected in the kitchen, around a big pot of lentil soup, carrying bread, salad, and sweets. Hugs were exchanged, glasses of wine and house-brewed 'Lois Lane ale' were shared, and stories of all of our journeys, near and far, were shared over food.

As a community, we had come together for a Roundtable, joined by Dr. Christine Billups and Dr. Jim Burke of Lewis University. Dr. Christine Billups is an Associate Professor of Theology and Theology Department Chair. Dr. Jim Burke is also a Professor and with Christie, directs the Br. Jeffrey Gros, FSC Institute for Dialogue, Justice & Social Action, which fosters ecumenical, interfaith and intercultural collaborations for just peace. The topic of the evening's roundtable was the charism of Dorothy Day.

The topic was explored by all of us as a true roundtable, facilitated by Jim, but with each member of the community sharing their experiences of the charism of Dorothy Day. We passed a 'talking stone', and responded to prompts shared by Jim. We shared about where we had noticed beauty recently. We talked about how we had come to experience or know Dorothy Day and the Catholic Worker movement. And we shared where we felt God speaking to us, and taking us in

new directions. There were moments of silence, and moments of tears, as really, for a moment, we stepped into each other's journey with God, in solidarity.

You know, it is a blessing of being a community that each of us sees God in a slightly different way. That each of us, through our lives, if we let it happen, reveals something beautiful about God that only we uniquely can. And when we share that together, with each other, we all come to see God, who loves us so infinitely deeply and eternally, a tiny bit more fully. And that draws us together. That attracts us all. That tiny glimpse of the irresistible beauty and truth and love that we cannot live without. That presence that is what our hearts are made to hold. That light shines forth, and makes even the coldest, bleakest nights warm and bright.

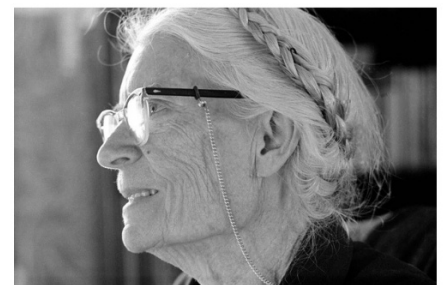
God loves us, and that Love leads us all to unity. We cannot always see the path ahead, but we know where it leads. To unity. To heaven. And, in the charism of Dorothy Day, this little community carries each other there, through thick and thin, together.



Dr. Lydia Finney is a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion professional, and mother of two boys. Lydia is a member of the Nativity House CSA garden, and serves on the board. She resides in Lockport, IL, and teaches adult faith formation, at her parish, St. Dennis Church.

"In general, in the first flush of Lent, the struggle is undertaken bravely. What if during the long weeks the fervor lessens and the work of accumulating graces was continued with many lapses, but by effort of will. That time when will has to be brought into play is perhaps the most important of all, despite failures and the total lack of sense of accomplishment, of growth. Fervor comes again with Holy Week, joy comes on the day of Resurrection, with all nature singing exultantly God's praises. To keep united to God through suffering Humanity of his son- that is the aim of Lent."

Dorothy Day
from *Day after Day*
April 1935



Nativity House on Retreat

Members of the Nativity House Community were hosted for a retreat day at St. Procopius Abbey in Lisle, Illinois, on February 26, 2023. They spent the day reflecting on the life of Dorothy Day, hanging out in the backyard with the ducks and rabbits. Thanks to Abbot Austin for leading the community in a group *Lectio Divina* reflection.

Dreams for a Post-Roe Society

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He struggled with his new position as a keeper of a woman, “it’s physically impossible for a woman to take a man. She always gives, gives herself up. And now I hate you - I don’t want you because I feel everything going out of me to you. The thought of you eats into me continually.”

She had many friends in her vagabond, bohemian circles. They would all carouse the pubs together with wild nights of joyous romping. There was a strange paradox unfolding. This man, so mesmerizing to the ladies, suddenly in a monogamous relationship, found great difficulty in the vibrant charismatic ways of his *woman*. One night, she rested her hand on the shoulder of a mutual male friend. A monstrous jealousy was unleashed. He violently set his *woman* free.

