



# RELIEF

Respect Every Life In Every Family

A bi-monthly pro-life newsletter

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# LIFE IS PRECIOUS CHERISH IT



*There are two ways to live your life. One is as though nothing is a miracle. The other is as though everything is a miracle.*

*- Albert Einstein*



# MY VERY FIRST MONTHS

*Life is a miracle. In this issue, we take you through a journey. A journey through life before birth.*

## CONCEPTION

I'm ready for life from now on. Tiny I may be but no one can cease to be amazed at my power at this stage.

At 10 days, I exhibit a dramatic display of hormone power. I stop mother's menstrual periods and from then on, control her body completely. At 18 days, my heart begins to beat. By 21 days, my heart pumps blood through a closed circulatory system.

## FOURTH WEEK

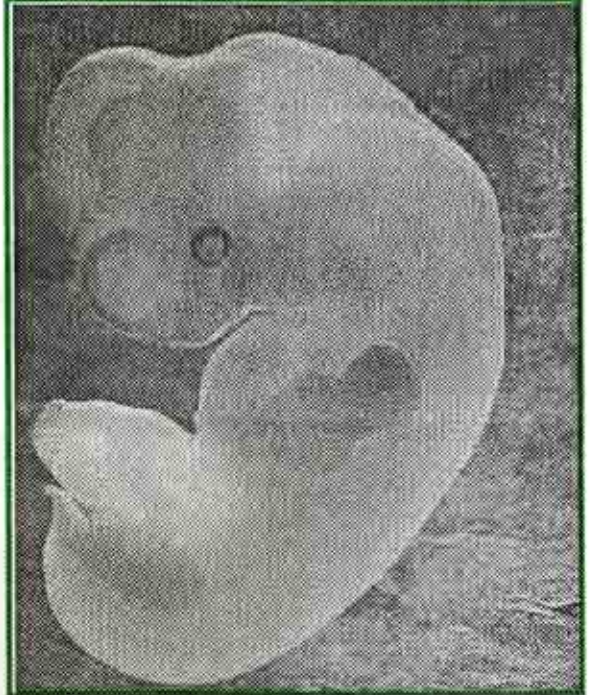
I'm about 1 cm long now. I'm beginning to develop eyes, ears, mouth, nose, kidneys and a liver as well. My arm and leg buds have delivered. Soon, I'll have full-fledged limbs.

## AT SIX WEEKS



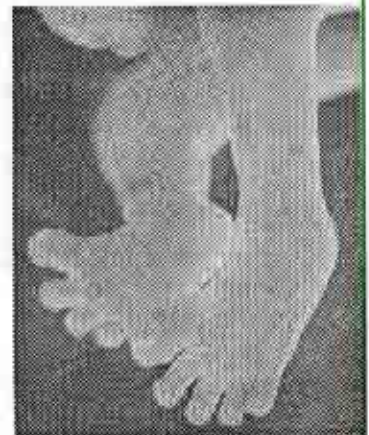
I've started moving though it's not very obvious now. And this is when my brain begins to function.

## AT FIVE WEEKS



## EIGHTH WEEK

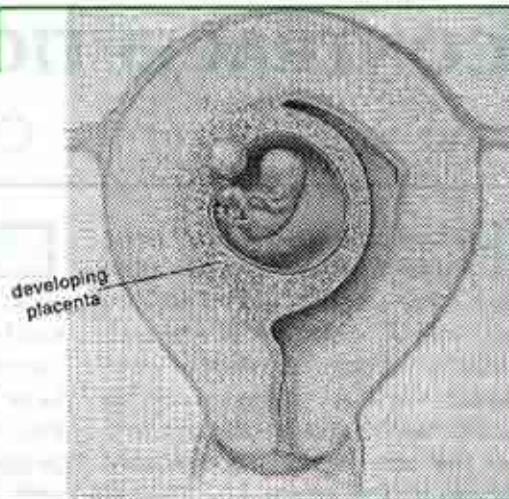
I'm now 4 cm long. My skeleton is beginning to form. I have hands and feet and I begin to move. My various body systems begin to function. What's more, you can even measure my brain waves. I've started responding to touch too. If you prick my arms or legs with a pin, I'll pull away. I can grab an object and swim with a natural swimmer's stroke.





