



Trump Administration Releases Rules To Protect Employer Conscience Rights

BY JONATHAN ABBAMONTE

The Trump administration has released three new regulations to help protect the conscience rights of families and employers when purchasing health insurance. Each rule is aimed at undoing Obama-era regulations that were put in place in pursuit of implementing the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

The first two regulations seek to provide employers with religious and moral exemptions to the Obama-era “HHS Contraceptive Mandate.” If implemented, the new rules would prevent the government from forcing religious employers to pay for abortifacient methods of contraception in their employer-sponsored health plans.

In addition, another rule released by HHS would undo a federal regulation that currently allows health insurance companies to collect premiums for abortion coverage and health care coverage together on the same



The White House in Washington DC / Getty Images

bill. Under the ACA, the government is required to collect a “separate payment” for coverage of elective abortion but under the Obama administration, health plan issuers were permitted to collect both payments on the same bill.

Here is a summary of the new rules released by the Trump administration:

New Conscience Rights For Religious Employers

A pair of final rules released November 7, just after the midterm elections, would provide a religious exemption from the “HHS Contraceptive Mandate.” The rules were

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Can the Supremes Hear the Heartbeat?

by Steven W. Mosher

I still remember the joy I felt when I first heard the heartbeat of each of my nine children.

Six weeks into the pregnancy my wife and I would go in for our first ultrasound. My wife would lie down on the examination table, and we would both wait anxiously while the technician moved the wand around my wife's lower abdomen searching for a sign of life.

Then we would hear it.

A sound like a galloping pony racing toward the finish line at 120 tiny hoofbeats a minute. We would smile—even tear up a little—at the sound of this calming rhythm.

The heartbeat was living proof that our baby was alive and well and growing.

Everyone instinctively understands that the heartbeat is the ultimate sign of life. Banning abortions after this point would be a huge step toward our ultimate goal, which is to protect all unborn children from the moment of conception.

So-called “heartbeat legislation,” laws that would protect unborn life from the moment that a heartbeat can be detected, has the support of nearly seven in 10 Americans.

Last year, a Barna poll found that 69 percent of Americans, including 61 percent of Independents and 55 percent of Democrats, support the legal protection of the unborn child from the moment a heartbeat is detected.

Over the past five years, the heartbeat movement has gotten ever stronger, winning support from people like Vice President Mike Pence. The vice president has said he “loves” the heartbeat bill and has raised the issue with President Trump.

“69 percent of Americans... support the legal protection of the unborn child from the moment a heartbeat is detected.”

PRI's own heartbeat petition has well over 30,000 signatures, and the number continues to grow.

No fewer than 10 states, as well as the U.S. House of Representatives, have seen heartbeat legislation introduced that would require would-be abortionists to listen for a baby's heartbeat, and would prohibit an abortion if the heartbeat can be detected.

The states of Arkansas, Iowa, and North Dakota have actually seen heartbeat legislation signed into law, only to have these measures struck down by federal judges on the grounds that they were “unconstitutional.”

Why? Because the liberal-dominated Supreme Court in both *Roe v. Wade* and *Planned Parenthood v. Casey* declared that an unborn child has no right to life prior to “viability.”

But what is “viability”? Babies born prematurely at 20 weeks are now surviving, and the expectation is that medical advances may allow even younger premies to live outside the womb. “Viability” is not a



The Population Research Institute Review is published bimonthly by:

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medical term, but a legal one, arbitrarily used to deprive the unborn of the right to life.

In *MKB Management Corp. v. Stenehjem*, the Eighth Circuit Court of Appeals actually pointed this out. The “viability standard has proven unsatisfactory because it gives too little consideration to the ‘substantial state interest in potential life throughout pregnancy,’” wrote the Eighth Circuit.

The court went on to argue that the states should be left to decide at what point to protect the life of the unborn. It even left open the possibility that states could legitimately choose “the point at which an unborn child possesses a detectable heartbeat.”

Despite this, the Supreme Court to date has left lower court injunctions against heartbeat legislation in place. Some pro-life groups have been less than enthusiastic about continuing this effort, fearing the legal challenges that would follow. They would prefer to gradually chip away at *Roe v. Wade* rather than reverse it completely.

