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**“And the Light Shines in the Darkness”**

**Talk No. 14**

held on October 7, 2010 by  
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**“Under the Protection of the Virgin Mary - 20 Years 'Helpers of Gods Precious Infants”**

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Today's Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary has for the Apostolate and mission of the Helpers of Gods Precious Infants a special significance. To appreciate why this is so, it would be beneficial briefly to remember the historical events that occasioned the Church to established this Feast. The last canonized Pope, before the canonization of Pope Saint Pius X in 1954, was Saint Pius V who was Pope from 1566-1572. Being elected shortly after the end of the Council of Trent, Pope Pius V had the difficult task of dealing not only with the negative consequences in Europe of the Reformation but also removing the abuses within the Church that unfortunately were the source of the seeds from which many of the negative reactions of the reformers, sprouted.

Before becoming Pope, Saint Pius V was a member of the Dominican Order and was known to have followed the Holy Rule of Saint Dominic with interior fervor and strict external observance while absorbing St. Dominic's great love for Mary the Mother of God and her Holy Rosary. With great reluctance he accepted the Papal dignity, being aware of the abuses in the Church that gave credence to the Reformation and that these abuses still needed in many cases to be corrected. At the same time Saint Pius V recognized that the unity of Faith, which for a thousand years had bound the peoples of Europe into a united Christendom, was now destroyed. With the birth of the principle of subjectivism in interpreting Scripture, it did not take long before the divinely instituted authority of the Church as regards doctrine and its ecclesiastical government was increasingly repudiated.

Religious chaos and civil disorder quickly followed. The Protestant churches became national churches in which the all-powerful State became Caesar in secular matters and Pope in religious matters. Emphasis on territorial boundaries and racial differences bred an exaggerated nationalism and racial hatred which for many replaced love for ones brother and sisters in Christ. A divided Europe became quickly a weaken Europe.

Saint Pius V immediately after his election as Pope, with a fervor similar to a zealous Abbot bringing about reform in a lax monastery began to treat the Papal household, every branch of Papal administration, indeed the Church in the whole City of Rome as a vast monastery that needed swift, strict, strong disciplinary action.. He summarily corrected or punished every abuse and set the ground work for a zealous informed clergy. He placed in the hands of every priest the Roman Catechism resulting from the Council of Trent and set about re-editing the Breviary and enforcing its daily recitation. Pius V wanted an informed, prayerful, pious clergy. At

the same time he was working to reclaim large areas of the Church that were cut off from Rome in Europe and Scotland.

To help in this true reform of the Church, besides Saint Pius V, God provided for the Church other leaders for the Catholic Counter Reformation, like Gregory XIII and Sixtus V, the good Popes, who immediately succeeded Saint Pius V. And of course, that extraordinary Cardinal and Archbishop of Milan, Saint Charles Borromeo who was greatly responsible for reassembling the Council of Trent in 1562 and bringing it to a conclusion in 1563. After the Council the positive impact on everyone of St. Charles Borromeo inspiring example in the Diocese of Milan of what a good Bishop should be, cannot be measured. From the lives of these men, we are reminded that no matter what the difficulty in our modern times, that God is still in charge and will provide His Church with good Popes and holy leaders which God has indeed done for us from Pope Leo XIII to Pope Benedict XVI.

But God did send a further cross to Saint Pius V during his papacy. The Pope had more than enough to do, when he became painfully conscious that he had another major problem on his hands. I said to you that a divided Europe was a weakened Europe. This was clearly recognized by the leaders in the Ottoman Empire who had superior armies and were without equal in their naval armada. The superiority of the seas was incredibly important, because ships at that time did not fly, and therefore he who ruled the sea, ruled. The Pope quickly tried to put together a Catholic armada from an alliance between himself, Philip II of Spain and the Venetians, while placing Don John of Austria as commander of the allies fleet of ships. It has been reported that someone gave the Commander, an image of Our Lady of Guadalupe to take with him onto his ship, whose help he implored when the battle was at its worst for his ships.

