



FROM: POPE JOHN PAUL II SOCIETY OF EVANGELISTS
TO: MEMBERSHIP

Pro-life Movement Should Not Apologize for Abortionist's Death

by Phil Sevilla

Members of the media elite and abortion advocacy organizations have pounced on the tragic story of the fatal shooting of late term abortionist George Tiller like famished piranha in a feeding frenzy to justify their worldview of "anti-abortion zealots and extremists". They insinuate that the large segment of society who speak out and work against abortion are responsible for the violence. In actuality in the thirty-five years since the Supreme Court majority legalized abortion in our nation, there have been less than a dozen incidents of violence (not all fatal) committed against abortion providers for various reasons by individuals. In total there have been seven fatalities related to violence committed against abortionists and abortion centers since abortion was legalized in 1973.(1)

The last fatal attack on an abortionist by an individual before the tragedy earlier this month was in 1998. While every act of violence committed against abortion providers must be condemned and every perpetrator brought to justice, there has never been clear evidence of a conspiracy within the pro-life community to commit violence against abortionists.

Scott Roeder, the accused shooter, is widely labeled as a Christian pro-life extremist. Voices in the pro-life movement who are decrying Tiller's murder but accusing the abortion doctor for business practices that result in acts of violence are labeled terrorists. A recent opinion piece in a widely read newsmagazine was titled, "Tiller Murder is Terrorism, and All Pro-life Extremists Are to Blame".(2)

In fact many of us who call ourselves pro-life Americans are simply Christians, and, no committed Christian in his right mind would choose to commit a violent act like the assassination of George Tiller, let alone in a church, in the house of God, on the Sabbath day. A man was gunned down on Sunday at a church during Sunday service. This act of violence was an

abomination, a sacrilege, and a crime, contemptible to all men and women of good will, not only to Christians. Any Christian involved in pro-life ministry would never respond to what we believe to be violence committed by abortionists against unborn children with more violence. This is not the way of our faith. Catholic Archbishop Joseph Naumann of Kansas City recently wrote, "Killing those who perform abortions builds up the culture of death, because it embraces its premise that we solve problems by destroying human life rather than honoring the truth that every human being is made in the image of God."(3)

Another overlooked fact addressing the history of legalized abortion in our nation is the significant influence peaceful Christians during this period of time have had over a number of high profile abortionists and abortion rights ideologues like Doctors Bernard Nathanson, Carol Everett, Anthony Levantino, Beverly McMillan and many others who left the abortion business for good.(4) Bernard Nathanson's moving confession after committing 75,000 abortions speaks eloquently about the patient, loving and peaceful influence of Christians.(5) Norma McCorvey and Sandra Cano, the celebrated plaintiffs of the landmark cases that legalized abortion in 1973 have both spoken out boldly against legalized abortion and have written about the quiet and persevering influence of Christians.

It's disconcerting to read so many pro-life, or in pro-choice parlance, "anti-abortion", leaders stumbling over themselves to distance their organization from what one individual did last Sunday. In 20 years in pro-life ministry, I have never heard any leader involved in the national abortion abolition movement advocate picking up guns and bombs to assassinate abortion doctors. Yes, you read correctly. Our goal as pro-life Americans is to abolish legalized abortion in our nation. But we will not resort to violence to achieve victory because our Christian faith informs us that the ends never justifies the means. But in all honesty, I am relieved that Dr. George Tiller of Wichita, Kansas, no longer practices his profession, that is, the killing of unborn children.

I find the pointing fingers from the left laughable and suspect many know in their hearts that conservative folks of the Christian persuasion do not condone vigilante justice in any way, shape, or form. But it's fun poking us in the eye nevertheless and it's a favorite pastime in our coarsened culture to throw the "H" word around (as in hypocrisy) to deflect attention from morally questionable values held dear by the left that are contemptible to a growing segment of our society. We hope for the day when media moguls raise the bar and hire professionals with the intellectual and professional capacity to provide balance and fairness even in editorial pieces, out of simple respect for the diversity of opinions among their listeners and viewers.