I strongly disagree. With Justice Brett Kavanaugh replacing the ever-wobbly Anthony Kennedy, it is time to revisit the abortion issue in a major way.

We have a solid pro-life majority on the Supreme Court for the very first time since *Roe v. Wade* was wrongly decided nearly a half century ago. Let us challenge them to uphold the constitutionality of a law that protects unborn Americans from the moment that a heartbeat can be detected.

The babies have waited long enough. And so have we.



Letters

Dear Steve,

Thank you for being a guest on *Life Matters*, the right-to-life television program for the state of Massachusetts.

Thanks for everything that you and PRI do. I am very appreciative of your efforts, which witness to the value of life around the world, and have helped to convince the U.S. government to cut funding to many abortion- and population control-promoting groups.

Your Friend for Life,
Brendan O'Connell

Executive Producer & President, Life Matters TV and Media, Inc.

Hello, Steve,

Thank you for your fine article about the bad deal and China's Catholics.

Your writing and speaking are irreplaceable in the defense of the Church in China. Thank you for standing with the faithful. The Vatican needs to ponder "You can trust the Communists...to be Communists."

Dan

The article referenced is reprinted on page 11.

Dear Steve,

It was great to see you at the National Right to Life Convention.

I heard nothing but wonderful remarks about your session on China. Thank you SO much for coming. Take care, Steven. You are one of the true heroes.

For their lives,
Jacki Ragan, Director, State Organizational
Development and NRL Conventions, Inc.

Dear Steven W. Mosher,

Thank you for your letter which arrived today 12th June and the information folder which arrived a few days ago. PRI is doing great work. I fully agree with your efforts on behalf of the family which is under such attack all over the world and also here in Australia.

Keep up your good work.

Kind regards,
Bill Larkin

How to live the Benedict Option and aid the spiritual lives of those around you.

Dear PRI friend,

One of the most talked-about and widely admired books in a very long time is Rod Dreher's *The Benedict Option*, and doubtless you're familiar with it. Perhaps you've read it, but almost certainly you've read the rave reviews it's received in major Catholic media.

Well, PRI's gift to you is a book that belongs right beside *The Benedict Option*. It's *Building the Benedict Option*.

Published by Ignatius Press, *Building the Benedict Option* gives you practical suggestions on how to grow spiritually with fellow traditional Catholics, despite the madness that is engulfing parts of the Church. It will help you, as one columnist put it, to "try, each day, to be a bit more like Christ."

Here are just a few of the tips, ideas, and suggestions you'll find in this wonderful book:

- Suggestions on effective ways to deepen friendships with like-minded Catholics... how to maintain deep prayer practices when your prayer pattern no longer fits your changing life ...
- Six words that should be burned into our memories about acts of love ... practical advice—based on the author's own experiences—on how to build a Benedict Option project among friends in which people offer themselves for each other ...

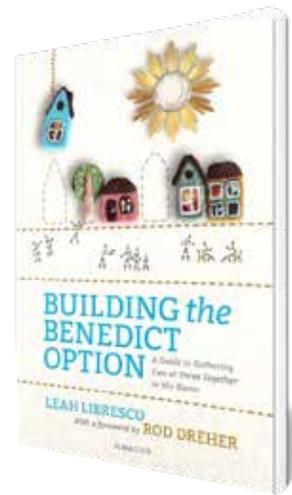
advice from G. K. Chesterton on how to proceed with a Benedict Option project that seems beyond your reach...

- How love is most fully expressed ... tips on where to have gatherings of traditional Catholic friends, from small to large ... which Catholics are often most eager to participate in Benedict Option gatherings (hint: you'll frequently meet them at social hours following Mass) ... the most serious enemy of the Benedict Option...

The author of *Building the Benedict Option* is Leah Libresco, an atheist convert to the Church whose work has appeared in *First Things*, *The Weekly Standard*, and other publications. Her earlier book is *Arriving at Amen: Seven Catholic Prayers That Even I Can Offer*.

If you've read Rod Dreher's *The Benedict Option*, or if you've read some of the voluminous praise his book has received in the Catholic press, then you should read *Building the Benedict Option*.

