

# THE ERIE ECHO

*"voice for life"*

Vol. XXXVII No. 1

www.peopleforlife.org

January 2009

## Meet Ramesh Ponnuru

*"You'll love Ramesh!" – Jacki Ragan, National Right to Life Director of State Organizational Development*

Ramesh Ponnuru will be the main speaker at People for Life's annual Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast on Saturday, January 17. The event will be held in Erie at the Ambassador Banquet & Conference Center.

Mr. Ponnuru is a Senior Editor of *National Review Magazine* and author of *The Party of Death*, published in 2006.

Of Asian Indian descent, Ramesh Ponnuru grew up in Prairie Village, Kansas. He graduated high school at age 16 and went on to Princeton University, graduating summa cum laude with a B.A. in history.

Ponnuru has published articles in numerous newspapers including the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, the *Wall Street Journal*, the *Financial Times*, *Newsday*, and the *New York Post*. He has also written for *The Weekly Standard*, *Policy Review*, *The New Republic*, *First Things*, *Reason* and other leading publications. He has appeared on CNN's *Inside Politics*, NBC's *The McLaughlin Group*, MSNBC's *Buchanan & Press* and *Donahue*, CNBC's *Kudlow & Cramer*, PBS's *The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer*, CSPAN's *Washington Journal*, Comedy Central's *Politically Incorrect*, Fox News, and NPR's *Morning Edition*.

Ponnuru has been a fellow at the Institute of Economic Affairs in London and

a media fellow at Stanford University's Hoover Institution.

His book *The Party of Death* examines abortion and euthanasia and how "pro-choice" activists have manipulated the political parties, the judicial system, and the mainstream media to advance their agenda. As the Evangelical leader Charles Colson has observed, the book is a "carefully researched and rigorously argued work [that] skillfully rebuts the seductive arguments of America's merchants of death."

Dr. Robert George, the well-known McCormick Professor of Jurisprudence at Princeton, has described Ponnuru's history thesis as "superb" and "the kind of work one expects from a young professor." The thesis focused on a friend-of-the-court brief filed by 281 (evidently pro-abortion) historians in the *Webster v. Reproductive Health Services* abortion case that was heard by the U.S. Supreme Court. Ponnuru maintained that the brief seriously misrepresented historical fact and that it actually contradicted material that was previously published by many of the historians who signed the brief.

The thesis was seen as bold and courageous not only because it challenged pronouncements of the academic elite, but because some of the historians that Ponnuru took to task were currently teaching right there at Princeton.

"I'm very proud that he was my student," said Dr. George. "He's a brilliant



PHOTO BY MICHAEL RONQUILLO

### Ramesh Ponnuru

young man, not only a person of the highest intellectual gifts but also one of integrity and personal rectitude. He is not afraid to criticize his own side.... He's extremely fair-minded."

Ponnuru lives in Washington D.C. with his wife April and young daughter Mary.

Copies of *The Culture of Death* will be on sale at the Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast, and Mr. Ponnuru has graciously agreed to sign autographs.

Read more about the Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast on page 2.

## Erie March & Motorcade for Life

The annual Erie March & Motorcade for Life will take place on January 10, 2009. It will be a local observance of the 36th anniversary of the *Roe v. Wade* and *Doe v. Bolton* Supreme Court decisions, which gave our nation the most extreme abortion policies in the Western World.

Set aside an hour or so to be part of this urgent call for real CHANGE on behalf of our nation's unborn children. Invite everyone you can think of to march with you.

Everyone who is able to march is encouraged to do so, but for those who would have difficulty walking the distance a Motorcade will follow the marchers.

The March will begin at the Perry

### Caution: WINTER WEATHER

Marchers should come prepared for winter weather conditions with warm clothing and warm, non-slip boots. The City of Erie does a good job clearing streets and sidewalks for us, but some snow and ice is to be expected.

Square Gazebo in downtown Erie at 11:00 am. All participants should arrive at least 15 minutes early.

Parade marshals will begin setting up the Motorcade at 10:30 am. A line of vehicles will form along the north side of South Park Row. (South Park Row is the one-way, westbound street on the south side of Perry Square.) Drivers should turn on their emergency flashers upon arrival to identify their vehicles as part of the Motorcade. Red ribbons will also be used for this purpose.

continued on page 3

# Annual Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast

People for Life's 31st Annual Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast will be held on Saturday, January 17 at 9 am. We are excited to be at a new location this year, the Ambassador Banquet & Conference Center on Peach Street just north of I-90. The doors will open and our pro-life displays will be ready to browse at 8:00 am.

