

Pulling Back the Curtain on Planned Parenthood

The Center for Medical Progress - undercover video series puts a human face on the unborn

by John M Grondelski

At the very end of the Church's traditional "corporal works of mercy" is the call "to bury the dead." In antiquity, there was no greater injustice than to deprive someone of a grave. That's why Joseph of Arimathea's burial of Christ is an act of mercy — the crucified were often buried in a common grave or just left to rot off their crosses. Antigone's providing a decent burial for her brother Polynices, in defiance of Creon, is a classic example of the demands of human decency. For modern Americans, that command may seem strange. Soup kitchens "feed the hungry." The St. Vincent de Paul Society and the Salvation Army "clothe the naked." More and more cities provide shelters to "shelter the homeless." Parishes organize groups "to visit the sick." But we don't seem to have many forlorn corpses in need of burial. Then came Planned Parenthood.

One of the visceral reasons why the ongoing series of videos showing just how much Planned Parenthood profits from its blood business makes people angry is that it puts a face on the unborn. Abortion has managed to maintain a certain degree of social acceptability precisely because its grislier side has been methodically kept under wraps. "Nothing to see here, folks," declares the man behind the curtain, and when that man (or woman) is dressed in a white coat, the declaration acquires an even greater measure of credibility from a society that flatters itself for being "scientific." Till, sometimes, the curtain is pulled back, and the man in the white coat adds the disclaimer: "I'm not a doctor, but I play one ..." for Planned Parenthood.

One reason the culture of death has managed to prevail is that, paradoxically, it depends on hiding death. "Assisted suicide" takes place behind drawn curtains in a hospital, alone or with another killer (also playing caring "doctor"). Jack Kevorkian's suicide machine was designed to enable someone to kill himself completely alone. Contemporary funerals are hidden. We keep young people from the "trauma" of seeing a dead body. We even hide the dead body: The growing acceptance of cremation, even among Catholics, turns the body, the temple of the Holy Spirit, into freeze-dried flakes, powder to be scattered as we play *Dust in the Wind*. Then Planned Parenthood gives us a detached arm or leg or talks about an intact "calvarium" (i.e., head), and the body comes right back, front and center.

But if abortion has been largely practiced "out of sight, out of mind," that doesn't mean the human costs disappear. You have to put the 56 million bodies since *Roe v. Wade* somewhere. Monica Migliorino Miller's *Citizens for a Pro-Life Society* (ProLifeSociety.com) has tried to throw light on the post-abortion question: What happens to the bodies? Her book, *Abandoned: The Untold Story of the Abortion Wars* (St. Benedict Press, 2012) will inform you about what is found in abortion-facility dumpsters, on loading docks, in storage warehouses or consigned to incinerators — if you have the guts to face it. Her most grisly account relates to the story of an animal cemetery in Milwaukee, where your little kitten gets a lovely coffin but also where Milwaukee's abortion businesses used to dispose of their "waste." When she confronted them with the fact that the remains of the unborn were ending up with animals, Miller was struck by the twisted logic: For the contractors, "it could not be wrong to bury the remains of the unloved aborted with those of cats and dogs that were good to their masters."

There is also an eerie parallelism to the current Planned Parenthood disclosures: After initially being caught off guard, the cemetery came out swinging. "'The public is fine as long as they don't know what's going on,' ... [and] 'the public should not be so outraged, given that the firm accepts fetuses only from a few sources and can't be two percent of our business,'" for which they only charged a flat incineration fee. Maybe they also do mammograms.

Kermit Gosnell, the Philadelphia abortionist now serving a life sentence for murder, manslaughter and other grisly practices, also kept the bodies of many unborn babies that he killed in a refrigerator or specimen jars. You have to admit abortionists have a problem: 56 million bodies since *Roe*, and, as the Planned Parenthood videos show, you can't keep the bodies buried ... especially when to make a buck you don't bury them.

This year is shaping up to be a bad one for the abortion giant. Montana tried to add an element of humanity to prenatal killing by stipulating that any unborn child aborted after 20-weeks (i.e., five months) gestation be anesthetized before execution, since a fetus is pain-capable at that point. Reliably pro-abortion Democrat Gov. Steve Bullock vetoed that bill April 30, and, so far, it seems other states have not followed Montana's lead.

Kansas earlier this year passed a ban on abortion after 20-weeks gestation, when the unborn are "pain capable," as did Wisconsin last month, and similar legislation is pending in the Senate. Planned Parenthood and other abortionists have quietly worked behind the scenes against such legislation but really have not wanted to take the fight public: How do you oppose bills framed to prevent or at least mitigate excruciating pain? The default abortionist response is: "What pain?" If a fetus is not human, it cannot have pain.

But people in their gut know that an unborn baby at five months of pregnancy feels. And having to debate that question risks bringing into view the one thing the abortion establishment has sought assiduously to hide: the humanity of the unborn. Now, Planned Parenthood is faced with pictures: pictures of its callousness, pictures of its charnel trafficking. And a picture is worth a thousand words. Especially if it ignites discussion of questions they'd like kept off the table. "To bury the dead" is a corporal work of mercy. Because — Planned Parenthood's denials notwithstanding — everyone has a right to rest in peace in a grave, especially those consigned there as victims of injustice.

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