With great thanks for your baby-saving gift of \$50 or more, a copy of *Building the Benedict Option* will be on its way the very day I hear from you!



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Building the Benedict Option

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A handwritten signature in black ink, which appears to be 'Leah Libresco'.

Conscience regulations, *continued*

jointly released by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the Department of Labor, and the Department of the Treasury.

Back in 2011, the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), an agency under the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), imposed the “HHS Contraceptive Mandate” on Americans. The mandate required all non-grandfathered health care plans to provide, without deductible or co-pay, all women’s contraceptive methods approved by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

The Obama administration faced over 100 lawsuits over the contraceptive mandate from religious and pro-life organizations and businesses, alleging the mandate substantially burdened their right to religious liberty. Employers that failed to comply with the government’s onerous mandate were subject to crushing fines. It was estimated that the Little Sisters of the Poor would have been forced to pay approximately \$2.5 million in fines per year for non-compliance.

Cases on the contraceptive mandate twice reached the Supreme Court in *Burwell v. Hobby Lobby Stores, Inc.* and *Zubik v. Burwell*. In both instances, the Supreme Court affirmed the rights of religious employers.

The finalized rules released by the Trump administration last week would protect employers from being forced to facilitate access to abortifacient methods of contraception in their company health insurance plans if doing so would violate their religious beliefs or moral convictions.

The rules would exempt religious organizations such as the Little Sis-



Doctor with Medical Healthcare Icon Interface / Getty Images

ters of the Poor and pro-life organizations such as the March for Life from being forced against their faith or moral beliefs to facilitate access to contraception in their employer-sponsored health care plans.

The finalized rules would also seek to provide employees a pathway to exemption from being required to pay into an employer-sponsored health insurance policy that includes coverage for contraception. However, employees would be able to obtain a health insurance plan without contraception only if both the insurance company and the employer agree to provide such a policy.

The rules released by the Trump administration last week initially went into effect as temporary interim final rules on October 6, 2017. However, the regulations were immediately challenged in three separate lawsuits which have resulted in federal court injunctions blocking the administration’s temporary rules from taking effect.

The Trump administration is currently pursuing appeals, and if the injunctions are lifted, the final rules approved by the administration will go into effect.

Separate Payments for Abortion Coverage

On November 9, the Trump administration also released a new, never-before-seen proposed rule that would prevent health insurance companies from billing enrollees for abortion and health care premiums in the same invoice.

The Hyde Amendment has long prohibited federal funds from being used to subsidize health insurance plans that provide coverage for elective abortion. However, the Affordable Care Act changed that, allowing cost-sharing reduction payments and premium tax credits authorized under the ACA to be used on health care plans that include coverage for elective abortion.

Federal funds authorized by the ACA are still prohibited from being used to pay for the portion of the health plan that pays for elective abortions. However, the arrangement has been described by pro-lifers as little more than an accounting gimmick. Federal dollars are still allowed to be used to subsidize all the other non-abortion services offered by the very same health care plans that offer abortion coverage.

¹ Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, Sec. 1303(b)(2)(B)(i) (as codified at 42 U.S.C. §18023(b)(2)(B)(i)).

Kenyan Authorities Ban Marie Stopes from Providing Its Abortion Services

BY JONATHAN ABBAMONTE

Kenyan authorities have ordered Marie Stopes Kenya to stop offering abortion services in the African country. Abortion is illegal in Kenya except to save the life of the mother or in cases where the “health of the mother is in danger.”¹

In November 2018, the Kenyan Medical Practitioners and Dentists Board (KMPDB) issued a statement banning Marie Stopes Kenya from performing abortion at any of its clinics.

“Marie Stopes Kenya is hereby directed to immediately cease and desist offering any form of abortion services in all its facilities within the Republic of Kenya,” Daniel Yumb-

ya, Chief Executive Officer of the KMPDB stated according to the *Standard Digital*.²

The KMPDB is a regulatory board authorized by the Kenyan Government to regulate the practice of medicine and dentistry in Kenya. The KMPDB also sets licensing requirements for medical practitioners.