We are very happy to be hosting an incredible guest speaker, *National Review Magazine* Senior Editor Ramesh Ponnuru.

For tickets, mail \$12 per person (\$7.50 for ages 3-10; no charge for kids under 3) to People for Life or visit either of our two Erie offices.

Also this year, high school senior Joseph Caulfield will present the very impressive

speech that earned him a trip to the state finals in the National Right to Life High School Oratory Contest last spring. The speech is based on an essay Joseph wrote that took first place in the statewide 2008 Student Essay Contest sponsored by the PA Pro-Life Federation.

Erie Catholic Bishop Donald Trautman has made plans to attend and promised to share a few words with us as well.

Free babysitting with entertaining activities for children of all ages will be available during the speaking portion of the program. Parents are invited to take advantage of this service so they are better able to devote their full attention to the keynote message while the kids are also enjoying themselves.

A large selection of pro-life literature and promotional materials, including a new version of the famous Precious Feet lapel pin, will be on display before and after the program. Available for the very first time,

the new Precious Feet are enhanced with a touch of color (choice of pink, pastel blue, or white).

## Business and Professional Sponsor Listings

The printed program for the Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast will include sponsor listings for local businesses and professionals. Listings are available at levels of \$10, \$25, \$50, \$75, and \$100 (Bronze, Silver, Gold, Platinum, and Diamond).

Sponsors will also be eligible for a listing and link on our website, [www.peopleforlife.org](http://www.peopleforlife.org).

Please help spread the word to pro-life business people and other pro-life professionals!

For more information or a sponsorship form, call (814) 882-1333 or e-mail [office@peopleforlife.org](mailto:office@peopleforlife.org).

# March for Life Bus Trip

The annual Washington, DC March for Life will take place on January 22, two days after the inauguration of Barack Obama.

Plan now to march in DC to show the new President, as well as the new 111th Congress, that Americans really do care about their unborn brothers and sisters.

People for Life has chartered three 56-passenger motor coaches for our 36th annual March for Life Bus Trip. As this newsletter goes to press, about half the seats have already been taken, so make your reservations as soon as possible.

People for Life has sponsored a successful Bus Trip every year since the first March for Life in 1974. That year, the marchers numbered about 20,000. At least ten times that many are expected this year.

We will board the buses at St. George Church, 5145 Peach St. on Wednesday evening, January 21 at 11:00 pm. There will be a brief stop at the I-79 Edinboro Exit to pick up marchers from that area, including a group of students from the University. We will arrive in Washington, DC at approximately 7:30 am Thursday morning. A few hours will be available for sightseeing.

Many people choose to visit points of pro-life interest such as the March for Life Convention headquarters; National Right to Life headquarters; the U.S. Holocaust Museum; and (a favorite destination for tens of thousands of Roman Catholic marchers) the National Basilica on the campus of the Catholic University of America, a virtual beehive of pro-life activity that morning.

The official March for Life program begins at noon with a Rally on the National Mall at 7th Street, between the U.S. Capitol and the Washington Monument. The March itself begins at approximately 1:15 pm, following Constitution Avenue to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Members of Silent No More, a national pro-life organization made up of women who have had abortions, will gather on the steps of the Supreme Court at 3:30 pm and present testimonies about their own abortion experiences as the marchers are passing by.

When they finish the March many people will take time to visit their senators and representatives in the nearby House and Senate office buildings. Many legislators set aside a generous amount of time to spend with the marchers. People for Life provides the times and locations of any meetings that have been scheduled.

The return trip begins at 5:00 pm. We will make a quick stop for dinner at a Prime Outlets food court just off the Interstate at Hagerstown, MD and return to Erie at approximately 1:00 am Friday morning.

We hope you will join us for this very important March for Life. Anyone who has attended the March will tell you it is a moving experience and one that will always be remembered.

## Needed: Bus Trip Sponsors

Due to the current economic situation, a larger-than-usual number of deserving students and families will be in need of some financial help in order to attend the March for Life this year. Despite increases in our costs, we have held the price per bus seat to \$40, same as last year. Nevertheless \$40 can be a significant obstacle for someone on a tight budget, even for

someone with a strong desire to "march for life."

