

Summer of Mercy 2.0 continues with prayers for healing after abortion

GERMANTOWN - Summer of Mercy 2.0 - nine days of prayer to witness for life near the clinic of late-term abortionist Dr. LeRoy Carhart - continued Aug. 6 with an afternoon of prayerful remembrance and intercession at Mother Seton Church in Germantown.

Participants prayed for healing for those who have been wounded by abortion. The gathering was sponsored by Project Rachel Ministries of the Archdiocese of Washington and the Archdiocese of Baltimore.

“The foothold of evil is real. Prayer can make a difference,” said Julia Shelava, director of the Project Rachel Ministry for the Archdiocese of Washington, after a Mass celebrated by Washington Auxiliary Bishop Martin Holley.

Earlier that afternoon, Shelava spoke at the beginning of a bilingual prayer service.

“Having the privilege to journey with so many women healing from having had abortions in their past, I am keenly aware of the impact abortion has had on our society, and yet my awareness is only a glimpse of the deep pain,” she said.

Shelava said that many silently suffer this pain and she hoped that the gathering would bring healing to those who “carry grief in their heart for a family member they never had the chance to know here in this life.”

Prayer service volunteers read actual testimonies from many people who have been

affected by abortion. A mother's testimony included these words to her unborn child: "You are never far from my thoughts. No matter where I am and what I am doing, you are with me. Every Mother's Day, every year around what would have been my due date, every pregnant mother reminds me of you and what I have done. I struggle with sorrow, guilt and shame all the time."

Monsignor Mark Brennan, pastor of St. Martin of Tours Parish in Gaithersburg and a regular volunteer with Project Rachel, led Eucharistic Adoration.

Afterward, he said people struggle with denial and then "recognize the humanity of the child, and one's personal responsibility, and to accept in one's heart that God truly forgives the repentant sinner, no matter how grievous the sin."

In his homily, Bishop Holley echoed that point, saying, "We too are called to be transformed, each and every day, into the image and likeness of God. In order for our culture to experience true transformation regarding abortion, it will take all of our efforts."

Bishop Holley thanked the people for participating and encouraged them to continue building a culture of life.

The 150 people at the Mass included Martin and Caroline Begley, plus their seven children.

"We felt like we needed to be here, because our culture needs to respect the dignity of the human person, at the most fundamental level," said Caroline, a parishioner of St. Peter in Olney. "Prayer is part of the battle. It's one way that we as a whole can make an impact for the defense of human life."