The order issued by the KMPDB also directed Marie Stopes to submit to the board, within 60 days, a proposal for how the organization plans to bring itself into compliance with the order.

Marie Stopes Kenya is a subsidiary of Marie Stopes International, an international NGO that performs

millions of abortions and post-abortion care procedures every year in the developing world.

The order from Kenyan Medical Practitioners and Dentists Board comes following public outcry over allegations that Marie Stopes Kenya was running radio advertisements for abortion services at their clinics. Earlier this year, the Kenya Film Classification Board (KFCB)—another regulatory board authorized by the Kenyan Government—had issued a separate order, banning Marie Stopes from airing radio ads which were deemed to be promoting abortion.

A public statement issued by the Kenya Film Classification Board on September 11th banned Marie Stopes from running certain radio ads. The KFCB found that the ads had “a message that clearly promotes abortion ... contrary to Article 26 (4) of the Constitution.” The KFCB also stated that Marie Stopes “targets teenage girls” with their abortion ads, offering abortion as “alternatives to unwanted or unplanned pregnancies.”³

The Kenya Film Classification Board is a state corporation responsible for rating and regulating TV, radio, and film content. The KFCB sets age restrictions on media content and enforces regulations on TV and radio content. Kenyan government regulations require that TV and radio content aired between 5 am and 10 p.m. “must be suitable for family listening and viewing.”⁴ All programs and ads for TV and radio



Young African woman holding her baby, Kenya, East Africa / Getty Images

are required to receive a classification rating from the KFCB prior to airing.

According to the KFCB, Marie Stopes never submitted their ads for approval.

“The board demands that the said adverts be pulled down immediately and should not be aired until they have been submitted to the board to determine age suitability,” Dr. Ezekiel Mutua, the CEO of KFCB, said back in September when the advertisement ban was first issued, according to *KBC Channel 1* news.⁵

The KFCB also called on Marie Stopes to issue a public apology for airing the ads without prior approval, according to the *Business Daily*.⁶

Marie Stopes Continues Abortion Radio Ads

Compounding its offense, Marie Stopes Kenya allegedly continued to run abortion ads for weeks after the KFCB banned the ads from the public airwaves.⁷ Marie Stopes claimed that it had not received a formal notice from KFCB and would, in the meantime, “continue to air weekly 15-minute discussion programs” and teaser advertisements for their clinics on popular radio stations, according to *Reuters*.

If found to have violated orders from the KFCB, Marie Stopes executives could face up to five years in

“ Marie Stopes Kenya is a subsidiary of Marie Stopes International, an international NGO that performs millions of abortions and post-abortion care procedures every year in the developing world.

prison or a 100,000 Kenyan Shilling fine, according to the *Daily Nation*.⁸

The order issued by the Kenyan Medical Practitioners and Dentists Board last week reinforced the order previously issued by the KFCB earlier this year. The Kenyan Medical Practitioners and Dentists Board statement, in addition to banning Marie Stopes from performing abortion services, also ordered the organization to comply with KMPDB’s advertising rules by “pull[ing] down the misleading information on its website,” according to the *Standard Digital*.

Now with orders from two different government regulatory boards, Marie Stopes Kenya is fully prohibited from offering abortion services or ads in Kenya.

Marie Stopes International is one of the leading purveyors of abortion and contraception worldwide and is currently active in 37 countries. According to Marie Stopes Inter-

national’s 2017 financial statements and annual report, the organization performed over 4.1 million abortion and post-abortion care procedures last year alone.

By comparison, the International Planned Parenthood Federation (IPPF) reported performing approximately 1.2 million abortion and post-abortion care procedures in 2017.

Marie Stopes is no stranger to controversy in Kenya. Last year, the organization drew ire and outrage after it was discovered that Marie Stopes staff visiting a school in Kitui County had provided adolescent girls in with birth control pills and Norplant contraceptive implants without their parents’ knowledge.⁹ Norplant is a contraceptive implant inserted under the skin and remains in the woman’s body for up to five years.

Chris Locascio helped provide research for this article.