Please consider being a March for Life sponsor. In some cases, even a partial sponsorship of \$10 or \$20 could make the difference between someone marching in DC or having to stay home.

## Freedom of Choice Act

Everyone probably knows by now that the *Freedom of Choice Act* (FOCA) is the most radical and dangerous pro-abortion legislation ever introduced in Congress and that Barack Obama, a cosponsor of this bill, cannot wait to sign it into law.

Although FOCA is only one of many anti-life bills that we will have to fight during the next four years, no bill is likely to be more dangerous.

Now is the time to start lobbying our federal legislators in opposition to FOCA.

Remember, whether you are communicating by phone, e-mail, or conventional mail, always provide your  
continued on page 3

## two ways to make... BREAKFAST AND BUS TRIP RESERVATIONS

### 1. MAIL YOUR CHECK

People for Life, Inc.  
PO Box 1126 / Erie, PA 16512

### 2. VISIT ONE OF OUR OFFICES

Downtown...1611 Peach St., Suite 321  
Open 9 to 5, Monday through Friday  
Main Office...1625 W. 26th St.  
Call for open hours.

Call (814) 882-1333 or go online for more information about our January Activities.

[www.peopleforlife.org](http://www.peopleforlife.org)

**FROM PAGE 1  
March & Motorcade**

In recent years the March had been 24 blocks long, traveling all the way from Perry Square to 18th Street where it would pass by the American Women's Services abortion facility before returning to Perry Square. This January, that distance will be reduced to 10 blocks in the hope that this will encourage many more people to participate.

AWS has been dormant for almost two years. If and when it reopens, the March will be rerouted accordingly once again.

After an invocation and brief opening remarks, the marchers will proceed west on West 6th Street to Sassafra, south to West 10th Street, east to State Street, then north on State back to Perry Square, where there will be a brief Memorial Service at the Gazebo. The March & Motorcade will pass by several significant landmarks including the County Courthouse, the Federal Courthouse, and Erie City Hall.

The Memorial Service will conclude by

12:30 pm at the latest.

**Student Volunteers**

High school and college students are encouraged to check with People for Life about volunteer opportunities. We can offer a variety of projects to choose from and flexible hours. Students are welcome to call Tim at (814) 882-1333 to see if we can provide an assignment that matches their individual talents, interests, and/or community service requirements.

**People for Life Membership**

As we begin a new year, strengthen your commitment to the pro-life cause by joining People for Life or renewing your current membership. A membership form with all the information is provided below.

Please also consider an extra donation to support our ongoing projects, such as pro-life outreach at local community events. Our record 13 events in 2008 required us to spend—invest, that is—a considerable amount of money, but we are certain that the results were well worth cost.

For the latest information about all of our upcoming *Roe v. Wade* anniversary activities please monitor...

**www.peopleforlife.org**  
and People for Life's  
**E-Mail Updates**

To receive E-Mail Updates, send a subscribe request to [office@peopleforlife.org](mailto:office@peopleforlife.org)

**FROM PAGE 2  
Freedom of Choice Act**

name, address, and telephone number and request a written response. This will, at a minimum, help ensure that your message is formally noted and tallied.

Your message can be very simple: "I'm pro-life. I acknowledge the basic scientific fact that human life begins at conception, and I strongly support LEGAL protection for unborn children and all vulnerable human lives. I am urging you to OPPOSE the *Freedom of Choice Act*."

*Memorials*

*Given by*

Ed & Jean Hammer  
Ed & Jean Hammer  
Theresa Dworaczyk  
Jean Hughes  
Bernard R. Graf  
Ed & Jean Hammer  
Mr. & Mrs. James Yadeski  
Bill & Ann Seelinger

*In Memory of*

Patricia Baginski  
Irene Chapin  
Ambros & Rosie Dworaczyk  
Tom Hughes  
Dolores Kreger  
Dolores Kreger  
Dolores Kreger  
Chuck Mitchell

*Given by*

Ray & Peg Fitzgerald  
Family & Friends  
Jim & Rose Ann Yadeski  
Ed & Jean Hammer