At this point, Pope Pius V realized there was no other earthly powers that his newly formed limited alliance could turn to, that could help weaken and divide Christian Europe from being overrun by the militant Turks. And so it was, the Pope instinctively went back to his Dominican training and began praying the Rosary and encouraging everyone else to do likewise, with the realization that Mary's intercession was there only real hope of Victory. On Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>, 1571 the day of the Battle of Lepanto, the day on which the power of the Turks on the sea was to be permanently broken, the Pope was discussing business with his Secretary, when suddenly the Pope lapsed into silence, went to his window, and opening the large shutters, and seemed lost in thought as he gazed out into space. Then, recovering himself, he turned to his Secretary and said: Let us return thanks to God. Our Armada has even now defeated the Turkish fleet." On Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> the supreme power of the Turks on the sea was broken. Saint Pius V convinced that the victory was the result of Mary's intercession, the Pope in expression of thanksgiving established the Feast of Our Lady of Victory, which later became known as the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary, since the victory was obtained primarily by praying the rosary. And so today being Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> the Church once again has us celebrate the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary. Knowledge of these historical facts is necessary in coming to understand fully why the Feast of Our Lady of the Rosary is so significant for the Helpers of God's Precious Infants mission.

As some of you are aware from the year 1967 until October of 1989, I was actively involved in every aspect of the pro-life movement in America. But any degree of success was mitigated by the realization that every poll by 1989 was showing that the majority of Americans in their thinking and actions were pro-choice or pro-abortion.

Pro-lifers were now, clearly the minority among the American people. And same forces of evil were working hard and with success to spread the same pro-choice, pro-abortion attitude quickly throughout the world. All the human efforts by pro-lifers in academic and media venues; also in the Legislative and Judicial Branch of Government, to check or delay the tidal wave of death rolling towards the shores of humanity, was not working. Indeed Pope John Paul II at a meeting in Rome in November 1998 told a group of American Bishops, that one could describe the Twenty Century, with all its wars and cruel dictators, as a Century of Blood and Tears. Then the Pope said one would hope that the Twenty-First Century would be a Springtime of Hope. But the Pope warned the Bishops, that if the new technological, Bio Chemical revolution that is now being turned on man himself, is not restricted or guided by Judaic, Christian ethical principles, then the Twenty-First Century instead of being a Springtime of Hope will prove to be an Age of Barbarism.

The threat of the aggressive Ottoman Empire to Christendom in Europe, during the pontificate of Saint Pius V, clearly was a lesser threat than is the modern threat to all humanity, of an unchecked barbaric treatment to human life especially at its weakest moments, namely at the beginning and at the end. A massive structure of sin has become institutionalized and has been put into the Laws of one Country after another, and into the Charters and Constitutions of National and International organizations. The world enslaved can no longer call for help, on a so called free world with an armada of ships or planes, that will turn back this tidal wave of death. Yet, instead of slipping into sadness and hopelessness, the Holy Spirit moved us to follow the wise example of Saint Pius V, who taught us to ask for help from a spiritual power outside the present human condition. And so after twenty-two years of pro-life activism, realizing our helplessness in the face of such an armada of modern evil, we too took our rosaries in hand and began to pray with the rosary outside the largest abortion center in New York City, on Oct. the 7<sup>th</sup> 1989 the Feast of Our Lady of Victory. In the beginning of the Book of Genesis it is sadly related to us that the culture of death started through the disobedience of a woman called Eve, who believed in the lies of Satan, and that a culture of life will only be restored, through the obedience of another woman and her divine Son, whose heel will crush the serpent's head. And so standing in front of the largest abortion clinic in New York City in prayer, we were moved to beseech the intercession and protection of the Woman, whose name is Mary, to obtain for us, poor children of Eve, struggling in this vale of tears, a Victory for Life. From that point on everything began to change for the better.