¹ http://www.kenyalaw.org/lex/actview.xql?actid=Const2010#part_II

² <https://www.standardmedia.co.ke/article/2001303049/why-marie-stopes-has-been-asked-to-stop-abortion-services?fbclid=IwAR3nE4ITuD5c6eNiD-fmz3EuzHEWEKDoFazlpGS1TvlkgXBZ1FICodmeTOQ8>

³ <http://kfcb.co.ke/kfcb-banns-unclassified-content-on-free-to-air-tv-and-radio/>

⁴ http://kfcb.co.ke/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/Programme-_code.pdf

⁵ <http://www.kbc.co.ke/kfcb-bans-pwani-oil-marie-stopes-adverts/>

⁶ <https://www.businessdailyafrica.com/news/Pwani-Oil--Marie-Stopes-ads-over-sexual--abortion-content/539546-4754968-2k51tiz/index.html>

⁷ <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-kenya-abortion-ban/charity-denies-promoting-teen-abortions-after-kenya-bans-radio-ad-idUSKCN1LX243>

⁸ <https://www.nation.co.ke/business/Marie-Stopes-defies-ban-on-advert-linked-to-abortion/996-4784930-12p1t47/index.html>

⁹ <https://nairobi.news.nation.co.ke/news/fury-pro-abortion-activists-administer-birth-control-pills-school-girls/>



HUMANAE VITAE COALITION

"I've Never Heard Any of That Before!"

by Dr. Christopher Manion

After speaking in Toronto at a *Humanae Vitae* conference sponsored by the marvelous Cardinal Archbishop Thomas Collins, several participants came up to me with a common response.

"I've never heard any of that before," they told me.

The history of Western governments, including our own, massively funding population control in Third World countries was news to them. They had never heard of forced abortion in China, forced sterilization of men and women in dozens of countries, nor the sterilization clinics on the Mexican side of the U.S. border funded by major players who sat on the board of Planned Parenthood USA.

The conference was held on the campus of the University of Toronto. The audience included many highly educated people—medical students, foreign exchange students from several countries, and teachers in various fields. But many had no idea of the depth and intensity of the population control movement worldwide. They had simply not been exposed to this dimension of their subjects, even though many had acquired considerable expertise.

At the Population Research Institute, we hear stories like this all the time. After all, elite institutions are not going to tell us about their support of gruesome programs designed to eliminate billions of unwanted black and yellow and brown people;

PRI researchers must go digging for the facts all by ourselves—and those facts are often hard to find.

In our age of increased specialization, peripheral vision often suffers. A longtime colleague of mine, now serving as the in-house expert on India for one of Washington's most prominent think tanks, was visibly stunned when I told him how government employees in several Indian states were losing their jobs because their families had just welcomed a third child.

"I work on Indian issues all the time, and I've never run across that at all," he said. Not on his frequent trips to meet with the country's leaders, not in his participation in Washington foreign policy conferences—nowhere.

As we at PRI work to spread the word about *Humane Vitae*, we often encounter the same experience. After all, the truths offered by St. Paul VI in this marvelous document are thrilling, liberating, even exhilarating when people hear them for the first time.

Even Catholics who have never heard of HV know in an inchoate way that the Church forbids the use of the pill, but that's about all. That stern prohibition sort of hangs out there in a vacuum, without any foundation, rationale or context. But once the light of truth illuminates their understanding of the beauty of a family united in procreative love, their appreciation and gratitude fairly overflows.

And that brings on another grateful observation which we often hear

in spreading the word about HV: "I've always felt that way, but I didn't know how to say it." After all, the work of Sanctifying Grace is mystical and intimate, isn't it? Often it cannot be expressed out loud at all. When one hears this profound experience articulated as truth, as Saints Paul VI and John Paul II so beautifully express it, the soul leaps with joy, trembling in amazement as the secret it has pondered in its heart now comes alive in words that can be shared.

And that's what we do at PRI. We are called to share the truths of life and love and to defend them. We must also fight to defend the rights of those around the world who are victims of falsehood and evil and force—yes, force, because that's what population "control" and all its ugly spawn are all about: power and force, imposed by tyrannical governments for their own sordid ends.

They are imposed just as Saint Paul VI predicted they would be if the truths of God's law and the natural law regarding marriage, sex, and the family were defied, defiled and ignored.