## TENTH WEEK

My body structure is now complete. I lie quite comfortably in a fluid-filled sac – they call it the chorionic vesicle. This will later develop into the placenta which will cushion me during my stay here. A body stalk connects me to the chorionic vesicle. Through this stalk, I receive my nourishment from the rich blood supply in the endometrium (the lining of the uterus). This body stalk will develop into the umbilical cord. My toes and fingers are forming. I can suck my thumb. I'm waiting for my eyelids to develop.



## TWELFTH WEEK



I am now 8 cm long and you can even tell what sex I am. I've developed my unique fingerprints and now have finger and toe nails. I can move, I can kick and even make a fist. I begin to develop facial characteristics that resemble my parents'. I can swallow, digest, urinate, pass tiny liquid bowels, sleep and awake, taste, hear and feel pain.

## 14<sup>th</sup> WEEK

From now on, they call me a foetus, not an embryo. I begin to look more and more like you. Though my head is still larger than the rest of me, its pace of growth slows down. My arms and legs lengthen, my fingernails begin to appear and external reproductive organs develop. By now, I measure three inches from my head to my buttock.

## 20<sup>th</sup> WEEK

I am now 9 inches long. I begin to get eyelashes and hair.

## READY FOR THE WORLD

At seven months, I measure 14 inches and weigh about 2.5 pounds. By the time I'm ready to take on the world at 9 months or 40 weeks, I will have tripled my weight. Then begins my mother's labour pains. Here I come now....





# CONTRACEPTION IS INTRINSICALLY EVIL

And that is why the Catholic Church says it is always wrong

Before addressing the issue raised in this article, we must take into account that there are two ethical systems. These are: situational ethics, which goes under various names such as contextualism and proportionalism, on the one hand, and absolutist ethics on the other.

Situational ethics, which the Catholic Church rejects, claims that there are no intrinsically evil acts. According to situational ethics, the act supposedly derives its morality, as good or bad, depending upon whether there are sufficiently good reasons for positing it as a so-called "lesser evil" in a particular situation. However, the "reasons" that situational ethics considers for positing an act are purely materialistic. It ignores any spiritual values that transcend temporal considerations, such as taking into account a 'destiny beyond death'. In sharp contrast, absolutist ethics affirms that no one may ever perform an intrinsically evil act even to save one's own life or the lives of family members, etc.

Absolutist ethics is based on the following fundamental truth: God, the Unchangeable and Infinite Being, the Absolute and Eternal Order, is reflected in the perennial truths of the created order. Examples of such perennial truths are the following: '2 + 2 = 4'; 'the shape of a square can never be the same as that of a circle'; and 'abortion, rape, etc., are inherently evil acts (sins) that can never be morally justified'.

Unlike the relativistic (i.e., atheistic) and materialistic situational ethics, absolutist ethics respects the laws of the Absolute Who has created human beings for a destiny beyond death. In absolutist ethics, the supreme value that leads to the fulfilled life beyond death is love. To love truly one must be willing even to lay down one's life to

Fr. Lawrence Abello, S.J.

avoid evil always and to do good as much as is reasonable possible'. Temporal values, such as survival, have only a relative value, that is, they are values only if they can be pursued in a way that is consistent with love. Thus, 'the end does not justify the means'. If a person obtains temporal values by, knowingly and willingly, using means that inherently violate the supreme value of love, such a person is turning away from the path that leads to a fulfilled destiny beyond death.

