

Birthright OF PITTSBURGH, Inc.

160 N. Craig Street, Suite 200, Pittsburgh, PA 15213

Volume 40, No. 2

Spring 2011

~Birthright of Pittsburgh celebrates a 40th anniversary this year! Our chapter was founded in November 1971 by Rita Cunningham. We remember Rita with great love, admiration and gratitude. ~



Julia Lynn, Birthright volunteer, collects for Red Rose Day.

Red Rose Day

It's a familiar sight at many church doors in Pittsburgh and the surrounding communities, a red rose, the pro-life symbol, being offered to parishioners for a donation to Birthright of Pittsburgh.

Originally called "Tag Day," the tradition of giving a paper or lapel rose in return for a monetary donation to Birthright following church services dates back to the early 1970s, not long after Birthright was founded by Rita Cunningham.

It began one winter day in downtown Pittsburgh when Birthright volunteers tried collecting on the streets for the organization despite cold winds and frosty temperatures. Many volunteers pushed strollers with small children bundled up to keep warm as they asked for money from strangers to maintain an office to offer help for mothers and their unborn babies. After receiving little interest from people on the street, disappointed volunteers wondered what to do as they stood outside St. Mary of Mercy Parish when services ended. As they watched people leaving the church, one Birthright volunteer thought she would ask for donations and the response was surprisingly overwhelming.

Nancy Sullivan, Birthright board member, was there that day with her own young children and believes God was certainly telling them something and they instantly got it. Over the years, "Tag Day" became "Red Rose Day" but the purpose and way of collecting remains the same today with the faithful support of many parishes, including some from 40 years ago.

At Birthright, on behalf of mothers, we say, "Thank you." By opening your hearts, praying with us for pregnant women and babies and providing generous financial donations, you have kept the doors of Birthright wide open. We know we could never continue to operate all this time without your commitment and support in so many ways.



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A Conversation Over Coffee

by Teresa Silvestri, Birthright Board President

While enjoying a cup of coffee and good conversation with friends, the topic of volunteering arose. As we each discussed the various organizations where we volunteer, I was surprised by the dialogue that developed when I spoke about Birthright. One of my friends voiced that he thought that Birthright might not have the appeal that some of the other organizations do. This puzzled me. "That kind of place is an opinion," he said. "Where is the opinion in helping women in crisis pregnancies?" I asked. I then proceeded to ask if they really knew what Birthright was all about. As you might suspect, they did not.

I explained to them that Birthright was founded in order to pro-

vide women with an alternative to abortion. I quoted Louise Summerhill, founder of Birthright, "*It is the right of every pregnant woman to give birth and the right of every child to be born.*" Birthright continues to provide practical and emotional support and alternatives to abortion. To me, helping women and babies in a time of crisis is simply an act of human kindness, not an opinion.

Furthermore, I added that Birthright is nonpolitical and interdenominational. I told them that Birthright is about providing love and compassionate support to women faced with difficult decisions regarding the life of their unborn baby. I explained that in many cases, the volunteers at

Birthright provide a shoulder to women by giving them confidence and assistance to carry their child to term and gradually they realize they are not alone.

Birthright volunteers provide information and guidance in a variety of areas ranging from employment to baby diapers.

By the end of the conversation, I can happily tell you that the perception of Birthright had been changed. There was new respect and understanding of Birthright. With that came respect for the women that come to Birth-

right seeking help to keep their babies. They show strength in character, perseverance and a love for the blessing of life.



Don't be afraid to talk about Birthright. Let people know all that we provide. Educate them so they can spread the word to any pregnant woman that may need our support.

"Change for Life": Baby Bottle Fundraiser

The "Change for Life" fundraiser kicked off on Friday March 18, 2011 with Birthright volunteers from Oakland Catholic High School and Leaders Now International. Six volunteers helped to prepare baby bottles by filling them with candy and attaching directions. The baby bottles will soon be distributed at the end of masses at Sacred Heart Parish in Shadyside and St. Joseph Parish in O'Hara Township. Parishioners will be asked to take a baby bottle home, fill it with spare change, and return it to church.

Proceeds will go toward infant clothing, diapers, and more for mothers and babies who visit Birthright for support. Thank you to all who participated in the project. Your prayers, time and contributions will save and *change* lives.



"Before I formed you in the womb I knew you" (Jeremiah 1:5).

Thank you parishes for Red Rose Day collections held from January—March 2011.



Good Shepherd Parish
Sacred Heart Parish, Shadyside
St. Basil Parish
St. Michael Parish, Avella
St. Richard Parish
St. Susanna Parish

Many Friends Meet Birthright Needs

*Charity Sisters of Seton Hill
William Delaney*

Mary Enright- In memory of Rita Cunningham

I.W. Abel Prayer Community-Infant clothing items, blankets & monetary donation

Richard and Lynda MacMurchy

Theresa McHenry

Helen Milligan- Baby bibs, hat, socks, outfits & baby book

Sacred Heart Parish, Shadyside-Annual Epiphany Party-- baby clothing, items & monetary donations

Paul Stamatakis

Helping Birthright at Aquinas Academy

by Mary Kay Tappe, Aquinas Academy Faculty

The Aquinas Academy pro-life club, "Vivat Vita," began three years ago. The Latin name means "Long Live Life." The club is open to middle and high school students. Most of our activities involve all students in grades K-12, as well as families. We have raised over \$1500 to purchase three pro-life transit posters to be placed in different locations around the city. The 1-800-550-4900 hot line number for Birthright will be listed on these posters. We have raised this money through monthly bake sales and the "Pro-Life Shop" where we sell donated religious items to students at lunch time. We have also raised money through our annual "Cakes for Life" cake decorating contest. Each year, we have had 20 original cakes baked and decorated by students, faculty, and families. The students pay \$1 per vote. The entire school looks forward to the contest each year. Each class receives a cake to enjoy at the conclusion of the contest! We also participate in the Life Chain, March for Life, 40 Days for Life and have several baby drives for needed items and cash which we donate to local agencies helping mothers in need. Our club leads the school in prayer for an end to abortion and educating the students and families in pro-life issues. Our next project is encouraging all families to participate in the Spiritual Adoption program beginning on March 25 through December 25, and making "New Mother's Kits" for mothers who use the services of Birthright.

