

AFFIRMING LIFE

ROCKY MOUNTAIN DISTRICT LCMS

Pro-Life Honesty

When asked to write about my experiences as a deaconess at a pregnancy resource center in Fort Wayne, Indiana, I hadn't anticipated the recent political outcries in the wake of the Supreme Court's potential decision to overturn Roe v. Wade to the States. Serendipity. Like most politically charged topics, however, much mudslinging abounds. In the era of misinformation, some honesty, specifically spiritual honesty, should be proclaimed.

Which leads us to the wonderful and underpublicized work of pregnancy resource centers (PRCs). For

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women (and men!) who find themselves struggling with one of the most important decisions of their lives, keeping or terminating a pregnancy, pregnancy resource centers have a strong history of expressing honesty and support in various ways. Here are the main things women and men are told at PRCs, based on years of counseling and medical data:

1. Abortion is emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually hard. We know the media will try to spin it and make you feel like it's not, but PRCs often receive calls from distressed men and women who need counsel many years after their decision to abort. (As Christians we know this is consciously or unconsciously taking a life, so repercussions are normal and natural) And they do! Depression, anxiety and suicidal ideation increases after abortions. Physical healing can take longer than expected, is traumatic, and could interfere with future conception. PRCs educate about this and also provide medical care such as ultrasounds to determine a viable pregnancy and STD testing. While they do

This monthly newsletter, serves to support the Rocky Mountain District in the ministry of defending those who cannot defend themselves and proclaiming the Gospel of Christ to those struggling with life-related issues.

Comments and suggestions are always welcomed and appreciated.

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not provide abortions, it cannot be understated that they DO offer post-decision support.

2. Adoption is emotionally, mentally, physically and spiritually hard. Mothers (and fathers) will naturally develop a physical and emotional bond with the growing child, and even though they have had support throughout the process and made the decision to give their child up for adoption, it will be hard. PRCs are trained, willing and able to offer this information and guide people to the proper channels should they choose to make this incredibly sacrificial choice for their child and themselves.
3. Parenting . . . you guessed it, is emotionally, mentally, physically, and spiritually HARD. Ask any parent. Add to the mix a single mother with limited resources, and it's easy to see why many choose abortion. Children need food, shelter, and care beyond what some can provide. PRCs offer material support through their food and clothing banks—often distributed on a point system when the mother and/or father go through parenting classes to help prepare them for the future of parenting their infant.

Are you seeing a theme here? Life is hard, no matter the decision, and Jesus cares about all—the mother, father and child. That's something we don't often see on protest boards. As a deaconess who served in that setting, it was my privilege and honor to walk alongside several women in crisis pregnancies who chose to keep their child and who worked toward getting diapers,

clothes, cribs, car seats and the like through the parenting support group. I also got to speak to them about spiritual matters and tried to connect (or reconnect) them to their local churches and spiritual advisors.

It was true mercy at work, watching how our Lord was using and refining us all to His glory. There was sadness, too, as people walked out the door believing abortion was their only option. Yet, even in the midst of such turmoil, the staff at the pregnancy center were so spiritually grounded and knew God was in control no matter what people chose to do, but especially if they

chose abortion. As most PRCs are affiliated with Christianity, prayers were, and are, a constant in those walls. While the world, our sin and the devil will rage, tempt, and destroy, our loving Father continues to call to us, point us to His Son our Savior, and comfort us in what He (not us) has done! That is real mercy, spiritual honesty, and the only way to true peace. May our loved ones and leaders make such a confession!

Deaconess Melissa DeGroot
Regional Life Coordinator, New Mexico



The Spring 2022 issue of LCMS Life Ministry's *News and Notes* reminds us how we can care for mothers, babies, and their families after birth; discusses the term "Reproductive Rights"; and provides information on interacting with policymakers.

To read this quarterly newsletter and subscribe, www.lcms.org/life.



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- **Phase 2:** Applications are due July 1, 2022. Awards will be made in Sept. 2022.
- **Phase 3:** Applications are due April 1, 2023. Awards will be made in June 2023.

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