This young woman was devastated to the point of attempting to take her life - twice. The hiatus was brief. Maybe the man felt some responsibility or remorse for this young woman after a year long affair that ended too abruptly to jealousy. He begrudgingly took her back and their affair resumed. Soon after reuniting she found herself pregnant. She wrung her hands in worry. She knew he would not be contained by the trappings of marriage, especially children. She found herself sitting in parks and playgrounds observing young children. She knew what she had to do. She sought out an abortionist. The procedure took a few hours. Eventually she delivered their child, still born at 4 months gestation. Upon arriving back to their apartment, she found a letter with a small amount of cash, “millions of women have had this same experience. I hope

you get comfortably married to a rich man.” He was gone.

The year was 1918. She is Dorothy Day. He is Lionel Moise. This account can be found in greater detail in Jim Forest’s biography *All is Grace: A biography of Dorothy Day*.

Moise wasn’t wrong. *Millions of women*, generations of women have had this *same experience*.

Ponder for a moment, God’s plan for humanity. Since the dawn of time God has had a plan for His creation. In the beginning, we read in Genesis, He walked freely in the garden with the humanity that He created in His image. He lovingly gave humanity free will. With that free will we made some choices that separated us from walking freely with God in the Garden. The plan begins to unfold.

God could have chosen any way to bring about the redemption of humanity. God elevated woman. A simple, love-full being, a perfect spouse for the Holy Spirit - Mary - was to be the new dawn. Mary carried Jesus in her womb. Mary’s uterus became the first tabernacle of the Son of God, Jesus.

God chose the perfect human spouse for Mary, earthly father for Jesus - Joseph. Joseph was a man of faith. For the split-second that he doubted he even sought to protect the dignity of Mary. Joseph’s faith in God’s plan reaped a rich integrity of spousal and fatherly love and protection. Within His plan for our redemption he provided a model of the quintessential family: Mary, the tabernacle; Joseph, the

protector of the tabernacle and its most precious contents, Jesus.

God’s plan for humanity, redeemed through the birth of Jesus, when broken down in this manner makes the above story of Dorothy Day and Lionel Moise perplexing. Yet, the narrative played out has been happening for millenia.

Here in the United States of America we tout being the biggest and the best on many fronts: economy, military, technology, etc. Yet, among life issues of racism, child poverty, equal pay for women in the workplace, family leave, proper punishment of sex traffickers rather than the trafficked (just to name a few) we lag far behind. We are eager to perpetuate the inheritance of disorder. We have put our faith in a political system to uphold the values of life and we have fallen short. We have become the pawns of talking heads and political wonks. A country sorely divided between protecting women’s rights and the life of the unborn is wildly erroneous. This is a both/and situation.

Further evidence of our misguided argument lies in the widespread availability and use of pornography and of sex-trafficking rings employed by the very political leaders we hail as advocates for the life movement. Women have become commodities in the name of liberation. This commoditizing of women has robbed men of their dignity and honor. They have been denied the fruits of self control and self worth, being reduced to animalistic tendencies. We have lost sight of the vision

given to us by our Creator. Our society maintains a woefully disordered version of sex, femininity and masculinity. As long as we turn a blind eye to it, we help to perpetuate it.

On Friday, June 24, 2022, I was giddy. Finally! Such an egregious law has been overturned. The joy quickly wore off as the reality of our human condition struck me. The words that nagged at me - *This is not enough. We are not doing enough.*

In this time of deep division and extreme mistrust of our neighbor, the words of Mother Teresa are echoing in my heart:

“And so, my prayer for you is that truth will bring prayer in our homes, and from the foot of prayer will be that we believe that in the poor it is Christ. And we will really believe, we will begin to love. And we will love naturally, we will try to do something. First in our own home, next door neighbor, in the country we live, in the whole world.” (From her 1984, Nobel Peace Prize Speech)

Those of us who know the truth have a duty to walk with our children, our families, our neighbors. Shouting at each other, proving our side, constantly judging one another will continue to not be effective. We are obligated to hold one another in close in relationship. This relationship must rank higher than our need to be right. Our homes need to be an emulation of the quintessential family. *The millions and millions of women,*

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Accompanying Grief *continued from page 1*

have experienced miscarriage, still birth(s), infant loss. And every single time, grief does not disappoint - it smacks us straight in the heart with new stories of tragedy, loss, trauma, anger, frustration, deep sadness. Yet, there is also laughter and hope that creeps in through the sharing of life. And when we leave, I feel different - heard, seen, listened to, accompanied on the journey.

