



# HALO HERALD

A Voice for The Medically Vulnerable

Fall 2020

## A MANNER OF SPEAKING

All lives matter - except apparently the lives of black babies.

By Anne O'Meara, Executive Director



On most Saturday mornings, you will find me sidewalk counseling at our local abortion clinic. On one recent Saturday, I heard a fellow sidewalk counselor call out to an African American woman, "Black lives matter. All lives matter - except apparently the lives of black babies." I looked at the woman's car and saw a Black Lives Matter sticker proudly displayed on its bumper. The woman looked at us but did not pause or respond as she entered the clinic.

I could not help but think she had been completely brainwashed. Here she was, presumably, to end the life of her unborn black baby (a reasonable assumption since abortion is the "medical procedure" done at 7:15 am on Saturday mornings at this clinic) while showing support for the Black Lives Matter Movement. Nowhere is the hypocrisy of the Black Lives Matter Movement more obvious than at an abortion clinic.

In an article from lifenews.com, titled "Planned Parenthood Claims Black Lives Matter, But Kills 247 Black Babies in Abortion Every Day," the writer states, "Planned Parenthood was founded by Margaret Sanger - a racist eugenicist who sought to sterilize and exterminate the black population. Not only was Planned Parenthood founded with the goal of controlling the breeding of 'inferior races' but, to this day, Planned Parenthood still celebrates Sanger, branding her a woman of heroic accomplishments." (Note: Since this article was published, a few Planned Parenthood affiliates have dissociated themselves from the tie to Margaret Sanger, but this has not changed their horrendous racist agenda.)

Fast forward two weeks. I was nervously riding in the car with my teenage son, who had recently gotten his

driver's permit, when we saw a Black Lives Matter sign in a neighbor's yard. My son nonchalantly said, "Mom, by the way, our house may get egged." I asked, "What are you talking about? Why would someone egg our house?" (It is noteworthy that, earlier in the day, he had told me he wanted to take a self-defense class.) He replied that he had been responding to social media posts concerning the Black Lives Matter Movement. In his posts, he had conveyed that, while he believes in the statement "black lives matter," he doesn't support the Black Lives Matter Movement because their platform advocates for abortion (as well as other issues he disagrees with). His position angered many kids his age. They called him a racist and worse. In short, as a minority himself (he is adopted from Guatemala), he was being bullied for standing up against the Black Lives Matter Movement's pro-abortion position and standing for his pro-life belief that all lives matter equally.

I was proud of my son for standing up for his principles regarding a vitally important issue but was concerned that he was being bullied. I urged him to refrain from posting any more comments on the Black Lives Matter Movement. This advice stemmed from my belief that it is impossible to win a serious argument on social media. Also, I do not think social media is the optimal forum to touch people's hearts. It saddened me that a fifteen-year old kid is dealing with such serious issues. When I was his age, I was not discussing matters like racism and abortion.

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Healthcare Advocacy and Leadership Organization (HALO)

HALO Helpline: 1-888-221-HALO (4256)

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## ONLY A MONTH TO LIVE

### EVERY DAY IS A GIFT

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By Larry Larson with Julie Grimstad

*Choosing to die (as opposed to accepting the inevitability of death) cheats a person of the closing moments God has planned for his or her life. Euthanasia or suicide allows for no second chance to savor a bit more of life or better prepare for death.*

*Larry's story is about one man's journey through terminal illness—a journey during which he discovered that every day, even when it includes suffering, is a gift. His story movingly illustrates that the last stage of earthly life can be a time when the bonds of humanity are strengthened, and a person learns what it means to be loved more than he ever could have imagined. This is a story of hope, written by Larry in September 2013.*

—Julie Grimstad

I was born and raised in a small city in the northernmost part of Wisconsin. After high school, I spent a year in college and then was drafted by Uncle Sam and served my country

for two years. My life was quite uneventful until I fell head over heels in love with a beautiful girl named Diane. The best move I ever made was to ask her to marry me, and we've been happily married for 43 years. We have three wonderful children and eight beautiful grandchildren.