Under the protection and intercession of the Virgin Mary, the mission of the Helpers of God's Precious Infants for the past twenty-one years has been truly blessed and has flourished. The Tree of Life planted in Brooklyn on Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> 1989, within a decade quickly branched out across the United States and around the World. In the United States alone, Cardinals Mahoney in Los Angeles; O'Connor, in New York; George, in Chicago; Bevilacqua, in Philadelphia; DiNardo, in Houston; Rigali, in Philadelphia; and Keeler, in Baltimore, and more than a hundred bishops in the United States have taken part in Rosary Vigils for Life, in front of abortion sites. The format for the large Helpers' Prayer Vigil is deliberately simple to enable it to be easily repeated. The Bishop or priest after offering Mass in Church exposes the Blessed Sacrament. The rosary is started in front of the Blessed Sacrament then the Bishop or priest leads the people out of the Church praying the rosary and singing hymns between each of the decades. Some people are left in the Church to continue adoration, until we return. We

pray going to the abortion clinic or hospital, then at the site and on the way back to the Church. When the people return to the Church, benediction takes place. Everything is done under police supervision. In the year 1989 there were two-thousand two hundred abortion clinics in the United States. Now twenty- one years later, seven hundred abortion clinics remain open, meaning that two out of every three clinics have closed. The Helpers would like to believe that the Helpers praying the Rosary outside of the abortion clinics across the USA, has played no small role in this blessed victory. The battle for life still goes on, but we do know now the source of Victory.

After Cardinal Francis George, on June 26<sup>th</sup> 1999 led the Helpers Prayer Vigil, outside a Humboldt Park abortion clinic in Chicago, Illinois, the Chicago Sun Times wrote an editorial entitled 'Faith and Love Shall Overcome'. The Editorial said: "If the critics of Cardinal Francis George's involvement in a peaceful, prayerful vigil outside an abortion clinic could only hear themselves, they'd be amazed. They sound like 1960s bigots and hotheads who screamed that the clergy who fought against racism and war should go back where they belong-the pulpit. The Editorial went on to say: "So it will be whenever religious leaders challenge the Nation's conscience and make people uncomfortable by spotlighting in a peaceful, nonviolent way, the day's great moral conflicts. And there is no greater moral issue today than abortion, the killing of humans, even after they can live outside the womb. The grotesquely reasoned Roe vs. Wade Supreme Court Decision removed abortion, as a legitimate issue to be resolved by public policy debate. That left people who believe that abortion is a moral evil the same alternative faced by those in the 1960's who believed that legalized segregation was a moral evil: Go to the place of the moral evil and by your presence, shine the spotlight on it. The editorial said Cardinal George and his supporters had it right. They turned aside insult with the calming, serene sound of prayer and song. With no slogans or signs, they reached inside for something stronger than the insults hurled at them. They committed an act of faith and love that, if nourished, can blossom into a social movement that can enlighten this land, just as the abolitionist and suffrage movement did."

Cardinal George himself after the Vigil, wrote a simple, profound answer to why he participated in the Helpers Prayer Vigil. He said it was: "a normal pastoral response. The Church always accompanies the dying with prayer. People die in an abortion clinic. And it is good to pray for the living, they leave behind. It is also good to pray, when faced with tragedy: and most people, even those who regard abortion as a necessary evil, understand that abortion is a tragedy. My decision to participate was based on the track record of the group organizing the event. They promised that the only words would be prayers and that everything would be peaceful. I was asked many times: "Why are you here?" I was there because it must be said again and again, that our society cannot indefinitely sustain the playing off of a mother's freedom, against the death of her child. The country itself will eventually come apart. And I was there because no mere argument, no matter how well crafted, will convince those who sincerely believe in a right to abort a baby. What is left, along with peaceful and respectful discussion in the public forum, is prayer, in season and out of season. I was there then, along with hundreds of others, to whom I am grateful, in order to pray."

More than twenty-five years ago Eileen Egan wrote a book about Mother Teresa of Calcutta entitled 'Such a Vision of the Street.' The words of the Title are taken from

the 'Prelude' of the English poet T.S. Eliot. The more complete quote is "Such a vision of the street as the street hardly understands." Eileen Egan was making the point that many people viewing in the streets, the Sisters of Mother Teresa's Religious Order, see them as good humanitarian or social workers reaching out to the unwanted and the outcaste of society. Mother Teresa, however, with the eyes of faith saw her Sisters as Jesus doing acts of kindness to Jesus, hidden in the distressing disguise of the poor, the unwanted and the outcast. A totally different vision of the same experience.