Accompaniment is something we all yearn for: people to walk the ups and downs, ins and outs of life with. Because of this desire, I would argue that most of us love to celebrate the joys and laughter and celebrations with our closest friends and family. We love to accompany one another through the “ups” and the “goods.” But what about the “downs”; the challenges; the hurts; the griefs? Tragically, it can often feel like we are all alone in the most challenging, grief stricken moments of our life. And it can feel as though we are never “doing enough or saying the right thing” for those friends/family/strangers who are grieving. So, how do we accompany one another as well as ourselves in grief?

Based on our experience over the past three years, I would propose we take a lesson from the book of our dear buddy, Job: *Then they sat on the ground with him for seven days and nights. No one said a word to Job, for they saw that his suffering was too great for words. (Job 2:13)* Give yourself space and time to grieve. Create space to sit with your friends/family/strangers to grieve. It can be that “simple.”

Each month when we carve out that space to sit and grieve through stories, silence, tears, laughter, and more stories with our “grief partners” at bereavement group, we remember our children and feel their presence in union with one another and to be honest, with God. It is a reminder that we are not alone; that our children are not forgotten; that they are indeed living; and that we are indeed living and connected to one another, alive and passed, always. And that is exactly what I need in my grief.

Does it have to be only once a month? Of course not. Recently, Stacy and I were watching the new apple TV show, “Shrinking.” In it, one of the main characters, a therapist himself, is definitely on the grief journey as his wife passed away a year ago at the beginning of the show. In a recent episode, his boss/coworker encouraged him to take fifteen minutes a day, turn on some music, and just hardcore grieve: cry, yell, scream, etc. What a simple, yet meaningful exercise to allow time and space to grieve.

When it comes to accompanying others in grief, I return back to our group for an example. Recently a new mom came for the first time and shared her tragic story of her still born son. As she shared her story, the rest of us listened, cried, affirmed feelings of anger and frustration, and just sat there with her. By the end of our time together, the grief was not gone but the feeling of being alone as she had stated - Perhaps, embraced and recognized in a new, loving way

Easy Essays:

Houses of Hospitality

by Peter Maurin
(1877-1949)

1. We need Houses of Hospitality to give to the rich the opportunity to serve the poor.
2. We need Houses of Hospitality to bring the scholars to the workers or the workers to the scholars.
3. We need Houses of Hospitality to bring back to institutions the technique to institutions.
4. We need Houses of Hospitality to show what idealism looks like when it is practiced.



for her that filled her “grief cup” for the night. We must create this sort of space on a regular basis to listen to and ask your friends/family/strangers about their grief. It’s as simple as, “I know it has been a couple days (a week, a month, a year, a decade...) since (whatever has happened/is happening), how are you doing with that?” Then, sit and listen and affirm and be there.

On a more daily basis, a friend of mine recently reached out specifically as the anniversary of our son’s death approached.

As we all continue on towards the hope of spring and within the Christian community, the epicenter of the faith in Holy Week, perhaps it is a perfect time to recall our own griefs as well as the griefs of others. It is a great time to make a simple “grieving plan” remembering that when it

comes to accompaniment of one another particularly in grief, we must create space and time to be present before anything else. It really is okay to not say anything or to ask if it’s okay to say something to a friend in grief as long as we are present. A good reminder of the call of the season of Lent - to become still and present more fully to Christ within and around all. In our experience with grief - as sad and angry and confused we are with God, we have also found the presence of God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit evermore in the relationships that are deepened and strengthened through presence: sitting, sharing, and listening.



Jake DeMarais is part time staff at Nativity House and full time dad. He loves being outdoors with friends and family always trying to live in the moment.

Sts. Perpetua & Felicity

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Many people think friendship is something that comes and goes. It has no real value or point, but that is not true. Friends are there for you through thick and thin; some are even willing to die for you as Jesus died for us and Perpetua and Felicity died for him.

I admire their bravery and strength. They gave up their children for God. Imagine the happy lives they could have led if they just renounced God. They could raise their babies together and enjoy earthly pleasures. But it would never feel as good as following Christ, even if it was to the grave.

We can all learn valuable lessons from Perpetua and Felicity, what true love for God is, what real friendship is, what unbounded bravery and strength is. They inspire me to grow in my closeness with friends and family in my faith and to serve God with all my heart.