At PRI we often remind ourselves: there are countless millions who "have never heard that before." Yet, their hearts are hungry for it. That longing, and the love that the truth arouses in the hungry heart, keeps us going, as do your prayers and your encouragement reminding us every day of how important it is that we share that truth with the world.



Despite Family-Centered Culture, Latin American Households Are Shrinking

by Carlos Polo

With regard to the issue of the family, and in particular the large family, the whole Latin American region shares some common features.

On the one hand you have the heroic virtues practiced by faithful Catholics in many marriages and on the other the indifference of, or even the hostility of, an increasingly selfish society that feels "offended" when a couple makes the decision to accept all the children that God wants to send them. These attacks, sometimes subtle, sometimes overt, are difficult to explain.

Latin Americans, despite their deep love for the family, is suffering from the same demographic decline that is affecting the rest of the West: birth rates are falling.

Over the past two decades, Latin American households have shrunk by almost one full member per household: In 1997 there was an average of 4.4 members per household, but by 2016 the average had fallen to 3.6 members. Households with children have gone from being almost half of total households in 1997 to being only one third of total households at present.

Many families in the continent are limited in this regard because poverty is widespread. But the focus in school and in society is entirely on material needs. At school they began to teach us that the best way to achieve prosperity was to have only



Large family at an animal park / Getty Images

two children: the "model" family. As population control propaganda became every more common, over time "the best way" to have a family became "the only" way to have a family.

Throughout Latin America, very strong, foreign-funded lobbies press for the agenda of gender ideology to be included in the educational curriculum.

Gender ideology promotes sexual relationships by distorting the meaning of the word "responsibility." For gender ideologues, to be "responsible" is to always use a contraceptive. Using a contraceptive is not being generous with life.

If sexual relations require no commitment and if the state is constantly promoting contraception as

"the right thing," then the basis of a large family falls apart.

The issue of financial aid is another way in which the government gets involved.

The Mexican government is an example. The bureaucrats say it literally: "Oportunidades (Opportunities, the government's aid program) will no longer benefit families with many children but will support those with few children." They believe and teach that a family with fewer children is more likely to progress.

But in Guatemala, Sophia Aguirre, a sociologist at the Catholic University of Washington, discovered something very different: "(...) it is not the number of children themselves, but the characteristics

of the home that makes the number of children be problematic.”

But governments do not understand this.

Justo and Giuliana have seven children. They confirmed to me many social micro-aggressions against large families. They say, “People always think that the man is ‘guilty’ for the fact that they have so many children and, therefore, is the one that receives the most rejection or sarcastic and disrespectful comments.”

Marcos and Mili, parents of six children, have a theory: “There is a conceited attitude on the part of society, little self-sacrificing. And that is a cultural feature. For too many people, the most important thing is not to give, but to accumulate.”

Young people in Latin America aspire to emerge but they look for it with a mentality in which the large family has no place: They see it as

a sign of sure failure, especially economic and social.

Florencia and Juan are Argentinians and have 12 children. Florencia confessed with sorrow: “When I told the priests that I was pregnant, they told me ... ‘you should learn the natural methods.’”

In Mexico, Alfonso and Guadalupe have the similar impression: “When we attend courses of natural methods taught by the Church the message is always to have few children.”

Is the *Humanae Vitae* teaching being delivered to suggest to generous families that it is better not to have “many” children? Do our priests really understand the greatness of a large family? Clearly, there is much to teach about this in seminars.

But large families, in general, rescue values of humanity and values for raising children that is very difficult to develop in single-child families. Parents often express that

“For too many people, the most important thing is not to give, but to accumulate.”

there is more sacrifice but that they feel “happier.”

Unfortunately, in some ecclesial environments, the potential of large families is not adequately assessed. One must be careful of the misunderstanding of what *Humanae Vitae* is and what natural methods actually are. The openness to life should not be reduced to simply “not using contraceptives.”

Keep Your 2019 Pro-Life Resolution By Joining PRI's Circle for Life!

BY KAREN SHANNON

Many of you faithfully write a check to PRI each month. You also know that it can be easy to forget, particularly if you travel, or have visitors.