What the mainstream media has missed and the real story ignored by the media elite in the killing of Dr. Tiller is the horrific work Tiller was involved with in his place of business that drove a deranged individual to do what he did. This tragedy is about legalized abortion and the deaths that ensue from every successful procedure involving surgical or chemical abortion. Why are the actual activities of abortionists, especially late term abortion procedures, off limits for public scrutiny and discussion in polite company? Doctor George Tiller was a late term abortionist. He used an incinerator in his place of business to dispose of bodies. The Catholic Archbishop of

Kansas City, Joseph Naumann, declared that Kansas had become "infamous for being the late-term abortion center for the Midwest." Actually Kansas was commonly known as the late term abortion capital of the country because of Dr. George Tiller's business.

I believe that those of us who call ourselves Christians, especially those who are actively involved in pro-life crisis pregnancy counseling and educational ministries, saw George Tiller as a soul in dire need of redemption and conversion. We saw a human person with dignity who was worthy of our love and compassion in spite of our serious disapproval of his work and profession. We love the sinner, but hate the sin. We did not see Tiller as a blood-crazed madman or barbaric, murderous agent of death like Josef Mengele. He was someone, we saw, with a terribly malformed and erroneous conscience, but, the virtue of hope compelled us to believe that he would see the light and turn his back on the business of abortion, especially late term abortion which takes the life of the unborn up to the day of delivery. We hoped and prayed his conversion would come sooner rather than later.

Our society must stop the violence. Violence committed when the lives of innocent unborn children are destroyed is very bit as reprehensible and contemptible as gunning down a man in the vestibule of his Church on Sunday morning. We must address the real problems destroying the moral fabric of our society - sexual licentiousness, infidelity, pornography, an entertainment industry drenched in sex, sensuality, porn, crude and profane language, and violence. Our young people are robbed of their innocence at an early age by the pervasive moral toxic waste around them. The terrible consequences of the moral slippery slope we have witnessed over the past forty-five years since the sexual revolution of the '60s took root in our society, is clear to all with eyes to see.

There is a professor in a prestigious university who promotes the idea that it should be permissible for parents to put to death their children after they are born. Not since the pagan days of the Roman empire when the paterfamilias could throw his imperfect child over the wall to be devoured by wild animals have we seen such depraved and wide-eyed disregard for human life. Moral relativism is widespread today. License is confused with freedom and tolerance is a worn out slogan used to silence all opposition and rationalize every deviancy and perversion.

We must work to restore to its prideful place the dignity of every human person, born and unborn, educate our young people about their true nature as children of a loving God and Father, and condemn all those deceptive influences in our society that enslave rather than free men and women. We must uphold moral values of marriage, fidelity, and sexual ethics rooted in our Judeo-Christian tradition. We must all work and pray for the transformation of our society where we no longer accept such acts of unspeakable violence against innocent members of our human family, especially the unborn, the poor who are deprived of work and a living wage, the elderly, disabled, and handicapped who face the threat of rationed health care, and, with as much conviction, cry out to condemn and never ever condone and support the actions of those who take the law into their own hands and destroy lives in the name of God or false notions of "righteousness".

Phil Sevilla is president of the Catholic Coalition of New Mexico, a non-profit volunteer educational group promoting conservative moral values in public policy, churches and schools. He is the Executive Director of Project Defending Life, a crisis pregnancy center and pro-life ministry in Albuquerque, NM.

Sources:

- (1) http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2009/05/31/recent-cases-of-abortionr_n_209528.html
http://www.prochoice.org/about_abortion/violence/murders.asp
- (2) US News World & Report, Bonnie Erbe
<http://www.usnews.com/blogs/erbe/2009/06/01/tiller-murder-is-terrorism-and-all-pro-life-extremists-are-to-blame.html>FirefoxHTML%5CShell%5COpen%5CCommand
- (3) http://www.theleaven.com/columnist/archbishop_column.html
- (4) <http://prolifeaction.org/providers/>.
- (5) <http://whittulipe.wordpress.com/2008/04/02/dr-nathanson-shares-conversion-story>