Dreams for a Post-Roe Society

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generations of women, that have all had the *same* gut-wrenching *experience* and the millions of men who have been denied the fruits of dignity and honor will be no longer. This is our goal. This alone is what will change the hearts and minds of those that espouse to our disordered societal norms. Suddenly, the discordant will modulate and there will be a resonance of truth, beauty and goodness.



Venus Wozniak is the co-founder of Nativity House. She serves Lewis University in the office of Mission and Ministry



Laila Panek volunteers with her siblings and mom at the Nativity House weekly. She likes to read and write. She enjoys playing piano and drawing with her brothers. She also likes to do schoolwork with her rabbit, Jack, and loves her writing class.

come grow WITH US
NATIVITY HOUSE
2023 GROWING SEASON

Go Green! Fresh, local, mostly organic produce grown in community!
The best way to grow food!
**COST: \$350 Full Share
\$250 Half Share**

VEGGIES & FRUITS:
POTATOES, CARROTS, CUCUMBERS, LETTUCE, HERBS, EDAMAME, GREEN BEANS, BEETS, RASPBERRIES, PEARS, STRAWBERRIES, APPLES, ASPARAGUS AND MORE!

INTERESTED? QUESTIONS? CONTACT VENUS VENUS@NATIVITY-HOUSE.ORG

NATIVITY HOUSE

ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS

6:30PM POTLUCK DINNER
7:15PM DISCUSSION
8:30PM EVENING PRAYER

PREPARING THE CHRIST ROOM: PRACTICAL HOSPITALITY

APRIL 21 & MAY 26

Accompaniment in Action

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have saved a baby's life. Nothing. The elation of the moment was also caught up with anxiety as I briskly walked the young woman over to Aid for Woman, a Catholic women's healthcare center, wanting to encourage her to seek out the counseling and resources there instead. Thoughts raced through my mind, "Did I really just save her baby? Will she change her mind? How can I support her right now?" I briefly asked her why she was going into Planned Parenthood today. She replied "abortion pill." My pace quickened, and a sigh of relief blew out of me after I watched her safely enter Aid for Women. Inside, compassionate women will provide counseling, an ultrasound, and connect her to resources she needs to feel at ease with bringing her baby into the world. My job was complete.

Accompanying woman who are seeking an abortion means you have to be ready for everything: the shouting from angry pro-choice people, the crying young women, the unconcerned boyfriends... I've seen it all. Most of all what is needed is compassion. The young girls I have seen at Planned Parenthood (some still in high school) have broken my heart in the best way. One young girl told me that her mom had had an abortion, and they talked about it and she was choosing abortion too. Yet, there was a fear in her eyes, and for some reason she kept talking to me instead of walking through Planned Parenthood's doors. Something, maybe her conscience, or just a fear of an invasive procedure, was holding her back. I knew there was still hope for her and her baby. Before no time I had her walking over with me to Aid for Women, just to

"check it out." Thanks be to God, that woman did not come back to Planned Parenthood that day.

While counseling, we always have a partner, so we are never working alone. One day I was counseling with a good friend of mine, and the teamwork between the two of us made all the difference. This story begins when a young woman with her cousin in the passenger seat pulled up to Planned Parenthood. My friend was able to stop them and talk with them and shared about Aid for Women. They decided to go check it out and pulled into Aid for Women's parking lot. We rejoiced at the turn-around and continued counseling.

To our distress, the young women came back. I was able to stop her before she pulled in. This time, she said that she was going in to make an abortion appointment. She seemed set in her decision, but she hadn't pulled away yet. My adrenaline was spiking as I tried to think of every possible thing to say to her. My counseling friend came over and helped me as we pleaded with her to save her baby's life. The abortion-minded young woman mentioned that her parents would not support her if she chose life. I spoke straight from my heart and said something to the effect of, "When your parents meet that little baby, when they see their grandchild for the first time, when they realize they are grandparents, they are not going to reject you or your child, they are going to love that little baby, they are going to rejoice that you chose life, they are not going to wish that you had aborted their grandchild." The young woman's eyes became moist. I knew we were getting through to her. Words kept spilling out of me,