In February 2011, because of a bowel problem, I went to my Veterans Administration doctor for a check-up and I underwent an MRI procedure. My doctor diagnosed a bowel infection and prescribed some pills to treat it.

Two days later, on Valentine's Day, Diane and I were having lunch at a restaurant when my cell phone rang. My doctor needed to see me immediately. As we sat down in his office, he told me I had stage IV pancreatic cancer, and it was inoperable. I knew that was one of the worst types, but I didn't know just how bad. Diane and I had planned a trip to Florida. The deposit had been paid and plane tickets purchased. We asked if we could still go, as it was done only a couple weeks away.

The doctor responded, "You will turn yellow, and be too sick and weak. *And you have only a month to live.*"

I don't remember much after that because I fainted. Diane told me later that my eyes rolled up into my head, I slumped over, and Code Blue was called. I woke up on a gurney. Later that day, I called my kids, relatives, and close friends to give them the bad news. Not fun!

### GOING TO GREAT LENGTHS

The doctor told us to drive to the VA medical clinic in Minneapolis, 160 miles away, and go directly to the emergency room and check in. The next day, we did what we were told, but the doctor's instructions were all wrong. I needed a referral, but he hadn't sent one. I had to go to the oncology department, but he hadn't told them we were coming. I was supposed to have my medical records, but he didn't send them. Our long ride was a waste of time. We got my name into the system, but that could have been done by phone.

The first phase of my treatment was a consultation with the head of the oncology department. She explained that, because the cancer was advanced, it was best to attack it aggressively with a relatively new type of chemotherapy. I called it "the new kid on the block." After the first treatment, I walked outside into a cold, misty rain. It felt like a thousand freezing pin pricks on my face.

For my chemo treatments, we would drive to Minneapolis on Monday and stay in a hotel so we could make it to the VA clinic the next morning. After the staff gave me blood tests to determine if I could have chemo that day, they made up the batch. I'd get my treatment and then a battery-operated pump for the second

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### A MANNER OF SPEAKING

*(continued from front page)*

Kids like my courageous son are not the only ones being bullied for expressing their beliefs. Almost daily, newspaper headlines highlight the latest public figure who has been fired for criticizing the Black Lives Matter Movement. People are labeled racist simply for disagreeing with the movement. This infringement on freedom of speech, combined with

the failure of many to recognize the hypocrisy of the Black Lives Matter Movement, means that we have a colossal battle before us. We must not cower in silence. We need to do everything we are humanly capable of doing to protect and defend life – whether black, white, brown, preborn, elderly, handicapped, employed, unemployed, poor, rich, smart, demented, sick or healthy – because ALL LIVES MATTER!

### Did You Know?

Despite the fact that black Americans make up only 13.4% of the country's population,<sup>1</sup> over one-third (36%) of all abortions are committed on black babies?<sup>2</sup> It's estimated that abortion is the leading cause of death for black citizens in the United States.<sup>3</sup>

batch. The pump was attached to me for 46 hours. We would drive home and return two days later to have the pump removed. Nobody at the VA clinic back home could do this; hence the 320-mile round trip twice a week, every other week.

When I turned 65, Medicare took over the payment of my medical bills, so I could be treated closer to home. That made the next year a lot easier: a round trip of only 60 miles and not having to fight traffic.

### A MOST UNUSUAL GIFT

My new doctor was a nice young man. We had a great doctor-patient relationship. After several months and several kinds of chemo, a CAT scan showed that my pancreas had calcified, which was unusual, and my lungs weren't getting any worse. The doctor pulled his chair very close to mine, looked me in the eye, and told me I had been given a gift. He had no idea why I was still alive or why the cancer wasn't going anywhere.

That was about nine months ago. Since then, that doctor left for another position. Even though I'm getting weaker, I'm still here. My current doctor did the latest CAT scan and found that the cancer in my lungs had started to grow. He told me there is no other chemo treatment we can use.