**Contraception is, by its very nature, intrinsically evil, i.e., against love.**

Since contraception (contraception) involves a self-manipulation to destroy the power to conceive, it necessarily turns attention to the self. Therefore, contraception is inherently a narcissistic act that militates against the very meaning of the marital act, which is to turn the attention to the spouse in a total self-giving that expresses conjugal love. The fundamental difference between natural family planning and contraception is that the former involves no self-manipulation. To avoid conception, a couple practising natural family planning perform the marital act during the naturally

*Contraception is inherently a narcissistic act that militates against the very meaning of the marital act, which is to turn the attention to the spouse in a total self-giving that expresses conjugal love.*

occurring, infertile phases. Such a marital act retains its true nature as an expression of total self-giving, without manipulation, as does the marital act during pregnancy or in old age when, likewise, there is no possibility of a fertile act.

Furthermore, being an act done to oneself, contraception demands neither communication nor cooperation, but both of these are necessarily present in natural family planning that, by its nature, is a mutual planning. In the case of a couple practising contraception, communication and cooperation can exist, but these positive elements exist in spite of contraception, not because of it. For example, donning a condom is a self-manipulation that does not demand communication and cooperation. The same can be said about all other forms of contraception. Moreover, it is irrelevant whether the contraceptive act is posited before, during, or after the sexual act. What affects the marital act is the relationship of the spouses. When a sexual act occurs in a context that has an intrinsic element, like contraception, which turns attention to the self, it can never be a loving act.

## Connected evils

Contraception logically leads to other sexual aberrations. For example, if it is morally permissible for a husband to ejaculate in a balloon (a condom) in the vagina, why would it not be morally permissible for him to ejaculate in a balloon placed in his wife's mouth or anus? A so-called "need" (à la situational ethics) to practise oral or anal sex arises if the wife suffers from irremediable dyspareunia (painful vaginal sexual relations). Moreover, if a society accepts oral and anal sexual relations between spouses, why



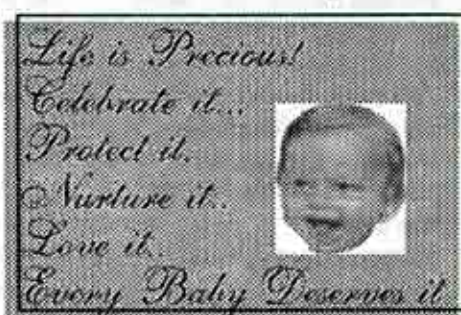
should such a society object to oral and anal sexual relations between two men who cannot relate to women (homosexuals)? Besides, not only does contraception destroy the procreative meaning of the marital act but, as a self-manipulation, it also destroys the unitive (love) meaning. Consequently, contraception reduces sex to mere pleasure which leads, in turn, to extramarital relations — there is no need to be married to derive pleasure. Finally, being a self-manipulative act, contraception leads to sexual addiction — cf. the literature published by 'Sexoholics Anonymous'. In turn, the addictive, irresponsible use of sex leads to many unwanted pregnancies in a society and, thereby, to abortion — not to speak of abortifacients pawned off as contraceptives, such as the 'Copper T' and oral tablets.

If a couple practising contraception face no major problem with their marriage, this is not because they practise contraception, but in spite of it. In other words, their harmony and love are due to positive factors in their marriage that outweigh the harmful effects of contraception so that these effects do not manifest themselves in individual cases. But the evil effects of contraception will manifest themselves in society — cf. the previous paragraph. Moreover, there are evils following from contraception other than those mentioned above. One such evil, resulting from disrespect for natural law, is the opposite of contraception: begetting a child in a way that involves the destruction of the unitive (love) meaning of the conjugal act as happens in artificial insemination, 'in vitro' fertilization, and now in cloning.