Today many a passerby, including some pro life people, might view the Helpers outside of abortion clinics as simply pro-life protestors of legalized abortion, demonstrators or some people praying primarily to save the innocent, unwanted unborn infants, whose lives on that very day are at risk, of a violent death from the abortionist and their pro-choice, pro abortion supporters. To view the Helpers simply as people on the pro-life side vs. the pro-abortion side, in a struggle primarily to save the unborn babies, would be hardly to understand the Helpers on the street. Only with the eyes of faith, in the light of Golgotha or Calvary, can the scene on the street, or the Helpers mission, be properly understood.

May I relate or share with you a story about Joey that I feel can bring home for each of us what is the goal or challenge of the Helpers praying and counseling on the streets outside of abortion clinics. Joey after being miraculously converted at a Bowery mission from a hopeless life of addiction became a humble, loving servant of all that would come to the mission. No task was beneath him. He did everything with love. One evening at a mission prayer service, a repentant drunk came down the aisle to the altar and knelt to pray, crying out for God to help him, to change. He kept shouting, "O God, make me like Joey! Make me like Joey! Make me like Joey." The minister at the mission leaned over and said to the man, "Son, I think it would be better, if you prayed, 'Make me like Jesus!' The repentant drunk looked up at the minister, with a quizzical expression on his face and asked, "Is Jesus like Joey?" The Helpers goal is to change the hearts of the people approaching the abortion mill by letting them find, or see Jesus in us. It means we have to remove from ourselves and the group any type of presence, that the person approaching the abortion mill, would view as confrontational, judgmental or self righteous. To do this we need to pray and fast; we need the grace of God; and we need the guidance and intercession of Mary, the Mother of God, the Mother of Jesus to help us, her spiritual children in Christ, to become like Jesus.

The Helpers vision of Faith, namely of being Jesus to Jesus on the Street is based on the great mystery of Christianity, namely that the Risen Christ intends and does continue to do the work of His Father through you and me. He asks permission to live within us, and through us, to extend His mercy to those enslaved in the culture of death. The challenge of the Helpers is not to be protestors but to be Roadside or Sidewalk Contemplatives at Calvary or Golgotha. The challenge is to remove from our presence, outside of the abortion centers, anything that would prevent those going to or working in the abortion 'clinics', from experience in us the unconditional merciful love of God for them.

But we know, we are incapable of doing this, unless God gives us the power to love even our enemies, as Jesus did. But thanks be to God, God has given us the power to love those who reject us, who even hate us. The power is called the Virtue of Charity.

Thus for the Helpers involved in this struggle of restoring a culture of life, there is no longer two sides, as the Media loves to project, namely pro-life vs. pro-abortion. For the Helpers now, there is only one side. We are commissioned by God, to be faithful ambassadors of the merciful unconditional everlasting love of Christ, for all those coming to the Modern Day Golgotha or Calvary, which tragically is not far today, from where anyone of us lives. Even more important than being at the abortion 'clinic' however, is the challenge of being there in the right way. The ones whose examples teach us best, how to be at our own modern day Golgotha, remains of course, Mary, the Mother of Jesus and John, the beloved disciple and the holy women who were at the foot of the Cross and above all Jesus who hung on the Cross.

When a woman who has had an abortion asks us the question: "Could God ever truly love me again? Our response is short and simple. "Mom, God never stopped loving you." It is we who turn away from God, become enemies of God, but God never became an enemy of us. When the whole World was broken and estranged from God, in the Person of Jesus Christ, God, in His unconditional merciful love, came into the human condition and freely offered His life in our place, in reparation for our sins and those of the whole world. A great physical evil is done to the unborn aborted child but the unborn child never committed a moral evil in its short life here on earth. For me, it is clear, the child having placed no obstacle in the way of grace, in the way of the gift of divine life, the child goes directly to God. However, those involved in the abortion are committing a great moral evil that puts their eternal salvation at risk.

