Notre Dame Right to Life observed Respect Life Week this year from October 1 through October 7. On Sunday, red roses were placed on or near the altars in each dorm chapel to as a sign of honor and remembrance for the millions of babies who have been killed by legalized abortion in the United States. Also, Our Lady of Guadalupe holy cards were distributed at the dorm masses, and each of the masses was to be focused on the Pro-life message, as this was Respect Life Sunday.

RTL hosted a series of three lectures during the week to help educate the Notre Dame community about certain life issues. On Tuesday, Professor Carter Sneed from the ND Law School offered a presentation about the various features and applications of Stem Cell Research. The lecture explained the differences between adult and embryonic stem cell research, the cloning and destruction of life that takes place in embryonic stem cell research, and the success that has been achieved through work with adult stem cells from such sources as umbilical cord blood. On Wednesday, RTL had its monthly meeting as well as a lecture presented by Professor Adrian Reimers of the Philosophy Department. The third lecture was presented Thursday afternoon by Professor David Solomon of the Notre Dame Center for Ethics and Culture. He outlined the various rhetorical devices that pervade the abortion debate, explained some purely rational arguments against the pro-abortion standpoint, and challenged the audience to work to meet the culture head-on by using secular reasoning, instead of purely theological reasoning, when fighting for the pro-life cause.

The central event of Respect Life Week was the construction of the Cemetery of the Innocents on South Quad. Six hundred white crosses were erected near the flag pole to represent the approximate number of abortions that occur during the duration of a four-hour Notre Dame football game. Many RTL members had helped the previous week to fix and re-paint these crosses, which have been used in the previous years by the club during Respect Life week. Also, in the section of the quad immediately east of the area with the crosses, 3,600 pink and blue flags were arranged to represent the number of abortions on average that occur within the United States each day. With these two displays, the Notre Dame community was able to see a powerful visual display of the pain and destruction that abortion brings to thousands of women and families across this country.

Finally, a large wooden (cont. pg3)
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A Few Words from the President

Dear Friends of Right to Life,

It seems like only yesterday that this semester started; but, Fall has been here awhile now, and the chill of winter is in the air already – the semester is midway through.

The past couple months have been challenging for Right to Life. Just as we were all settling back into our dorms we kicked off the year with Rock for Life. We held well attended meetings in September and October, were visited by the seminarians of Priests for Life, ran a concession stand at the Purdue game, conducted a Vote Pro-life drive, and Respect Life Week was an undeniable success.

Successes have been sweet thus far, such as Respect Life Week as mentioned above. From October 1 through October 7 we sponsored daily events advertised to campus and club including the Cemetery of the Innocents display on South Quad. The Saturday before that week, we ran a concession stand in front of the statue of Fr. Sorin. The stand sold out despite the fact the grill burned out! It was truly encouraging to see a long line of people stand and wait for the grill to restart. When told how long it would take, they responded: "No, we are not going to leave. We will buy from you because you are the best cause." And they did.

We have not been without our difficulties as well. Some commissions lag behind others, and as always, the budget is never large enough to encompass everything we wish we could do.

Nevertheless, with Our Lady as our patroness we continue on, trying our best to do what we can to bring a true Culture of Life to this university. Currently we are preparing for our November meetings, signups for the March for Life and are collecting goods for Project Mom.

Thank you for your constant prayers and support! Without such dedication, Right to Life would be far from what it is today. Even what may seem the smallest bit of help is great in our eyes. May God bless you always.

In Notre Dame our Mother,
Mary Elizabeth Walter ’08
President 2006-2007

Mary Liz enjoying breakfast after cemetery set up.

This year we welcome a new advisor to our team – Mrs. Elizabeth Kirk JD – who help Fr. J Steele guide the club in its events. New officers and commissioners, such as myself, also fill the shoes of a number who have graduated and are sorely missed.

Together we all hope to help Right to Life continue to grow and reach out to Notre Dame and the surrounding community. This year we look forward to not only reaching outwards, but also inwards to help build a stronger community between members of RTL in order that we may be better examples of the Gospel of Life to our peers.
cross with red roses at its base was placed near the flag pole to remember the women who have been harmed or killed because of abortion. The Cemetery was put up early Thursday morning and was taken down on Friday evening, allowing two days of exposure to the Notre Dame community.

