"Are you helping to slam that battering ram against the gates of hell, or..."

A good day to you and to each of my esteemed listeners! Welcome to EWTN's Open Line Tuesday edition! Barbara McGuigan here, alive and grateful and praising God in all things! Last week was a rough one. God-ordained marriage between a man and a woman took a big hit, thanks to the openly homosexual federal judge who arrogantly and on ridiculous grounds overturned California's Proposition 8, which affirms marriage as between one man and one woman.

Today I'd like to give you some excerpts of an interview that John Smeaton conducted with Hilary White, a reporter with the great pro-life news source, Lifesitenews.com. God's airwaves are open...here are the numbers.

In North America call: 1-800-585-9396

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And our email address is always: Openline@ewtn.com

John Smeaton, the head of the UK's Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, better known as SPUC, has interviewed one of my favorite writers, Hilary White, Lifesitenews.com's Rome correspondent. She described herself to Mr. Smeaton as "an Anglo-Canadian writer, researcher and art student recently re-assigned by God to Rome and desperately sand-bagging in sight of the coming flood." You've got to have a sense of humor in our cultural madhouse, and Hilary does!

John asked Hilary, "What is the significance of the Catholic Church to the pro-life movement?" She replied:

> **It is difficult to think how to answer that question. Not because it is hard to think of ways in which the Catholic Church has an impact on the movement, but in the way that it is difficult to, say, quantify the significance of water for the existence of life on planet earth.**
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> **I'm being glib, but not inaccurate. While we like to say that the pro-life position can be apprehended and held by anyone with any religious affiliation or none, the reality is that in practice, there are certain factors that, shall we say, mitigate strongly against atheism or even simple modern secular irreligion allowing the pro-life position, at least in its fullness.**

> **There are things about being a Catholic that make it possible (though never easy) to stand against the whole tide of the world and refuse to sway. It is this absolutist stand that so infuriates the world. Why are the world's media so doggedly pursuing the Catholic Church on the sex abuse scandals? Why only the Church when there are assuredly whole oceans of fish to fry in the Anglican, Lutheran and Baptist communities? Or for that matter, among teachers, scout leaders and librarians?**
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> **It is because the Catholic religion proposes absolute and unchangeable teachings on life, the universe and everything, and claims for them the infallible authority of God. Catholics grasp the concept that truth is simply what it is, and no amount of 'consensus', 'social progress', or committee-think will change it. It is why Catholics laugh (though somewhat darkly) when media experts demand that the pope change the teachings on homosexuality or abortion or contraception to become accepted by the modern world. The World cannot grasp, no longer has the intellectual capability to grasp, that the Catholic Church presents the truths of religion in the same way as a mathematician presents a mathematical axiom.**
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> **This is the secret of the martyrs. It is not, I guess, that martyrs have some great personal well of strength to endure torture. It is simply that the truth of the Faith is unalterable. It cannot be denied any more than gravity can be denied. We merely shrug in the face of these demands. The axioms of the mathematicians are less certain. It is not within our power to deny. Easier to ask us to fly.**

Brothers and sisters, Hilary White hits the nail on the head right there, doesn't she? But I'm going to respectfully disagree with her next few statements, because I find them to be not fully informed. Hilary suggested the following:

> **I have known for some time that there is a deficiency of education within the pro-life movement. There are a lot of sincere and often hard-working people who are, or believe themselves to be, pro-life but who hold the position without a concrete understanding of why…**
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> **…there is a strong streak of sentimentality in the movement that is little use in answering in a sensible way the questions and demands of the abortionist world. We cannot expect to win this war on feelings, on a vaguely held notion that babies are cute and that the world will automatically default back to sanity if we can only overturn Roe v. Wade…**
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> **What is missing in the pro-life world is solid education, intellectual training in logic and critical thinking skills as well as the facts… I have met too many nice pro-life people who cannot defend their position in the face of emotive arguments or slogans.**

Brothers and sisters may I just say in all charity that Hilary seems not to know about all the great minds and souls who have come before her in the worldwide pro-life movement of the last 40 years, including before Roe. Trust me: Pro-life groups of every kind have long since worked out every intellectual and logical argument and legal strategy and have compiled a massive body of educational resources.

So, upon reading Hilary's claims, "Time out, Miss Hilary," I thought. Yes, some pro-life souls are new to the movement and just beginning to see the light; let's leave room for constant metanoia. Others need to keep their heads in the game because the swamp gets deeper every waking moment. It used to be enough to have perfect clarity about abortion and euthanasia. That is no longer the case in a culture of death. When you are fighting Satan on his own turf, there is no room for complacency, willful ignorance, or mediocrity when it comes to defending God, His Church and His countless unborn, newborn and long born.

Remember, there is no mass movement in which every rank and file member knows everything. Yet we all should agree that there are many, many pro-lifers who can defend the babies and the right to life with true intellectual rigor and logic. That includes pro-lifers like you and most Open Line listeners, who've been the Church's battering rams against the gates of Hell, some even before Roe v. Wade!!

So rather than criticize the pro-life movement as a whole, we should just urge everyone to continue learning and to keep fostering an unshakable and passionate conviction that every unborn baby and every elderly, ill, handicapped, or otherwise vulnerable person is a gift from God. And we should always ask our pastors to start giving us pro-life sermons bellowed with conviction from the pulpit!

