

# The mission of prayer is at the heart of hope

One of the most powerful places in our nation's capital has very little to do with government, or lobbyists, or military, or any kind of worldly power. I say "very little" because all of the people laboring under those categories fall under its prayer cover. St. Clare's Convent, within walking distance of The Catholic University of America, is mission territory for the Sisters of Life.

Fairly recently, they took over the convent from the Poor Clares, its longtime tenants, who provided perpetual [Eucharistic adoration](#), buttressing far more than we will ever know. And the work that the Sisters of Life continue just off 12th Street is as essential as things get. During shelter-in-place days, while so many people didn't have access to the sacraments or even the Blessed Sacrament because of closed churches and their own vulnerabilities, there the sisters were in the chapel at St. Clare's, praying before our Eucharistic Lord, for all of us.

The Sisters of Life – which has grown to 100 women in less than 30 years since its founding – has critical missions for healing to abortion-minded women and women in crisis pregnancies, as well as to women who have had abortions. During the coronavirus pandemic, they have been helping to feed some of the courageous families – often single mothers – who chose life, mothers who once lived with the sisters, who are never alone in the world with the network of sisters and their co-workers around the country and the world (in addition to D.C., the Sisters of Life are currently in New York, Connecticut, Denver, Philadelphia and Toronto; and along with the U.S. and Canada, sisters hail from Australia, Ireland, Spain, Malaysia and the Philippines, to name a few – with England on the way). And [none of their work is possible](#)

[without prayer](#). And we don't have a shot at defeating this culture of death we continue to live in without it – and them.

I'm convinced that the prayers of this Sisters of Life in the D.C. prayer mission are at the heart of our hope.

Have you looked around lately? Planned Parenthood has canceled its founder Margaret Sanger for racism, without the self-awareness that her eugenic thinking is a poison they can't get away from. And their first step can't be healing until they take the second step of seeing the damage they do to lives and our culture. Think about the fact that in so many states during the early, most frightening days of this pandemic, abortion was considered essential, even while cancer treatments weren't.

And even as we all seemed to be going out of our way to protect life, not only were abortions happening, but deadly decisions were made that killed elderly men and women in nursing homes. Even as New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo talked about the value of every human life, his orders were ending them. This is the throwaway culture Pope Francis has talked about. We cast aside the inconvenient.

Those facts are a scourge. They pierce hearts. They suffocate freedom. They are the antithesis of love. From the hours of 2-7 p.m. every weekday, the Sisters of Life in D.C. are praying for our liberation. They are praying for healing. They are praying for an overabundance of grace to break the chains that bind us to this evil.

There's an organization I have long been fond of called Abortion Changes You. Abortion, indeed, changes the woman. It changes the man. It changes everyone they will ever encounter. These deadly decisions are not decisions without reverberating consequences for families and all of humanity.

Even during the pandemic days, the Sisters of Life were not only on their knees, they were able to have an open door. The

limit was 10 people, and somehow God kept them under it daily. Thanks be to God, because we need them, and we need to be joining them, in person or from wherever we are.

Violence and misery and death are having a field day, and it's all going to be on the increase. These women of valiant, radiant peace will help us all find our courage for life.

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