That’s why I’m encouraging you to prayerfully consider joining our Circle for Life.

All of you share our commitment to support the mothers we help, the babies we save, and the important research we do.

Many of you do this loyally by check. Did you know you can automate this? You may use your checking account debit card. Save money on those expensive

checkbooks! And, no high interest fees each month! No postage stamps! You keep your resolution!

And best of all, your monthly support remains constant for all the mothers and babies that we help in China, Peru, Kenya, and the Caribbean—all around the world!

Wouldn’t you like to join our Circle for Life? It’s simple! Just go to <http://www.pop.org/donate> and follow the simple steps. Or, if you prefer, call the Circle’s coordinator, Kevin Norton, at our toll-free number, 888-774-1531.





■ Mosher: America Needs Another Baby Boom Now

NY POST – In a recent column published in the *New York Post*, PRI President Steven Mosher made the case for a new American baby boom.¹

“Although the great engine of American capitalism is now humming on all cylinders, Americans remain strangely reluctant to have children,” he wrote.

“That birthrates plummeted during the Great Recession, which ran from 2008 to 2016, is no surprise. Who would want to bring children into a jobless, stagnant economy? But the return of prosperity after the 2016 election should have produced a quick uptick in births. That, after all, was the consistent pattern we had seen in the past.

“Despite generous tax cuts and rising middle-class incomes, however, our birth rate remains mired at the lowest level ever recorded in American history.”

Mosher proposes that the government can support childbearing by forgiving student loans and reducing the tax burden on young couples.

■ China Shrine Destruction Follows Pact with Vatican

LIFESITENEWS – The recent destruction of two Catholic shrines demonstrates that the recent pact signed by China and the Holy See is

hurting Chinese believers, according to PRI President Steven Mosher, quoted in *LifeSiteNews*.²

Our Lady of the Seven Sorrows, in China’s Shanxi province, and Our Lady of Bliss, or Our Lady of the Mountain, in the Guizhou province’s Anlong county were destroyed weeks after the Vatican signed a private agreement with China’s Communist government. Both shrines were popular with members of both China’s underground Catholic Church and the government-controlled Chinese Catholic Patriotic Association, according to the article.

“...The new Sino-Vatican Agreement is working out precisely the way that the Chinese Communist Party officials who approved it intended it to,” Mosher reported to the news service. “It distracted international attention from the ongoing persecution of the Church in China by appearing to give the imprimatur of the Vatican to the Catholic Patriotic Association.

“All the while Catholics throughout China were being put under a new set of onerous regulations that restrict all activity to a few ‘authorized places of worship,’” he continued.

The reason given for the destruction of the shrine was that it had too many statues. Mosher said this excuse is “laughable.”

“The landscape of China is littered with statues, mostly of Communist

Party leaders like Mao Zedong and Xi Jinping,” he said. “The problem was that these were statues of angels, of saints, and of the Blessed Mother herself. The bottom line is that the Communists hate any other religion than their own quasi-religious cult of Communism.”

■ UN Group Pressures For Worldwide Abortion

LIVE ACTION NEWS – PRI researcher Jonathan Abbamonte was quoted in *Live Action News* about a newly adopted document by the Human Rights Committee of the United Nations that puts pressure on pro-life countries around the world to change their laws.³

According to the article, the document, *General Comment No. 36*, replaces comments adopted by the committee 30 years ago on Article 6 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR). Specifically, the recent document states that protecting the rights of all human beings means that states “must” legalize abortion.

The reason *General Comment No. 36* is of importance, he said, is that its adoption “will inevitably provide pro-abortion activists in the U.N. system with sufficient grounds to place considerable pressure on pro-life countries to legalize abortion.”

