

June is... **Abortion** *and*
All Acts of Violence
Awareness Month

JESUS
JESUS

the
Giver of Life,
make us a
People for Life.

PEACEMAKING

*Let us remember all those whose lives
have been afflicted by acts of violence
and abortion in our prayers...*

Prayer for Life

God, our help in ages past, our hope for years to come, gaze upon our African American community as we pray for an end to violence and a halt to abortion among us. Touch our minds and hearts, and fix them on life and love. Turn us to seek the wisdom of our ancestors.

Bless us, so that we may pass on a legacy of your life and grace. Strengthen us to sacrifice ourselves for each other. Shower us with your grace and mercy so that we may be sources of light and hope to those less fortunate among us.

Jesus the Giver of Life, make us a People for Life.

Bless those who are sick, broken, lonely and forgotten. Bring us all to your everlasting arms at the end of our journey with a clean heart, so that we may rest in praise and thanksgiving, joined to all who have gone before us. We pray in the name of Jesus. Amen! Amen! Hallelujah! Amen!

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Stop the Violence, Right Now!

By Therese Wilson Favors

Here it goes again. I hear sadness encircling me with the piercing sobbing of mothers and fathers, crying over the loss of a child. Or maybe the cries of loss come from the shock of another elder struck down in the street or from an incomprehensible robbery inflicted with violence in their own home. Maybe I hear a baby crying from a womb, yearning for life before an abortion. I can't quite see their faces and I don't want to get up too close. It might be someone I know. I have already visited this place of pain and it is unbearable. This pain is far too familiar in this hour of ours.

What time is it? Am I asleep? Is this nightmare real? Somebody ought to wake me up or at least pray me out of this bad dream. I need to wake up, You need to wake up and while you are waking up, wake up somebody else. Then the nightmare of violence perpetrated on our people can come to an end. Wake me up, Lord, help us out Lord, for this violence must stop and it must stop NOW!

Someone once told me that nightmares tend to repeat themselves because our unconscious mind refuses to wake up and do something different than experiencing one horrific action after another. Brothers and Sisters, its time to WAKE UP. Let's Wake Up from this roller coaster nightmare ride, a ride we don't have to take.

Let's WAKE UP before the nightmarish alarm rings again and we won't be able to stretch ourselves and turn off the alarm. So, it just keeps ringing. Let's WAKE UP! Let's become conscious to what is happening right in front of our eyes. Let's wake up and tell our righteous mind that it's going to be different from here on. Let's wake up and delete the nightmare with life-saving actions to protect our children, secure safety for our elders and families and respect life by helping mother and father so that the child can be born and walk into his/her future. The one struck down just might be the one who will change history because YOU WOKE UP and HELPED OUT!

When angels woke up the shepherds on that day of Nativity, they did something. They looked for that Child and praised Him (Luke 2: 9-20). When angels awakened Joseph the carpenter, from his sleep, Joseph did something. Joseph took Mary and Jesus out of harm's way into Egypt (Matthew 2:13-15). But, they had to wake up and then rise up to do something.

This is our hour dear, Brothers and Sisters, to wake up and rise up to do something. We have nothing to fear and so much spiritual strength available to us. The Psalms give witness to a people who try and gain strength from the Lord.... "When I was hard pressed and was falling, the Lord helped me.... My strength and my courage is the Lord"(Psalm 118:13-14).

For the past fifteen years the National Black Catholic Apostolate for Life has designated June as a time for Black Catholics to actively raise consciousness regarding abortion and acts of violence within our community. This **June**, and throughout the summer, let's heat up our efforts by adding to all of our Youth Gatherings and Parish and Family activities these suggestions:

- Calling forth a Council of Elders within the community to evaluate and shape efforts of outreach and mentoring of our young folks.
- Gathering our Young to discuss strategies and avenues of peace-building, self-esteem building and anti-gang involvement.
- Sharing our faith and rebuilding moral expectations and traditions that respect life.
- Organizing a Discussion, Forum or Workshop on this topic at every National Gathering of Blacks Catholics during 2012-2013. We have some tremendous organizations who have the heart of our people as the center of the AGENDA. Let's utilize the spiritual and relational strength we have among ourselves and... Wake up, Rise up and Do something.
- Proposing and Utilizing Family Strategies of "A Helping Hand Up" during Family Reunions and Summer Outings. This may result in establishing a family emergency fund treasury, scholarships, special prayer and counseling circles. We can do it!
- Going down in prayer, because prayer changes things and people too.

Let's make up our minds and seek wisdom and strength from our God to do what only we can do for the future of our people. Too many of us have cried tears and felt the pain. Let's lean on the Lord, for scripture says... "The Lord is my rock and my salvation, whom shall I fear? In the times of trouble, He will hide me, whom shall I fear? Trust in the Lord, and He shall strengthen me" (paraphrase of Psalm 27).

Let's Wake Up, and while you are waking up, wake somebody else up! Let's Rise Up, and while you are rising up, help somebody else to rise up and TOGETHER, let's Do Something! To God be the glory!



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