Overall, this year’s Respect Life Week was a success, and we are working on plans to improve it for next year as well.

Secretary’s Welcome

Before we know it and it’s the beginning of another year. First off, I’d like to thank all of you for continuing to support our cause—your donations and especially your prayers make a world of a difference.

We’ve been kept pretty busy with the new Right to Lifers coming in, the usual set of preparation for Rock for Life, Respect Life Week, and the like. I won’t go too deep into what’s been going on, for I’m sure Mary Liz and the other commissioners have described the state of affairs better than I could. One thing that I couldn’t help but want to communicate was the sort of notion I experienced this year, as in the wee hours of the morning, we were setting up for the cemetery of the innocents. I could already imagine people complaining of what good setting up wooden crosses would do, people who wondered what sort of statement we were trying to make. Yet, I couldn’t help but think of a certain passage from G.K. Chesterton, where he talks about anthropologists and primitive people. Those anthropologists observed how primitive people used to place food in the graves of their deceased and from this judged the primitive people to believe their deceased could eat. Yet, Chesterton argues that primitive people place food in the graves for the same reason we place food in the graves for the same reason we place flowers in our loved ones’ graves: because it is “an exceedingly natural and obvious thing to do.” Would anthropologists look back at our custom and judge us to believe our dead could smell, he wonders? Thus, we do this as a tangible sign of love, for the same reason husbands kiss their wives goodbye or parents place presents under a tree. Essentially, it struck me, there it was something very human, we’re showing that these unborn were human persons just as us, and as we mourn, pray, and remember our dead dearly, so we do with these our unknown dead.

This issue, our first issue, will be covering the first half of our fall semester, mainly Respect Life Week. Kudos to Adam Hoock and everyone who worked with him to make this year’s a success.

Thanks again for all of your support and may Our Lady bless the cause.

Victor Saenz
Right to Life Secretary
Between the 5th and 6th of this October, students and visitors at the University of Notre Dame inevitably passed an immense, unique memorial display on campus: the entire eastern side of the South Quadrangle had become a sprawling field of tightly-packed white crosses alongside thousands of lawn flags. Each year, this simple but powerful display—the Cemetery of the Innocents—is without doubt the most powerful reminder of the urgent mission of ND Right to Life.

One of the many surrounding signs explained the tragic reality made visible by the cemetery: the 600 crosses corresponded to the number of children in this country who die by abortion during the span of one Notre Dame football game, while the 3,600 flags—some of them blue, some pink—mourned the number of daily unborn abortion victims in the U.S. In front of the cemetery stood a stark, six-foot tall, white cross. Nearby hung a sign of dedication, in memory of the countless children deprived of their lives while in the womb, and in sympathy for the many women who have suffered the physical and emotional torments resulting from an abortion.

Although the campus awoke on October 5 to find the cemetery suddenly spanning a quarter of South Quad, student members of Right to Life had dedicated many hours throughout the week in preparation for the memorial. The previous Friday afternoon, they had repainted, repaired, and re-counted the 600-plus crosses from last year’s display. The evening of the 4th was spent transporting all of these crosses and eight large wooden signs to a nearby building in anticipation of the set-up next morning. When that morning came, the RTL faithful trudged out of their beds before 6 a.m., in the dark, to meet at the South Quad flagpole; there they pounded in the 600 crosses, planted the 3,600 flags, and set up the signs around the cemetery, all before sunrise.

Naturally, reactions to the cemetery were mixed. But despite the one or two complaint letters that were published in the student newspaper, the majority of passersby paused noticeably in the middle of the quad to read the explanatory signs or simply to take in the magnitude of the cemetery and, hopefully, the awful reality that those little white crosses signified.

As a freshman Right to Life member, I realized for the first time this October the powerful and haunting impact left by the Cemetery of the Innocents; I was blessed and am deeply thankful to have witnessed and helped set up the cemetery. Most of all, I am grateful that this campus—where so many of my fellow students joyfully sacrificed time and sleep to defend the sanctity of human life—is the one I call home.