**The Catholic Church's teaching confirms that contraception is intrinsically evil**

Pope John Paul II expresses the intrinsic evil of contraception thus: "When couples, by means of

contraception, separate these two meanings (i.e., the unitive and procreative meanings) ... they manipulate and degrade human sexuality ... by altering its value of total self-giving. Thus the innate language that expresses the total, reciprocal self-giving of husband and wife is overlaid, through contraception, by an objectively contradictory language, namely, that of not giving oneself totally to the other. This leads ... to a falsification of the inner truth of conjugal love, which is called upon to give itself in personal totality. When, instead, by means of recourse to phases of



infertility, the couple respect the inseparable connection between the unitive and procreative meanings of human sexuality, they are acting as ministers of God's plan and they benefit from their sexuality according to its original dynamism of total self-giving without manipulation or alteration" (**Familiaris Consortio**, No. 32).

At a prayer breakfast in the United States, Mother Teresa expressed very succinctly why contraception is intrinsically evil, i.e., inherently against love. She stated it as follows:

"I know that couples have to plan the family and for that there is natural family planning. The way to plan the family is by natural family planning, not by contraception. In destroying the power to give life, through contraception, a husband or wife is doing something to self. This turns the attention to self and so it destroys the gift of love in him or in her. In loving, the husband and wife must turn the attention to the other as happens in natural family planning, and not to self, as happens in contraception. Once that living love is destroyed by contraception, abortion follows very easily."

Some people might object that natural family planning will never be accepted widely enough to control population. Aware of this, Mother Teresa also said the following at the same prayer breakfast: "I also know that there are great problems in the world — that many spouses do not love each other enough to practise natural family planning. We cannot solve all the problems in the world, but let us never bring in the worst problem of all, and that is to destroy love. And this is what happens when we tell people to practise contraception."

**Conclusion**

From the above, it is clear that contraception, a self-manipulation that destroys the love of the conjugal act, is an intrinsic evil that, by its nature, is against the supreme value of love. Therefore, in the absolutist system of ethics, upheld in its entirety only by the Catholic Church, contraception can never be practised for any reason whatever. Relating contraception to conscience, no one can judge to what extent someone else is violating his or her conscience, that is, willingly doing what he or she should know is wrong. But anyone, who knows that contraception is intrinsically evil (as the Catholic Church teaches) and still willingly has recourse to it, for any reason whatever, is committing a serious sin. The marital act, through which the future of humanity passes, is very sacred, as it is the sign of God's love for his people and, for Christians, the sign of Christ's love for his Church. The more sacred the reality, the more serious is the sin of the one who desecrates it. Contraception is a desecration of the marital act and anyone who KNOWS, or SHOULD KNOW, the objective evil of contraception and still WILLINGLY engages in it, is committing an act that is inherently and gravely against love. Such an act is called a 'mortal sin' and turns the person away from God and from a fulfilled destiny beyond death.