*In Memory of*

Jim Smith  
Carmen Squeglia  
Hank Starr  
Robert Terrill

*Given by*

William L. Schmidt  
Dave Wayman

*In Honor of*

William A. Schmidt, Jr.  
Rosemary Wayman

People for Life is a volunteer-based, non-profit, non-sectarian, citizen's organization committed to affirming the intrinsic value of human life. We are dedicated to advancing true justice by working for the protection of all innocent human lives, whatever the age, race, sex, physical condition, economic status, or place of residence (including the womb). We encourage local involvement through

education and by fostering political awareness. We advocate loving alternatives to the primitive and violent "solutions" of abortion, infanticide, and euthanasia. Working together, we are determined to achieve a society in which all human lives are considered sacred. *The Erie Echo* is published bimonthly in Erie, PA by People for Life, Inc., Tim Broderick, editor.

**PEOPLE FOR LIFE MEMBERSHIP/DONATION FORM**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_  
 ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-MAIL \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_ FAX \_\_\_\_\_  
 AFFILIATED WITH \_\_\_\_\_ OCCUPATION \_\_\_\_\_  
Church, Business, Civic Organization, etc.

MEMBERSHIP DONATION    New     Renewal     DUES:    Individual \$10     Family \$20     Senior Citizen \$5   
                                  Student \$5     Group \$25     Patron \$50     Benefactor \$100     Other Amount \_\_\_\_\_

GENERAL DONATION \_\_\_\_\_    Specify if for a special purpose: \_\_\_\_\_  
 MEMORIAL DONATION \_\_\_\_\_    In Memory Of     In Honor Of

**VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES**

<input type="checkbox"/> Fair Booths	<input type="checkbox"/> Sidewalk Counseling	<input type="checkbox"/> March For Life Bus Trip Worker
<input type="checkbox"/> Phone Calling	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature Distribution	<input type="checkbox"/> Mother's Day Carnation Project
<input type="checkbox"/> Office Attendant	<input type="checkbox"/> Public Demonstrations	<input type="checkbox"/> Erie March & Motorcade Worker
<input type="checkbox"/> Newsletter Mailing	<input type="checkbox"/> Pro-Life Breakfast Worker	<input type="checkbox"/> 'Call when you need an extra hand.'

Please make your check payable to:  
 PEOPLE FOR LIFE, INC.  
 P.O. Box 1126  
 Erie, PA 16512

Contributions or gifts to People for Life, Inc. are not tax deductible.  
 The official registration and financial information of People for Life, Inc. may be obtained from the Pennsylvania Department of State by calling toll-free within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999.  
 Registration does not imply endorsement.

**PEOPLE FOR LIFE INC**  
1625 W 26TH ST  
PO BOX 1126  
ERIE PA 16512

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

NON-PROFIT ORG  
US POSTAGE  
PAID  
ERIE PA  
PERMIT NO 1973

### 'Vote Pro-Life' Billboards

Former Bishop of Scranton James Timlin once famously said, "Abortion is the issue this year and every year in every campaign.... It is the single most important issue confronting not only Catholics, but the entire electorate." This is merely common sense if you think about it, but unfortunately not everyone seems to understand.

The abortion issue was never more important than it was in the recent presidential election, which pitted a militant abortion promoter, Barack Obama, against the McCain-Palin ticket, which strongly embraced legal protection for unborn children. For this reason, People for Life took the unprecedented step of placing 10 full-size billboards around the Erie area with the message, "Don't support abortion with your vote. Vote Pro-Life!" While our billboards did not "save the nation" from a radically pro-abortion president, they did carry the torch for common sense.

Special thanks are due to five individuals who each paid the full amount for one of the billboards. Both your generosity and your loyalty to proper pro-life priorities are an inspiration to all of us.

### Voter Education

During the election season, People for Life distributed 200 Vote Pro-Life yard signs and 14,000 candidate comparison pieces showing the sharp contrast between John McCain and Barack Obama. We also ran a large, \$2500 ad containing the same candidate comparison piece in the *Erie Times-News* on the Sunday before the election.