Following an abortion, the people involved, especially the mothers, experience low self esteem, depression and despair. Some so blinded by this culture of death, just don't appreciate the wrongness of what they are doing, until after the abortion has taken place. It is then especially that they need to experience the unconditional merciful love of God. The mission of the Helpers, indeed of any pro lifer outside of an abortion mill, is primarily to save souls, not simply to save the physical life of the unborn. It is to make present to all the unconditional love of God. That is why we teach the Helpers to be Christ to the people before and after the abortion. The people living in this culture of death, whose eternal salvation and spiritual souls are at risk, for having chosen an abortion, need our presence to experience God's merciful love outside of the abortion clinics. They need our presence even more than the unborn babies whose physical bodies only are at risk not their spiritual souls for they have not committed any moral evil. If God uses you to touch the soul of a mother, after an abortion, that is pleasing to God, one-hundred percent of the time. And since there is a fifty percent repeat rate for abortion in practically every major City, it means, if God uses you to turn the mothers heart to say she is sorry, after having had the abortion, then fifty percent of the time the next child will live. You want to save babies then save souls

Sometimes we forget that Jesus did not die alone but was surrounded by prayer, compassion and love.. At the foot of the Cross of Christ, Mary and John, Mary Magdalen and the other ladies were not talking and chatting or shouting or condemning others, as Jesus hung on the Cross but rather they were present in prayer, fasting, love and compassion. So also the unborn in their final painful hours on earth should be surrounded with prayer, compassion and love. Moreover when the women come to the abortion mill and see people really praying, they are more likely to think of the presence of God. We must be convinced that God uses this type of Prayerful Presence to change hearts which then makes the sidewalk counselors attempt to speak

to the women so much easier.

What makes the Helpers Sidewalk Counselors successful is their spiritual partners. Who are these partners? Those who pray in the large monthly prayer vigil; those who pray weekly or daily outside the abortion clinic while the counselor is trying to speak to the women coming to have an abortion. Those spiritual supporters whose duty or life commitments are unable to allow them to be physically at the site but who pray for the counselors. These are people like shut ins, working people, moms at home taking care of their children, contemplatives in their monasteries. I know when I go back to the monastery each day the Sisters want to know how they did. When I say sisters, do I get any credit, the sisters response is:” Father, you know it is prayer.” And they are right, for indeed just giving the rosary to so many mothers, outside the abortion clinic, results in them choosing life. I also ask our rosary makers to pray, as they are making the rosaries, for the people to whom the rosaries will ultimately be given. Everybody now knows the miraculous power of the rosary in turning people away from having an abortion.

A sidewalk counselor may only have forty-five seconds to a minute to speak to the woman approaching the abortion mill. You may have to deal also with so called clinic escorts hustling the pregnant women into the clinic. You may have the clinic security guard taken the material you give them out of their hands, before allowing them into the clinic. I know we have to deal with all of these obstacles What can you do under these hostile conditions in forty-five seconds. May I briefly share with you what I try to do in the forty-five seconds I have before the pregnant mother enters the clinic.

Both the administrator of the abortion center and the abortionist do not want the pregnant mothers to see what their unborn child looks like; what the abortionist will do to the child to get it out of the womb; what the child will look like after they get it out. They do not want the moms to know that there is help available for them. They definitely do not want anyone encouraging them to ask God for help in prayers or to tell them, even if they have had past abortions, that the merciful God will forgive them because, although they stopped loving God, God never stopped loving them. The challenge is to get all of this information to the pregnant woman in forty-five seconds. How does one do this? It’s not complicated.

It starts with the rosary. As the mother is approaching the abortion center, I have in my left hand a number of rosaries of different colors. I also have the pamphlets that contain information of where they can help etc. In the same left hand, I have a rubber band or two around the pamphlets. Under the rubber band I have attractive pamphlets on how to say the rosary, with the prayers and pictures of the twenty Mysteries of the rosary. Also under the rubber band I have a ten week fetal model of an unborn child. Underneath the pamphlets in my hand, I have the pamphlet ‘Did You Know’ which shows the feet of a ten week fetus and a picture of what the abortionist’s suction machine does to the ten week old unborn child. In my right hand I have my own rosaries, which I am using to pray. I walk towards the mother but stop a short distance from her, so that she is coming to me, rather than I to her.