## RFLI PROGRAMMES AT A GLANCE JUNE - JULY 2002

03/06/02 to 05/06/02	Sacred Heart Boys' School Ashoknagar	Preciousness of life, Growing-up, Respect for life, Self-esteem, Friendship, Self-confidence	Std X - 90 Std IX - 120 Std VIII - 180	
18/06/02 19/06/02 21/06/02 to 23/06/02	CSST Noviciate, Whitefield RFLI Centre	Personhood, Respect for life, Human Sexuality, Social evils Youth-to-Youth training programme - Basic Counselling Skills and Peer Pressure Reversal Techniques	21 Novices 20 Youth	
22/06/02	St. Don Bosco Center	Sex Education, Chastity, NFP, Breast Feeding	62 Ladies 26 Girls 30 Formators	
04/07/02 to 06/07/02	Siddhi Vihara	Preciousness of life, Celibacy, Communication, Human Sexuality, Values, Respect for life		
08/07/02 to 11/07/02	Stella Maris High School 4 days	Preciousness of life, Human Sexuality, Adolescence, Chastity	Std X - 174 Std IX - 180 Std 8,9, & 10 (K) - 168 Std VIII - 175 170 Students	
13/07/02	Lourdes High School, Cubbonpet.	Growing up, Respect for life, Preciousness of life, Human Sexuality, Friendship, Values		
14/07/02 15/07/02	Satya Seva, Venkateshpuram RFLI Centre	Family, Relationship, Girl child, Film shows Sharing of Respect for life ministry	5 Couples 25 Persons 10 GSC lay associates 53 Students	
16/07/02	St. Agnes' Higher Pry. School, Museum Road	Preciousness of life, Self-esteem, Adolescence, Friendship		
17/07/02 to 19/07/02	St. Teresa's High School Chamrajpet	Preciousness of life, purity, Self-esteem, Human Sexuality Abortion, child abuse HIV/AIDS	Std Xa & b - 180 Std Xc - 95 Std Xd (K) - 91	
20/07/02	St. Don Bosco Center	Respect for life, Self-esteem, Self-confidence, Unique person, Youth-to-Youth training program Basic Counselling skills contd.	35 Girls 71 Ladies 18 Youth	
21/07/02	RFLI Centre			
23/07/02 24/07/02	Sacred Heart H. School	Preciousness of Life, Human Sexuality, Chastity, Social evils, Role play, Self-confidence	Std X - 95	
25/07/02 26/07/02	Sacred Heart H. School	Preciousness of Life, Chastity, Social evils, Role play, Self- confidence, Human Sexuality	Std IX - 110	
28/07/02	St. Joseph's Evening College	Human Sexuality, Friendship, Values, Self-esteem	130 Students	
28/07/02	St. Martha's College of Nursing	Marriage, Divorce, Responsible Parents	200 Nurses	
31/07/02	Mathrusri Ambedkar Institute of Nursing	Human Sexuality, Chastity, Communication, Friendship Homosexuality, gay agenda	300 Students	



Video films are  
screened  
regularly  
in the RFLI  
room.

### HELPLINES

**SR. ANNUNCIATA**  
Good Shepherd Convent  
☎ : 2246806

**SR. NIRMALA RAJ**  
St. Michael's Convent  
☎ : 5282811

**FAMILY WELFARE CENTRE**  
☎ : 5587674

**VISHWAS**  
☎ : 6634489

**ABALA ASHRAYA SANGHA**  
☎ : 2869263

**HELPING HAND**  
☎ : 3535787/3535766

**CHILD HELPLINE** ☎ : 1098

**MRS. PHYLLIS FARIAS**  
☎ : 5472241

**Dr. BARBRA NAIDU**  
☎ : 5586622

**SNEHADAN**, Carmelaram  
HIV/AIDS ☎ : 8439516

**Ms. MIRIAM IMAM** Rel-scan  
☎ : 5448155

**Mrs. NORMA LOBO**  
☎ : 5462596

**Mrs. LILY PAUL** ☎ : 5321200

**ASHA FOUNDATION**  
☎ : 3543333



## **ISLAM & SEXUAL VALUES**

**I**slam is a very simple religion with clearly laid out rules and regulations. It was revealed in the sixth century AD to a simple man of semi-noble birth, who had earlier been a trader. Muhammad (upon whom be peace) is acknowledged as the last in a series of 1,24,000 prophets who were sent down by God throughout history. This long list of prophets includes Adam, Abraham, Moses and Jesus. Thus, the message that was brought by Muhammad was a confirmation of the word of God that was sent down repeatedly over the ages.

Islam means "Submission to the Will of God", and a Muslim is one who has submitted himself. Muslims believe that God spoke to Muhammad periodically, and the message of God that was recited by the latter was recorded verbatim, eventually being compiled into the Koran (literally, the Book). The Koran is thus the Bible of the Muslims and it has remained unchanged over the past 14 centuries.