On June 24, 2013, my doctor told me I had three to six months

left. The good news is that my hair has grown back, and I'm not beat down by the chemo now.

### COUNTLESS BLESSINGS

That's all the gloom and doom to my story. There are many good things to tell.

The nurses who gave me chemo have what I consider one of the toughest jobs there are, but, without exception, they were superbly kind and even laughed at my silly comments.

I've had lots of fun times golfing. I even made it to the championship flight (the final round of competition) in my senior league for the last two years. We've also enjoyed socializing with friends. I'm a retired police officer, and an old friend I worked with said he wanted to get some of the guys together for drinks and reminiscing. Due to disability I've been retired for 20 years, so it was overwhelming to see so many people there. We've discovered how much people care about Diane and me. Our friends and family have been there for us at every step of the way, doing anything they can to help—including praying.

I also found out I married not only a beautiful girl, but my best friend, soul mate, caregiver, confidante, and a saint. Diane has stuck with me through every mile and has put up with more bad days than anyone should have to endure. One of the most touching moments came one

day when we were driving home from the Minneapolis clinic. The news had been bad, and we were both down. Neither of us had spoken a word for quite a while. The radio was playing, and the song "Stand by Me" came on. Diane was driving, as usual. We both reached out and held hands. Though we'd heard that song a thousand times before, it never had so much meaning. We just held hands and cried.

Dick, a good friend, had a memorial golf bench made in my name. It now sits in front of the golf course clubhouse. Dick said he got tired of carrying that bench in his truck for two years, so he just dropped it off. I'm probably the only living person to sit on his own memorial bench!

I have lived a full and happy life. And it's not over yet. I am truly blessed!

**Postscript:** *Larry Larson died on Saturday, January 4, 2014, almost three years after being told he had one month to live. His wife, Diane, reported that he slipped into a coma and died the way he wanted to: at home, peacefully. My husband and I went to Larry's funeral Mass at the Cathedral of Christ the King in Superior, Wisconsin, and my husband was a pallbearer. Those in attendance almost filled up the cathedral. He was a well-loved man with many friends, and it was a beautiful funeral.*

—Julie Grimstad  
HALO Board President

## Do You Need Materials for an Upcoming Event or Conference?

In mid-September, Jo Tolck, HALO Board member, and Anne O'Meara, HALO Executive Director, traveled to Fargo, ND to attend the 2020 Lutherans for Life Regional Conference. The theme was "From Invisible to Indispensable" (1 Corinthians 12:22). Great speakers addressed a range of profoundly important topics. This event was a wonderful opportunity to network and spread HALO's message! If you are aware of an upcoming pro-life conference in your area, HALO will be happy to attend and/or provide materials!

Contact us via e-mail at: [feedback@HALOvoice.org](mailto:feedback@HALOvoice.org) or give us a call at: 1-888-221-4256 ext. 1.



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## A WORD ABOUT RHETORIC

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**RHETORIC** can be used to convince people of either truth or falsehood. Those who promote death make appeals to emotion, but do not back their claims with the truth. Pleasant sounding phrases like “black lives matter,” “right to die,” and “compassion and choices” are used to mask agendas that undermine the dignity of human life. Conversely, negative language is used to discredit movements to seek to preserve and protect people until a natural death in God’s time.

### GROUPS WITH DECEPTIVE NAMES

Organizations who are part of the “right to die” movement used to be more forthcoming with their goals until they realized that most people disagreed with their dark intentions. In an effort to conceal their true motives, many of these “peddlers of death” adjusted their language to make it more palatable to the general public. Nowhere else is this more evident than what they call themselves. What follows are some quick examples of how the original names of these groups reveal their true identity.

