

This Christmas season, focus on the good

If I was running a pro-life pregnancy center, and I was required by the new law to post a sign stating the services the center did not provide, I might post the following sign: “This center attempts in every way possible to help pregnant women to have healthy and happy babies. We are not, however, part of the abortion industry, and, consequently we neither counsel, nor participate in, the dismembering and killing of little ones in their mothers’ wombs. We believe that every baby deserves a birth day not a death day.”

On a related matter, I was dining at one of my favorite restaurants, The Double-T diner at Route 40 and Ebenezer Road. I’ve eaten at practically every Double T in the area because they serve large portions of good food at moderate prices. For special occasions I go to the Williamsburg, the Sunset or Sanders Restaurant. Okay, you might see me at McDonald’s too. But I digress. I’m not a restaurant critic!

On the place mats of the Double T are printed many advertisements. I was touched by two on this particular mat. One was an advertisement for Birthright. The other advertisement was for Our Lady of Mt. Carmel pre-school, grammar school, and high school.

I loved both advertisements. Critics of the church often claim that we are pro birth but not pro life – that we do not assist people beyond the birth of a baby. Absolutely nothing could be further from the truth. We not only have schools, but also outreach centers, food kitchens, employment centers, hospitals and hospices, and a myriad of other services. Almost all of our ministries are staffed by volunteers, or very modestly paid employees, who put their lives where there faith is.

Mother Teresa was once asked if she would join an anti-war march. She said no. She then added: “I will not join a march against war, but I will join a march for peace!” Mother Teresa didn’t waste a second of her life being against things. She simply did something to help the next person she could.

As I plead so often in columns, in sermons and in retreats, we need to focus on the good. What we focus on expands. If we focus on the good, good expands. If we focus on evil, we see more evil. When we push against evil, evil pushes back. Every war is followed by another war. The law of physics teaches us that: "For every action, there is an equal and opposite reaction."

We don't drive the darkness out of a room by cursing the darkness. We drive darkness out of the room by turning on the light.

In these days of Advent, in these final days leading up to Christmas, we realize that light has indeed come into the world, and, as John's Gospel states, the darkness did not overwhelm it. We overcome evil with good, and with love! Darkness could kill Jesus and the holy innocents, but it could not kill the light that is love.

You and I are Christophers, bearers of Christ and of the light. (A cute true story is about a little pre-school class who drew names for a Christmas gift exchange. One child's mother said to her son: "Oh, you got Christopher's name for Christmas!" The little boy looked puzzled and asked: "Does this mean that from now on everybody will call me Christopher?")

Finally, on the topic of life and children, allow me to share a prayer that a holy lady gave to me to pray on the days before Christmas and during the Christmas Season: "Dearest Baby Jesus, I kneel before you and adore you, born as both King and Savior of all people. Truly, Your Father so loved the world that he gave you to us, that if we believe in you, we will not perish, but have everlasting life. In honor of this we give gifts to each other.

Dear Heavenly Father, please bless and protect all children, including the child within us all, and bring us to heaven to live with you forever. Amen."