But we can’t allow the cemetery’s impact to have ended when the crosses were taken down on October 6. To call public attention to the tragic, inherent results of abortion is a pivotal part of the mission of Right to Life, but it is only a first step. May we as RTL members, along with all those who were touched in some way by the cemetery, increasingly take up this fight, through our words and through our actions, on the innocents’ behalf.
The Legislative Commission recognizes that elections are critical to the creation of a legal regime that respects the right to life. To that end, we have worked on two major initiatives this fall to elect pro-life representatives to Congress. The first was our Vote Pro-Life voter registration drive, and the second – currently in progress as of this writing – is our Vote for Life ad campaign.

The voter registration drive, held September 28, enabled everyone who stopped by our table on Fieldhouse Mall to register to vote and to request absentee ballots. Several dedicated commission members printed off the appropriate forms for all fifty states, meaning all students were able to simply walk up and receive the paperwork needed to vote for pro-life candidates. We also provided resources for researching current politicians’ pro-life stances, as well as Right to Life Club literature. Hats off to those who worked the drive and to those who will now vote!

Our second initiative is our campaign to design and disseminate ads that remind the campus of the importance of voting pro-life. These will include posters in buildings throughout campus, ads in (hopefully) all major campus publications, and possibly even chalk messages on the sidewalks during the last pre-election home football game. The goal is to spark conversation and to prompt serious consideration of how we can best vote to uphold the dignity of every human life.

The Legislative Commission intends to continue its work throughout the school year and the Commissioner, Tim Wymore, always welcomes additional commission members and new ideas to further the legal cause of life.

Other Brief Notes of News

Rock 4 Life
Rock for Life was held Thursday, September 14, 2006 on Fieldhouse Mall. Right to Life Officers and volunteers manned tables full of brochures, pro-life displays, t-shirts, and Subway subs from 4-6 pm. The response was better than we anticipated: we received three pages of sign-up sheets, two pages of t-shirt requests, and passed out many brochures and all of the subs. People seemed pleased and interested; at no point were we met with a negative reaction! Many people told us that they were thankful for another opportunity to sign up for Right to Life, as they had missed Activities Night. Overall, we were very pleased with the response to Rock for Life; we gained members, put information into the hands of many students, and in general, raised awareness of our group and its mission on campus.

RTL Website
For the world beyond campus, our website is the face of ND Right to Life. For members, it is an easy way to stay updated and informed. This year we are extensively renovating the site to meet those needs. First (and certainly foremost), all information has been updated and is being kept up to date. (That means no more two-month old calendars on the front page!) We are also expanding the content of the site: In the near future, every outreach, commission, and activity will have its own page. Of course a website should be pleasant to look at, too, and hopefully you'll find our new design to be just that. Stop by http://nd.edu/~prolife/ for the latest club news, commission information and signups, and other resources, or just to drop us a line.

Prayer
Notre Dame Right to Life understands that the pro-life cause is one that cannot be one without the aid of divine grace. That is why the club has set up an hour of adoration each week specifically for RTL. Also, the club continues to send students early each Friday morning to pray the rosary at the abortion clinic. May Our Lady intercede for us, our Life, our Sweetness, our Hope!
What’s been going on...

Top left: the Cemetery of the innocents being put up in the wee hours of the night...
Top right: ...and the wonderful people who put it up.
Middle left: All the food from our concession stand!
Middle right: Professor Reimers giving his lecture during Respect Life Week on the culture of life and the culture of death.
Bottom left: Right to Lifer’s at the concession stand.
Calendar posters help us reach out to the campus on a daily basis.

Like last year, our monthly posters will feature the stages of embryonic development.
March for Life
--Sign ups available online at: www.nd.edu/~prolife/march/
--until December 1, 2006
--March takes place: Monday January 22, 2007

Youth Rally for High School Students
--Presenting the message of chastity to our youth
--Date: February 24, 2007
--This year’s theme: “Step Up to the Plate”
--Open to all high school students!

2nd Annual Collegiate Conference
--This year’s theme: the Second Chapter of Evangelium Vitae: “I Came that they May Have Life: The Christian Message Concerning Life”
--Dates: April 13-14, 2007
--College students from all over invited!
--Speakers to be announced soon!