Thank You!

A Challenge to Reach Out

by Louise Alfer, Birthright volunteer

During the past several months I've heard of a couple of young ladies who found themselves faced with an unplanned pregnancy. At once, I felt the calling to pray for them and their little ones. All too often loved ones and society start to voice their opinions on what females should "do" when they find themselves pregnant! I decided I didn't want to be a part of just the verbal debate anymore. I prayed for the young ladies and asked the Good Lord to protect them and provide them with the support that they and their little ones needed. A few weeks later I found myself at a Sunday Mass where an individual was collecting for Red Rose Day for Birthright. I heard of the organization and even recommended Birthright to ladies who were expecting. Then I decided that I needed to put my prayers into action. The next day, I contacted Birthright and offered my time. I believe that many young women would have the courage to do the right thing and have their baby if more people would stand up and support them with a listening ear. Birthright has allowed me the opportunity to practice what I preach. I've enjoyed each hour that I've spent volunteering in the office and I challenge others who are reading these words to find a way to reach out and support expecting mothers and their unborn children with their prayers, time and financial support.



Louise Alfer

"Not all of us can do great things. But we can do small things with great love." ~Mother Teresa

Ideas to help Birthright Moms and babies...

- Sign-up for **Matching Donor** programs at work and designate Birthright
- **United Way** contributions – Give Birthright's contributor number: **224**
- Hold a **Red Rose Day** at your place of worship once a year
- Fill baby bottles/containers with **loose change** for Birthright
- Support Birthright's **annual appeals**
- Sponsor/attend our **Walk-A-Thon** in October at Schenley Park Oval
- Support Birthright **fundraisers**
- Request **free speakers** for presentations from Birthright
- Plan a **baby shower** for Birthright babies
- Donate new/gently used **baby clothes** (preemie to 12 mos.); diapers; baby items
- Provide a tax-deductible **donation** to Birthright
- Purchase Birthright **cookbooks**
- Establish a lifetime **legacy** gift for Birthright
- Donate **office supplies**: printer paper, a computer, postage stamps, ink, note pads
- **Pray** for expectant moms and dads and unborn babies
- **Pray** for Birthright volunteers or become a volunteer
- **Pray** for an end to abortion



Perfect Spring Recipe...

If you like cupcakes, you might try this recipe from Birthright's *Red Rose Recipes* cookbook submitted by Andrea Curtis.

Lemon Cream Cupcakes

2 ½ sticks butter	3 ½ cups flour
2 ¼ cups sugar	2 cups sour cream
3 eggs	2- T. grated lemon peel
2- tsp. baking powder	1- T. lemon juice
1- tsp. baking soda	2- T. vanilla
½- tsp. salt	



Sr. Joan Murray, board member, finds tasty Birthright recipes.

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Cream together softened butter & sugar. Mix in eggs one at a time. Add lemon juice, lemon peel and vanilla. Sift together baking powder, soda, salt and flour and slowly mix into batter with sour cream. Batter will be thick. Spoon about ¼ cup each into paper-lined cupcake containers and place in muffin tin. Bake for approx. 25 min. or until tops are golden and a toothpick comes out clean. Cool before frosting. Makes 3 dozen.

Lemon cream frosting:

1 ¼ sticks of butter	¼ cup lemon juice
4 ½ cups powdered sugar	1 T- lemon juice
2- tsp. vanilla	3 T- grated lemon peel

Cream together softened butter & powdered sugar. Mix in vanilla, lemon juice and lemon peel. Add more lemon juice or milk if frosting is too thick.

To purchase a Birthright cookbook with 750+ recipes, including ethnic, call: 412-621-1988 or visit us.

Cookbooks - \$12. Yes, we will be happy to mail any amount with additional postage charge.

Checks payable to: "Birthright of Pittsburgh."

"You are called to stand up for life!
To respect and defend the mystery of
life always and everywhere, including the
lives of unborn babies, giving
real help and encouragement to
mothers in difficult situations.
You are called to work and
pray against abortion."

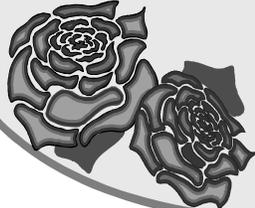
-Pope John Paul II



Birthright volunteers from
Oakland Catholic High School.



"It is the right of every pregnant woman to give birth and the right of every child to be born."



Louise Summerhill
-Founder of Birthright-

2010-2011

Birthright Board of Directors

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Opening: Secretary. We welcome your interest in becoming a member. Call: 412-621-1988



UNITED WAY CONTRIBUTOR CHOICE NUMBER: 224

PLEASE REMEMBER TO DESIGNATE BIRTHRIGHT OF PITTSBURGH AT YOUR WORKPLACE. WE GREATLY NEED AND APPRECIATE YOUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT!

Birthright's newsletter is now available online on our web site at:
www.birthrightpittsburgh.org.
Please call: 412-621-1988 to have the newsletter e-mailed to you.

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Birthright needs your prayers, assistance and financial support. We are interdenominational, nonprofit and nonpolitical. Dedicated volunteers help girls and women encountering unexpected pregnancies.

This newsletter is a free quarterly publication.
Call **412 621-1988** to be placed on the mailing list.
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