Current Name	Original Name
Partnership for Caring; Last Acts Partnership	Euthanasia Society of America
Concern for Dying; Choice in Dying	Euthanasia Educational Council
Americans Against Human Suffering	Americans for Death with Dignity
Compassion & Choices*	Hemlock Society

*\*This group is a result of a merger of the Hemlock Society and Compassion in Dying Federation.*

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### “PERSISTENT VEGETATIVE STATE” IS A DANGEROUS TERM

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Coined by doctors Jennet and Plum in 1972 “Persistent vegetative state” (PES) is a state of wakeful unresponsiveness where the sleep-wake cycle and autonomic functions remain intact, but awareness of self, others, the external environment and ultimately one’s personhood, is lost.<sup>4</sup>

Do not be fooled by this solid sounding definition, PES is a frequently inaccurate diagnosis which may result in unjust depreciation of a person’s value. According to Nancy Valko, RN ALNC, declaring a “persistent vegetative state” puts many patients at danger because the often quick prognosis of “hopeless” attached to people with severe brain injuries can-and has-led to early withdrawal of feeding tubes and ventilators as well as DCD (donation after cardiac/circulatory death) for these non-brain dead people.<sup>5</sup>

**A cautionary tale:** Vincent Lambert was a 42-year old French patient purportedly in a “vegetative state.” His parents wanted to take him home and care for him, but they were not allowed to do so. In July 2019, Vincent died just over one week after doctors withdrew assisted nutrition and hydration. The lengthy court battle for his life finally ended when, despite pleas from his mother and the Catholic Church, a judge ruled he could be killed in this horrendous manner.

Sources: 1. “U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts: United States.” Census Bureau QuickFacts, 1 July 2019, [www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045219](http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045219). | 2. Jatlaoui TC, Boutot ME, Mandel MG, et al. Abortion Surveillance — United States, 2015. *MMWR Surveill Summ* 2018;67(No. SS-13):1–45. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.15585/mmwr.ss6713a1> | 3. “Planned Parenthood, the Biggest Killer of Black Americans, Weighs in behind Black Lives Matter Movement.” Society for the Protection of Unborn Children, 4 June 2020, [www.spuc.org.uk/News/ID/384431/Planned-Parent-hood-the-biggest-killer-of-black-Americans-weighs-in-behind-Black-Lives-Matter-movement](http://www.spuc.org.uk/News/ID/384431/Planned-Parent-hood-the-biggest-killer-of-black-Americans-weighs-in-behind-Black-Lives-Matter-movement). | 4. Adams, Zoe M., and Joseph J. Fins. “The Historical Origins of the Vegetative State: Received Wisdom and the Utility of the Text.” *Journal of the History of the Neurosciences*, vol. 26, no. 2, 2016, pp. 2–3., doi:10.1080/0964704x.2016.1184074. | 5. Valko, Nancy. “Medical Experts Now Agree That Severely Brain-Injured Patients Are Often Misdiagnosed and May Recover.” Nancy Valko, 18 Aug. 2018, [nancyvalko.com/2018/08/15/medical-experts-now-agree-that-severely-brain-injured-patients-are-often-misdiagnosed-and-may-recover/](http://nancyvalko.com/2018/08/15/medical-experts-now-agree-that-severely-brain-injured-patients-are-often-misdiagnosed-and-may-recover/).

### Would you like to help HALO with its life-affirming work?

With the holidays coming up soon, please prayerfully consider letting friends and family know that in lieu of gifts they could choose to make a donation to HALO!

**Credit card donations** can be made securely:  
[www.halovoice.org/donate/](http://www.halovoice.org/donate/)

**Send your order form/donation (checks only) to:** HALO, 7301 Bass Lake Rd, Minneapolis, MN 55428

Healthcare Advocacy and Leadership Organization is a 501 (c)(3) organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.



### Signs of Elder Abuse or Neglect

At HALO we understand that every life holds value and significance, sadly, elderly and disabled patients in medical facilities – hospices, hospitals, and nursing homes – are frequently subjected to neglect and abuse. The card that we included with this issue is a quick reference to alert you to the warning signs of these situations.