¹ https://nypost.com/2018/10/27/why-america-desperately-needs-another-baby-boom/?fbclid=IwAR20XRmaUtoEVazo_wybfGefCu-xbG447jc-96cVNW163heARyjPyhrEHDUE

² https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/destruction-of-chinas-shrines-shows-that-vatican-pact-serves-only-communist?utm_source=LifeSiteNews.com&utm_campaign=d354c77693-Daily%2520Headlines%2520-%2520U.S._COPY_379&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_12387f0e3e-d354c77693-401373841&fbclid=IwAR0LtP0LKN6pkWN4emY-ZAD4cy2mRm9ZlyQWe4tm75ANAiwaevqqV-2vBno

³ <https://www.liveaction.org/news/un-human-rights-countries-abortion/>

From the Countries



PERU Fujimori's Forgotten Sterilizations

Alberto Fujimori, the former Peruvian dictator, was recently ordered back to prison after a court overturned his pardon, reported the *National Catholic Register*.¹ Imprisoned for human-rights abuses and corruption since 2007, he was pardoned last year by then-president of Peru Pedro Pablo Kuczynski, the article stated.¹

Fujimori's well-known crimes include embezzling millions of dollars from the government and operating death squads, but what many people outside of Peru do not know is that Fujimori also oversaw a program of forced sterilizations, as reported in the *New Republic*.²

The program began in 1993 and ended in 2000. The worst years were 1996 and 1997, when some 200,000 women were forcibly sterilized.

PRI President Steve Mosher told the newspaper he first began to hear reports of what was happening in the mid-1990s.

"We got reports that indigenous Peruvian women — descendants of the Incas — were being sterilized and that Chinese 'technical advisers' had been brought into the country. Any objective observer would know right away that if you bring in Chi-

nese population-control advisers, you are going to see draconian measures," said Mosher.

The Peruvian government immediately set targets and quotas for how many women had to be sterilized



IRELAND Lawmakers Reject Burial Law for Babies

A committee of the Irish legislature rejected an amendment that would have required humane burials for babies killed by abortion, in the latest ruling under Ireland's new abortion regime, according to *LifesiteNews*.³

A joint health committee was considering an amendment to the country's so-called Regulation of Termination of Pregnancy bill, which will establish the country's new abortion laws after the May repeal of its Eighth Amendment that protected preborn babies' right to life.

Pro-life legislators sought to require that aborted babies be buried or cremated rather than being treated as medical waste, according to the Irish publication *The Journal*.⁴ They argued that current law is missing guidance for medical personnel as to the handling of dead fetuses, *LifeSiteNews* reported.⁴

Health Minister Simon Harris rejected the proposal as "extraordinarily distasteful."



MYANMAR Cardinal Asks Help to Stop Trafficking

Asked what the Synod of Bishops on youth could do for young women, Cardinal Charles Bo of Yangon, the largest city in Myanmar, said the biggest concern on his home turf is protecting them from human trafficking, according to *Crux*.⁵

"During synod I was reflecting on our own situation, the situation of young people here in Europe, and in Asia, it's quite different, but especially in Myanmar, where women, with the help of some religious congregations and the Church, we are focusing on saving young women and girls from human trafficking," Bo told journalists.

Women, he said, are being trafficked "from Myanmar to Thailand, and especially from Myanmar to China. Because of the one-child policy in China, many girls and women have been trafficked desperately into China," the article reported.

Combining the policy with the cultural preference for boys, most of the children aborted have been girls, leading to dramatic gender imbalances in the world's most populous country. Out of China's population of 1.4 billion, there are nearly 34 million more males than females.

¹ <http://www.ncregister.com/daily-news/fujimori-re-imprisonment-and-perus-forgotten-forced-sterilization-program>

² <https://newrepublic.com/article/151599/dont-talk-perus-forced-sterilizations>

³ https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/irish-committee-kills-distasteful-amendment-requiring-humane-burials-for-ab?utm_source=LifeSiteNews.com&utm_campaign=bbb6834940-Daily%2520Headlines%2520-%2520U.S._COPY_377&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_12387f0e3e-bbb6834940-401373841&fbclid=IwAR0gWOUctBcipSaLB7cRMoXrKnqr0sbZsy8b5IeRXan_U-QsLCM5pAYxUjo

⁴ <https://www.thejournal.ie/abortion-legislation-amendment-burial-voted-down-4328059-Nov2018/>

⁵ <https://cruxnow.com/synod-of-bishops-on-youth/2018/10/23/myanmar-prelate-says-china-one-child-policy-leads-to-trafficking/>