



# LIFE MATTERS


The Newsletter of the Respect Life Office of the Diocese of Rockford  
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April 2010

vol. ix • no. 7

## Young pro-lifers standing for truth

by Patricia Pitkus Bainbridge



Generations for Life (GFL)—the youth outreach program of the Pro-Life Action League—is dedicated to educating young people on the “value of life and the lifestyle choices that affirm the dignity of each person, born and unborn.” One of their projects is to “encourage teens to be effective pro-life leaders by inspiring and helping them to establish lively pro-life clubs within their own high school communities and youth groups.”

As in past years, GFL sponsored its TeenSpeak conference in conjunction with the annual Speak Out Illinois conference held on January 30, 2010. At that conference, 14-year-old Julianne Winkel (from the Diocese of Rockford), was awarded a \$1,000 scholarship for her essay which won first place in the TeenSpeak Essay Contest.

Essay entrants (ages 14-18) were instructed to submit an original essay of a maximum of 750 words on the theme, “Think ahead to the next six months. What could *you* do to help fight abortion during that time? Be specific about what action you could take and why it would be helpful.”

This is what Julianne\* wrote (used by permission):

*The issue of abortion seems to be taken very lightly in today's world. In television shows, movies, and the media, when the issue of abortion comes up, people seem to brush it off and casually move on to the next topic. In reality, abortion is a very serious issue and more people need to be aware of the evils surrounding abortion.*

*I found out at a young age what abortion was and what it did to babies and their mothers. Of*

*course, I was appalled of how cruel it was, but I was even more appalled to find out that many educated people thought there was no harm in performing abortions. I have read about what abortion does, physically and emotionally, to women, and I have seen pictures of babies who have been aborted. There is DEFINITELY a great harm in abortion!*

*I am aware of how terrible abortion is and I pray for an end to it, but it wasn't until a couple of years ago that I became passionate about finding an end to abortion. Two years ago, a Planned Parenthood opened up about five minutes from my house. The Planned Parenthood told our city that they were simply a “Healthcare center for woman”. They told no one that their “healthcare” was really going to hurt woman and kill babies! Before the Planned Parenthood opened, I joined pro-lifers from all over the state to pray and rally together around the clock. We managed to prolong the opening of the Planned Parenthood for several weeks, yet eventually and sadly, their doors opened for business. During this time, I fully grasped how terrible abortion was, and more importantly, I realized that each individual and I can make a difference.*

*Even though the Planned Parenthood is still open, I have not given up my efforts to end abortion. In 2008, I began a Respect-Life club at my school for the Junior High students. In the next six months, I have plans approved to lead the group in raising money for Pro-Life organizations and we will each spiritually adopt a baby to pray for over the next 9 months. In April, I will take orders for the National Pro-Life T-shirt day at my school. I hope to exceed last year's order of 131 shirts!*

*We have been given permission to wear them to school on that day. In May, I will close the year by inviting families to join our group to*

*pray for the end to abortion at the Planned Parenthood clinic after school. I hope my actions will inspire more young people to join the fight against abortion and we will save many innocent children from being aborted.*

*On a personal note, one of my 60 cousins recently found out that she is pregnant. She is 19, unmarried, and living on her own. On top of all this, her baby has a disorder and the doctors told her the baby will either be a stillbirth or only live a few hours. Most people in her position, in our world today, would consider aborting the baby. Despite all of these obstacles, my cousin is dedicated to keeping her baby and is praying for a miracle. Over these next 6 months, I am going to support her through this hard time and celebrate her brave decision to give life to the little soul growing inside of her!!!!*

Isn't it amazing that while so many adults in our culture just "don't get it" when it comes to abortion and the dignity of the human person this 14-year-old (as well as many young people today) clearly understand.

Another young girl who "gets it" when it comes to the life issues is 13-year-old Lia Mills of Toronto, Canada. Lia has become a YouTube star with her 5 minute pro-life speech from February 2009 (when she was just 12). In the video, she clearly articulates the pro-life message with facts and passion. If you haven't seen the video, I encourage you to view it at:

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOR1wUqvJS4&feature=channel\\_page](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wOR1wUqvJS4&feature=channel_page)

A year after her original speech, Lia followed up with an inspiring talk on euthanasia which can be found here:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q6tAgJStVlo&feature=channel>

When Lila Rose was just fifteen-years-old, she founded Live Action—a nonprofit pro-life organization based in California. Now twenty-one and a student at UCLA, Lila has become a well-known, respected pro-life activist and international speaker. Her undercover stings have exposed the corruption and illegal activity at Planned Parenthood. Her talks have motivated many—young and old—to stand up for life.

With teens like Julianne Winkel and Lia Mills and young adults like Lila Rose, it's no wonder the number of young people favoring abortion "rights" is diminishing. Gallup conducted a poll in 2009 "asking Americans to say whether they believe abortion should be 'legal under any circumstances.'"

The results—which were reported on March 12, 2010—indicated that "young adults were slightly more likely than all other age groups, including seniors, to say abortion should be *illegal* in all circumstances."

While abortion advocates and the secular media target our youth with their insidious propaganda, it is refreshing to know that so many of our youth are becoming wiser than many adults when it comes to the life issues!

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For more information about Generations for Life visit:

<http://generationsforlife.org/>  
<http://prolifeaction.org/generations/curriculum.php>

To learn more about Lila Rose and Live Action's work, visit: <http://liveaction.org>

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\*Jules (as Julianne is known by friends and family) is 14 years old and an 8<sup>th</sup> grader at Holy Cross School in Batavia, Illinois. She was born in Rochester, New York and is the daughter of Dave and Ann Winkle of Aurora. She is the youngest of 4 children.

She has been active in the Pro-Life movement for 3 years. She is founder and leader of the Holy Cross "Crusader for Life" club. She personally sponsors a child from India each month through Children International.

She plays club volleyball, Holy Cross basketball, and loves listening to music, especially Jason Mraz and Brad Paisley.

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For additional commentary on the life issues, check out "Life Lines," on the first Friday of each month in *The Observer*.

*LIFE MATTERS* is published monthly by the Respect Life Office of the Diocese of Rockford. It is sent to all priests, seminarians, religious sisters prayer team members, and parish respect life coordinators. Individual subscriptions may be obtained for a donation of \$15.00 per year. This publication may be copied so long as it is done in full. It may be quoted so long as proper citation is provided with the quotation.

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