I gently say may I speak to you for a moment. Would you take a rosary and pray for the mothers who are coming here, with real problems. The problems are real, otherwise they wouldn’t be coming here, for no mother wants to abort her child, but many moms don’t know what else to do. I tell the person that for most of the mothers

coming here, the unborn child is about ten weeks. Then I show the person the ten week fetal model under the rubber band in my hand. I tell the mother there is real help available for them by pointing out all the Life Centers listed on the front page of our pamphlet. I say, if the mothers don't get this help, then inside they will turn on the suction machine for about four minutes to take the child out of the womb. As I am saying this, I pull out from underneath the pamphlets in my hand the 'Did You Know' pamphlet that shows the feet of the ten week old child and the results of suction machine abortion on the same ten week old child. I tell the person that I say to the moms, no matter how difficult things may be, don't let anyone do this to your child. I then again put the picture under the pamphlets, while saying it is important for moms to know, that even if they have had an abortion, that the merciful God never stop loving them and is waiting for them to say, I am sorry. But for us to tell God we are sorry and to really change our way of living, we need God's help. We need to pray. And so I give them a rosary and how to say the rosary pamphlet. Finally, I say if you need help yourself mom, please use this material, if you don't, please give it someone who does. I say this as I hand the pamphlet and rosary and how to say the rosary to her, while warning her that the security guard is paid to take this material from the mothers, because if they use it, the abortion clinic will lose money. I tell them to put the material into their pocket books or pocket now. Sometimes I give them an extra pamphlet and tell them give this one to the security guard and keep this one for your self. Please try this simple approach yourself, you will be amazed at the result.

Last month in the United States and especially at Ground Zero in New York City, there was once again many commemorative ceremonies recalling the tragedy of 9/11 namely of Sept. 11<sup>th</sup> 2001, the day on which Terrorists in an unconscionable act of terror, brought down the Twin Towers in New York City and with it the deaths of thousands of innocent people and rescuers. The terrorist act has radically affected the lives of people to this day, in the United States and around the world in so many areas from traveling, trust, to War itself. On the morning of 9/11 I was praying and counseling outside of a large abortion clinic in Brooklyn. The abortion mill is located a few blocks from New York Harbor, at a point where you could look across the Harbor and easily see the Twin Towers. The wind was blowing that day from Manhattan to Brooklyn. So when the Towers came down, an incredible black cloud came over our heads. Outside the abortion mill, it became midnight at midday. On that day in New York City all activity that wasn't absolutely necessary, stopped. There was a bizarre exception, namely the killing of unborn babies continued, especially at the mill where I was counseling. Inside the abortion mill, they were actually watching the events unfold on T.V. yet the killing of the babies inside continued. Thus I could not leave the mill at that time to go to Ground Zero. I didn't get to Ground Zero until it was midnight.

Standing at Ground Zero at midnight, I felt so helpless. So I decided to pray the Rosary and as I prayed the rosary, I closed my eyes and with my eyes closed, I suddenly saw the people in the Tower getting ready for work at 9 a.m. Some were getting a drink of water, others a cup of coffee, all feeling safe and secure inside their office. Then I saw the terrorist plane breaking into their secure quarters and exploding like a great bomb with the people in the office having no place to hide, no place to flee.. Then still standing at midnight at Ground Zero, I saw not the people in the Towers, but I saw a womb with an unborn child inside, feeling so safe and secure and suddenly breaking through the wall of the womb was this terrorist object, the



instrument of the abortionist, with the child having no place to hide, no place to flee from this terrorist instrument. When I opened my eyes at midnight at Ground Zero, it became absolutely clear to me that Ground Zero is On Going. Be not afraid then to go Golgotha, to the abortion clinic, to Ground Zero near you, to rescue the unborn children. Be not afraid to stand there in prayer for you never stand alone but you stand there in this battle for life as those at the battle of Lepanto, under the protection of our Lady of Victory, Our Lady of the Rosary. The unborn children need rescuers today. Let us not today, keep the unborn children waiting any longer, otherwise, for many, there will be no tomorrow.

See also: <http://helperslibrary.info/text>