

Stop the violence, right now!

By Therese Wilson Favors

Here it goes again. I hear sadness encircling me with the piercing sobbing of mothers and fathers, crying over the loss of a child. Or maybe the cries of loss come from the shock of another elder struck down in the street or from an incomprehensibly violent robbery inflicted in their own home. Maybe I hear a baby crying from a womb, yearning for life before an abortion. I can't quite see their faces and I don't want to get up too close. It might be someone I know. I have already visited this place of pain and it is unbearable. This pain is far too familiar in this hour of ours.

What time is it? Am I asleep? Is this nightmare real? Somebody ought to wake me up or at least pray me out of this bad dream. I need to wake up. You need to wake up, and wake up somebody else. Then the nightmare of violence perpetrated on our people can come to an end. Wake me up, Lord, help us out Lord, for this violence must stop and it must stop NOW!

Someone once told me that nightmares tend to repeat themselves because our unconscious mind refuses to wake up and do something different than experiencing one horrific action after another. Brothers and sisters, let us wake up from this roller-coaster nightmare ride, a ride we don't have to take.

Let's wake up before the nightmarish alarm rings again and we won't be able to stretch ourselves and turn off the alarm. Let's become conscious to what is happening right in front of our eyes. Let's wake up and tell our righteous mind that it's going to be different from here on. Let's wake up and delete the nightmare with life-saving actions to protect our children, secure safety for our elders and families, and respect life by helping mother and father so that the child can be born and walk into his or her future. The one struck down just might be the one who will change history because you woke up and helped out!

When angels woke up the shepherds on that day of Nativity, they did something. They looked for that child and praised him (Luke 2: 9-20). When angels awakened Joseph the carpenter from his sleep, Joseph took Mary and Jesus out of harm's way into Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15). They had to wake up and then rise up to do something.

This is our hour to wake up and rise up to do something. We have nothing to fear and so much spiritual strength available to us. The Psalms give witness to a people who try to gain strength from the Lord. "When I was hard pressed and was falling, the Lord helped me. My strength and my courage is the Lord" (Psalm 118:13-14).

For the past 15 years the National Black Catholic Apostolate for Life has designated June as a time for black Catholics to actively raise consciousness regarding abortion and acts of violence within our community. Throughout the summer, let's heat up our efforts by adding to all of our youth gatherings and parish and family activities these suggestions:

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