Rather than criticize pro-lifers, let's seek to convert the thousands of Catholics and other Christians who've bought the whole death package. That is: the pro-abortion, pro-euthanasia, pro-homosexuality, pro-same-sex union, pro-IVF, pro-embryonic stem cell research lie told over and over again by the main stream media, Planned Parenthood and their minions with oh so much sincerity and compassion.

As I see it, this is the group that needs pro-life formation and information, and deserves it as a matter of charity and justice. This is the group that needs "intellectual training in logic and critical think thinking skills, as well as the facts." And if this group doesn't go near a pulpit, much less hear a pro-life message from a pulpit, or from a solidly Catholic institution of higher learning, or on Catholic radio and TV, I ask you, where on God's good earth are they supposed to hear it?

Brothers and sisters, we will be judged on our silence.

But let's get back to Hilary White's interview with John Smeaton. Hilary is on very solid ground when she says the following:

Where the Catholic Church comes in for educational purposes is to provide these robust, intellectually rigorous answers to the abortion movement's political slogans and their (occasionally) honest questions. Catholicism is not a religion of sentimentality.

Why is IVF a bad thing? What is the pro-life position on embryonic genetic research? ... Why isn't there such a thing as a right to commit suicide? Why is it wrong to use donor sperm? Why can we not 'adopt' frozen embryos? Why is rape not a legitimate 'exception' for abortion? What is the moral difference between removal or withholding of 'extreme' medical interventions and dehydrating a comatose patient to death?

The Church derives its teachings (and yes, I can provide links to the documents answering all these questions) logically from basic principles. We start with an axiom: 'You can't kill people to solve your problems …or theirs.' (Or as it is put more elegantly, 'thou shalt not kill'.) From this principle it is possible to find one's logical way, step by step into the things the Church teaches about the sacredness of human life. Sometimes this process has been laborious and on some topics it has taken a long time. Centuries. But there is not one thing the Catholic Church teaches that is not intimately and inextricably connected to everything else she teaches.

When I was younger, I was convinced, by my Catholic parochial school, that the Catholic religion was nonsense. All merely a set of contrived and arbitrary rules designed to oppress and restrict human freedom. An evil creed by (evil old white) men. Then one day, the thought popped into my mind, 'I might be wrong'. Although I considered the possibility to be very slim, I thought it only fair to investigate this enormous and immensely old and important institution on its own merits. What did the Catholic Church have to say for itself? After eleven years of reading, I was ready to concede that the one thing that could not be denied about Catholicism was that its teachings were not arbitrary. If you accepted their basic premises, the dogmas, doctrines and even disciplines of the Catholic religion where coherent, sane and in keeping with reason. There are no internal contradictions in Catholic teaching.

After a few more years of reading, I concluded that no other religious or political system proposing answers to the big questions could say the same.

This is why the Catholic Church must and does necessarily lead the pro-life movement. And it is why when John asked me the question, 'What is the significance of the Catholic Church to the pro-life movement?' I laughed. It was like being asked 'What is the significance of physics to quantum theory?' or 'What does gravity have to do with things falling down?' ...."

Brothers and sisters, who can deny that? Mother Church, down through the centuries has been, and will forever be, the battering ram against evil. This is why She is hated so much, by so many, who even sincerely believe that all life is expendable and can be conceived any which way one prefers; that homosexual pairings are equal to the Sacrament of Holy Matrimony that Jesus Himself established; or that homosexual perversions are equal to the holy marital act.

Now, may I ask rather bold questions? Are you helping to slam that battering ram against the gates of hell, or are you stuck on the other side of the gate? No one can be on both sides. Time is running out. How far are you willing to go to save a soul, born or unborn? As Fr. Corapi has said, "Sacrificial love is what separates the men from the boys. You love to the degree you're willing to sacrifice."

I look forward to talking with you! Here are the numbers: 1-800-585-9396 and 1-205-271-2985.

Closing: A thousand thanks for your excellent calls! Because we believe in the power of prayer, my brothers and sisters, I ask for yours. My husband will undergo open heart surgery on August 20th, to replace his aortic valve. While very serious, it could be much worse. Thank you so much for your kind thoughts and special prayers. My family will be forever grateful!

Fr. Benedict Groeschel of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal, in his wonderful book, *Tears of God,* wrote a very important prayer he calls "Learning Christ." Here it is:

> **Teach me, my Lord, to be kind and gentle in all the events of life - in disappointments, in the thoughtlessness of others, in the insincerity of those I trusted, in the unfaithfulness of those on whom I relied.**
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> **Let me put myself aside to think of the happiness of others, to hide my little pains and heartaches, so that I may be the only one to suffer from them.**
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> **Teach me to profit by the suffering that comes across my path.**
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> **Let me so use it that it may mellow me, not harden nor embitter me; that it may make me patient, not irritable, that it may make me broad in my forgiveness, not narrow, haughty and overbearing.**
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> **As I go round from one distraction to another, let me often whisper a word of love to Thee. May my life be lived in the supernatural, full of power for good and strong in the purpose of sanctity.**

Until next week on Open Line, Blessed be God and may He mightily bless you! Bye for now!