The daily life of a Muslim is governed by the Koran, and whatever answers are not found in this book, are sought through the Hadith (or traditions of the Prophet Muhammad). Following the Koran and Hadith in letter and spirit makes it reasonably easy for a practising Muslim to find a way of life that is simple, pure and straightforward.

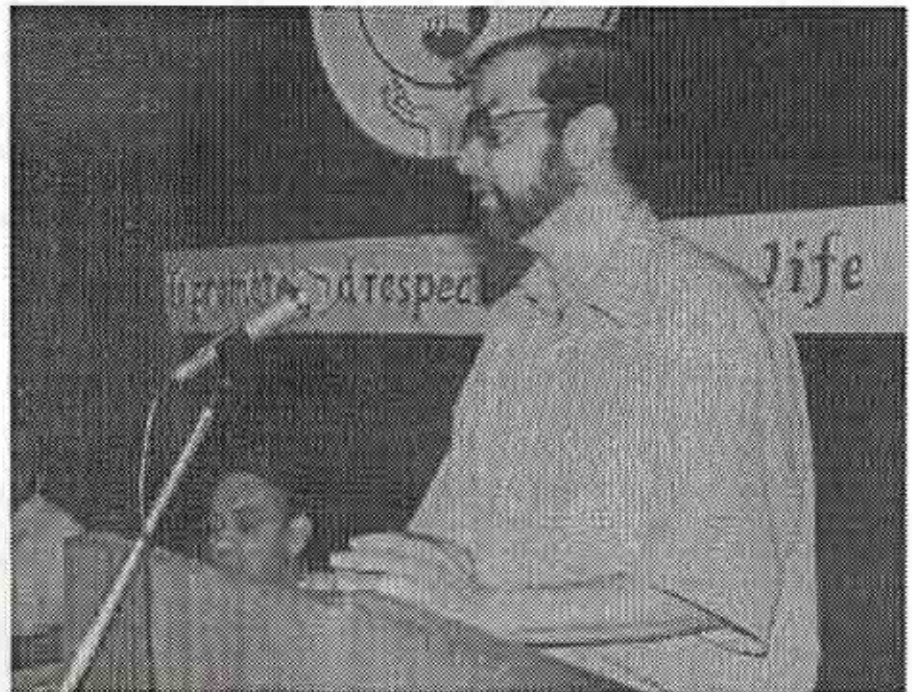
### **MORALS AND VALUES**

Islam lays a great deal of stress on an upright and moral life. It condemns sin in very strict terms, and prescribes very harsh punishment for the wrong-doer. Matters of man-woman relationship and sexual values are also laid down very clearly and in a manner upholding the highest of ethics.

In Islam, marriage is a civil contract between a man and woman. It is a simple ceremony in which the couple agrees to certain conditions in order to share their lives together. The Koran has laid down clear guidelines on the responsibilities of man and woman. How they should interact, and also laws pertaining to paternity. Generally, a Muslim marriage is conducted by a Kazi (magistrate) who is appointed by the state government, and it is recorded in the State Board of Wakfs which is a quasi government department. However, the marriage ceremony can be held without the Kazi in the presence of two witnesses and an "advocate", generally a senior member of the bride's family.

with the harshest of punishment. The underlying principle is to have an organized and disciplined society, following the laws of the land and of God. Free mixing of the sexes, promiscuity and temporary liaison between man and woman is strictly frowned upon.

Islam has also laid down rigid laws on unnatural sex such as homosexuality or masturbation. In an Islamic society, there is no place for prostitution, free sex or oppression of women. In the same vein, abortion and family planning is not permitted.



At the same time, divorce has also been simplified and can be obtained from the Kazi without too many elaborate rituals, only requiring three months to reconsider the decision to part. The purpose of making marriage and divorce so simple and easy is to ensure that no illicit relationships take place outside the sanctity of marriage. Islam severely frowns upon any extra-marital relationship and condemns it

Islam is a way of life. It strives to nurture a society that is God-fearing and just. It respects life in all forms and upholds the sanctity of the sexual union between man and woman, strictly within the ambit of responsibility and maturity. In this, it concurs with most civilized religions of the world, and aims to bring in harmony and a happy family as the core of peaceful society.