anything I could say to stop her from going into Planned Parenthood. My sidewalk counseling friend came to my rescue as I was running out of things to say. My friend noticed that the young woman was Hispanic and asked if she knew about Our Lady of Guadalupe. The woman nodded, yes. My friend shared that she should ask Our Lady to pray for her and protect her and her baby. I jumped in saying, "Our Lady was only about fifteen when she found out she was pregnant, and she decided to choose life!" Eventually after about a 20-30 minute conversation, the young woman finally pulled away from Planned Parenthood and promised us she would think more about this decision. Thanks be to God, our efforts, at least for that moment, were fruitful. I feel deeply blessed by God to be used in such a powerful way that day. That was one of the most moving and longest conversations I have ever had with a woman outside of Planned Parenthood. I thank God that my friend and I were there that day.

Despite our best efforts, there are still women who choose abortion. But even these do not escape our compassion. As Christians, we believe in a merciful God who wants healing and transformation for all of us. As women leave Planned Parenthood after an abortion, we try to share with them a pamphlet about Rachel's Vineyard, a healing retreat for post-abortive women. We also want to make sure they are ok physically, because unfortunately we have seen botched abortions.

Every time we get a pamphlet in a woman's hand, it is a small victory. We never know how the

information about free resources may help that woman going forward, or even a friend or relative who happens upon the pamphlet. Overall, the most important part of pro-life work is prayer. If you are reading this, it probably means you are pro-life. But what does it mean to be pro-life? How is God calling you to live this out in your daily life? Firstly, I would challenge you to pray. Pray specifically for the women going into the nearest abortion clinic to you. If you can, go out there and pray in front of the clinic. Even this silent witness has been proven to reduce the amount of abortions that happen. You can be part of your local 40 Days for Life prayer vigils, or come anytime to pray. After reading this, do you feel called to be a sidewalk counselor? To learn more about sidewalk counseling or to volunteer or become a paid sidewalk counselor, or to donate so that others can continue being paid for counseling, visit CoalitionLife.com.



Annemarie Coman is a previous Nativity House intern and Coalition Life sidewalk counselor who is now working as a nanny.





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Nativity House
17141 W. 143rd St.
Lockport, IL 60441



Sts. Perpetua and Felicity

Feast Day: March 7

Patron of mothers, expecting women, & butchers

by Laila Panek

When you face uncertainty and struggle, it's easier to have someone by your side. Perpetua and Felicity were lucky to have not just God, but each other. They were true friends to the end.

Saints Perpetua and Felicity lived in Carthage during the reign of Emperor Severus. Perpetua was a rich Christian woman who was assumed to be a widow. Her mother and brothers were baptized in the faith, but her father was a pagan and objected to Perpetua's baptism.

Felicity was Perpetua's slave and companion. She was pregnant with her daughter when her and Perpetua along with four other Christians were arrested and thrown into prison. Both women were strong and faithful. Their only pain was for their children. Perpetua, who had just had her child, missed him sorely, but her mother and brothers brought him to her so that she could nurse him. Felicity hoped her baby would be born soon enough so that she

could be executed with her friends and not alone.

Perpetua was said to have the gift of "The Lord's Speech" where God gave her visions. One night her brother asked her to ask God for a vision. Perpetua prayed for one, and that night God sent her a dream. In the dream Perpetua saw a ladder covered in sharp blades that could tear her to shreds if she wasn't careful. At the base of the ladder, there lay a terrible snake that snapped at her heels. In the dream she also saw her and Felicity's teacher, Saturus. He warned Perpetua to take care and not let the serpent bite her. She spoke the name of Jesus Christ, and upon hearing it the serpent shrunk away. Perpetua stepped on the snake's head and onto the ladder; she climbed till she reached a beautiful garden. In the garden she was given a bowl of milk to drink, and when she awoke, she could still taste its sweetness.

When Perpetua told her brother



Artwork by Laila Panek

the dream, they both understood what it meant. Perpetua would leave not only this prison cell but this world. Perpetua and Felicity, along with their companions would be killed for their faith.

Before they were executed Felicity gave birth to her daughter and gave her to a Christian woman to raise. Perpetua and Felicity went to their deaths singing and praising God. When

they were thrown into the arena to be killed by a heifer, the crowd cried for them to be taken out. They were, only for a moment, and then thrust back in to be executed by a gladiator.

Perpetua and Felicity are the personification of "best friends." They lived together and died together in the name of Christ.

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