### Personal Sacrifice

Many personal sacrifices on behalf of the unborn were made by local residents during the election season, all in the effort to inform the public about the candidates' sharply contrasting positions on abortion. There were pro-

**PEOPLE FOR LIFE**  
[www.peopleforlife.org](http://www.peopleforlife.org)

*An affiliate of the PA Pro-Life Federation*  
**(814) 459-1333 ★ (814) 882-1333**  
[office@peopleforlife.org](mailto:office@peopleforlife.org)

**MAILING ADDRESS**  
P.O. Box 1126 • Erie, PA 16512

**MAIN OFFICE**  
1625 West 26th St. • Erie, PA  
**Extended Hours January 5 to 21**  
10 AM to 5:30 PM - Monday through Friday  
— **REGULAR HOURS** —  
Wednesday 11 AM to 2 PM  
Thursday 10 AM to 1 PM  
*Other times by appointment*

**DOWNTOWN OFFICE**  
**Alternative Choices for Women**  
1611 Peach St., Suite 321 • Erie, PA  
**(814) 464-0266**  
Open Monday through Friday - 9 AM to 5 PM

life informational demonstrations at 13 local campaign events and four days were spent holding large pro-life banners along with McCain-Palin signs at two busy Erie-area intersections, the Bayfront Parkway & West 8th Street and Peach Street & Interchange Road. By the way, support from passing motorists was excellent.

### Student Essay Contests

The deadline for PA Pro-Life Federation Student Essay Contest entries is March 1.

Students in grades 7-12 are eligible to compete. Contestants are required to write a pro-life essay about abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, or stem cell research. Word limits are 500 for grades 7-9 and 750 for grades 10-12. Each essay should include a cover page with the student's name, address, phone number, grade, and name of school or indication that he or she is home schooled.

Essays can be e-mailed to [lifelines@paprolife.org](mailto:lifelines@paprolife.org) or mailed to the Pennsylvania Pro-Life Federation / 4800 Jonestown Rd., Suite 102 / Harrisburg, PA 17109.

### High School Oratory Contest

High school juniors and seniors are invited to compete in the National Right to Life High School Oratory Contest.

Contestants will prepare and deliver a five to seven-minute pro-life talk on abortion, infanticide, euthanasia, or stem cell research.

Students from northwestern Pennsylvania (Erie, Crawford, Venango, and Mercer Counties) will compete in the regional contest conducted by People for Life in Erie on April 18, 2009. The winner and first runner up will then have the option of competing in the state contest to be held by the PA Pro-Life Federation in Harrisburg on April 26th. The winner of the state contest will be eligible to compete in the National Right to Life Oratory

contest to be held in June in conjunction with the NRL Convention in Charlotte, North Carolina.

A student from Erie Collegiate Academy represented Pennsylvania in the National contest just a few years ago.

Interested students (and teachers) should contact People for Life for more complete information.

### Presentations

Call to schedule a free *Overview of Abortion* presentation in your classroom or at your church.

2009 PRO-LIFE DATE BOOK 2009	
<b>Jan. 6</b>	First day of the 111th United States Congress
<b>Jan. 10</b>	Erie March & Motorcade for Life - 11:00 AM, Perry Square, Erie
<b>Jan. 12</b>	Last day for Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast ticket sales
<b>Jan. 17</b>	Pro-Life Prayer Breakfast - 9:00 AM, Ambassador Conference Center
<b>Jan. 20</b>	Presidential Inauguration - The onslaught begins
<b>Jan. 21</b>	March for Life buses leave Erie - 11:00 PM
<b>Jan. 22</b>	March for Life - Noon, The National Mall, Washington, DC
<b>Feb. 16</b>	Regular Meeting - 7:30 PM, Main Office, 1625 W. 26th St.
<b>Mar. 16</b>	Regular Meeting - 7:30 PM, Main Office, 1625 W. 26th St.
<b>April 18</b>	Northwest Regional High School Oratory Contest - Main Office, Erie
<b>April 20</b>	Regular Meeting - 7:30 PM, Main Office, 1625 W. 26th St.
<b>April 20</b>	Last day to register before PA Spring Primary Election
<b>April 26</b>	PA State High School Oratory Contest - Harrisburg
<b>May 10</b>	Mother's Day / Mother's Day Carnation Project
<b>May 18</b>	Regular Meeting - 7:30 PM, Main Office, 1625 W. 26th St.
<b>May 19</b>	PA Spring "Municipal" Primary Election
<b>June 18-20</b>	National Right to Life Convention - Charlotte, NC