### Is the 'Population Explosion' over?

The UN had convened a meeting of demographers to discuss whether the fertility of developing countries like India and Brazil will continue to fall, perhaps even reaching the extremely low fertility rates found in many developed nations. The Population Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs concluded that it is altogether likely that the fertility of much of the world will sink well below replacement level, which is 2.1 children per woman. In fact, the Population Division reported at the meeting that, "before 2050, 60 per cent of the [world] population will be projected to have below-replacement fertility."

**Life is a creation, not a commodity, says Bush**  
President Bush gave the following videotaped speech to the 2002 NRLC Convention"

"I am honored to join all of my friends at the National Right to Life Committee as you gather for your 30<sup>th</sup> annual convention. This organization serves a great cause. For nearly 30 years, the NRLC has been a strong and important voice on behalf of the unborn.

"Today, there are more than 3,000 local affiliates of this noble organization; they represent all 50 states and people from both political parties. More importantly, they represent a simple, yet profound, ideal that all human life is sacred and deserves protection in all its stages. That is why my administration opposes partial birth abortion and public funding for abortion, why we support teen abstinence and crisis pregnancy programmes, adoption and parental notification laws, and why we're against all forms of human cloning.

"We live on the brink of a brave new world. As science seeks new ways to improve human life, we must ensure that it is done in a way that protects human dignity. Advances in biomedical technology must never come at the expense of human conscience. As we seek what is possible, we must always ask what is right.

"We must not forget that even the most noble ends do not justify all means. Therapies developed from adult stem cells are already helping suffering people. And I support increasing the research budget of the NIH.

The RESPECT FOR LIFE, INDIA is a non-profit, secular organisation of people from all walks of life, united in a common goal - which is to promote life in all its stages-from conception to natural death, and to act against all that would lessen human dignity.

RFLI believes that every human is precious and unique in the eyes of God and the human family.

The association is concerned with issues like Abortion, Child Labour, Drug Addiction, Alcoholism, Suicide, Battered Wives, Dowry Deaths, the Plight of the Disabled, Euthanasia and AIDS.

For more information call 2246806, or write to us at the address given alongside.

At the same time, I strongly support and I urge Congress to pass a comprehensive law banning all human cloning. Human cloning is deeply troubling to me and to most Americans. Life is a creation, not a commodity.

**"Our children are gifts to be loved and protected, not products to be designed and manufactured on human embryo farms.** Allowing cloning would be taking a significant step toward a society in which human beings are grown for spare body parts and children are engineered to custom specifications. And this is not acceptable. So I will continue to work with you on these important issues. These are the ways we can create, what Pope John Paul II has called a "Culture of Life"

"I salute all of you gathered for the National Right to Life Convention. May God bless you and all you do. And may God bless America."

### I'D JUST LIKE TO SAY

Thank you for your RELIEF newsletter. I have been reading the newsletter from the past 3 years and I must say you are doing commendable service by making people aware of certain heart wrenching issues which mankind is mindlessly indulging in.

Please find enclosed the feedback form. Although the topics covered are adequate, it would be all the more educative if topics like adoption, child labour and cruelty to man by man etc are written about. It would also be nice to read about philosophy of life in poetry. I shall write a few articles for the newsletter and also send to you a small contribution, shortly.

Thank you once again for your concern towards life. The world needs many many people like you.

**Latha Senali**  
(Junior Training Officer, SAITC)

**We welcome your comments, reactions and responses to the articles in this issue of RELIEF. Do send in your own articles, letters & testimonies to the address given below.**

### BOOK-POST

#### RFLI

C/o Good Shepherd Convent,  
Museum Road,  
Bangalore - 560 025,  
Karnataka, INDIA.