

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE:

The heart warming story of a special couple and their new son...

a domestic adoption.

URGENT PLEA

We are in search of a loving Orthodox Christian family to adopt an autistic five year old boy.

For more information, please call 1-877-436-5433.

To be a good steward of the gifts God has given us, please notify us if you receive more than one issue of our newsletter.

To help women who need emotional and spiritual support during crisis pregnancies; to provide confidential access to existing professional agencies; to connect interested women with potential adoptive Orthodox Christian families.

Our Mission Statement:

3352 Mayfield Road
Cleveland Heights, OH 44118



Volume 2 Issue 1 ~ Spring/Summer 2003



An Orthodox Christian Initiative

3352 Mayfield Road, Cleveland Heights, Ohio 44118
440/893-9990

hotline number 877/436-LIFE (5433)

www.zoeforlifeonline.org

S.C.O.B.A.

Endorses Work of ZOE

At its August 1, 2002 meeting, the Standing Conference of the Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas honored the work of ZOE for Life! by formal endorsement. In a letter to ZOE dated August 14, 2002, His Grace Bishop Demetrios of Xanthos, General Secretary of S.C.O.B.A., sent word of the approval of ZOE for Life!'s application, along with congratulations.

Hierarchs of S.C.O.B.A. are Archbishop Demetrios, Greek Orthodox Church in America, chairman, Metropolitan Philip, Antiochian Orthodox Church, Metropolitan Herman, Orthodox Church in America, Metropolitan Joseph, Bulgarian Orthodox Church, Archbishop Nicolae, Romanian Orthodox Church, Archbishop Antony, Ukrainian Orthodox Church of the USA, and Metropolitan Nicholas of Amissos, American Carpatho-Russian Orthodox Diocese. Their overwhelming response in recognizing ZOE's efforts has humbled everyone involved in this outreach. With love and gratitude, we promise to redouble our efforts to earn their confidence in, and support of this ministry, as we continue to reach out to our sisters and brothers in Christ.



The race is on!

Pure Gender Retreat For Teens

What is God's plan for each of us? How does He hope we conduct our lives, whether we are married or not? On Saturday, April 6, 2002, ZOE offered a retreat for senior high school students at St. Michael's Woodside in Broadview Heights, Ohio, to explore these questions.

Our Holy Orthodox Church guides us to lead our lives and make decisions based on a solid spiritual foundation. The retreat was lead by Presbytera Tina Patitsas and Maria Goudas, M.A.L.P.C.C. Teens, adult youth workers, parents and parish priests from two states participated and shared experiences in creative activities and thought provoking workshops. The retreat highlighted the value of pure living through a deeper understanding of how our gender affects us.



Another team competes in Ice Breaker.

Through healthy dialogue conducted with mutual respect and Orthodox fellowship, participants of every age gave positive feedback regarding their day with ZOE. God willing, it is the first of an expanding program of topics dealing with issues surrounding pure living for our young people.

Nowhere to Turn

You could hear the desperation in her voice when she called. "Smilja's" baby daughter had been diagnosed with a rare protein allergy, Celiac's Disease, and could not eat solid food. She could only tolerate one very costly formula, Alimentum, from Ross Laboratories.

"Smilja" has two older children, and her husband, a machinist, has been laid off for the past six months. He is working, but making less than half of what he had earned. They are on public assistance. At eight months, the baby is going through more than two cans of formula per day. Her consumption will increase as she gets older, if the doctors are unable to find a solution for her protein intolerance. The government offers a maximum of only 31 cans each month. Usually this is sufficient for babies on formula, but this little one was not eight months old, and required more. "Smilja's" family just could not afford this very expensive formula.

Could ZOE help? Praise God, the answer was "yes". Thanks to your generosity, we were able to obtain an ample supply of Alimentum for Smilja's baby. We are keeping in touch with her family, to offer assistance and prayers as they go through this difficult time.

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She was only 16

In September, her baby would have been born. That's when she called. Neither her mother, who had insisted she have an abortion in February, nor her boyfriend, the baby's father, would discuss it with her. Forced into the abortion, they simply wanted her to forget about it. But she couldn't. The memory haunted her. She shared a tearful poem she had written about what she had done.

ZOE for Life! referred her to a professional for free, confidential counseling. We promised we would be here to talk with her any time she chose. She was grateful to have someone tell her God would forgive her if she asked him with a contrite heart, and that He still loved her.

What Would You Do?

What if you were a young woman with a newborn, but nowhere for him to sleep? What if you had recently lost your job due to lay-offs, and for the first time in your life found yourself on public assistance?



Paula Kappos, Tameka Meredith and Pani Matka Iryna Mahlay with the crib ready to go to its new home.

What if the support most of us find in family and friends simply was not there? This was the situation Ms. Meredith found herself in once she brought her newborn home. Following the advice of a nurse at the hospital, she pulled out a drawer to her dresser, emptied it, placed soft blankets around it as best she could, and used

it as a bassinette. She was worried about the baby's safety, though, and as we all know, babies have a way of growing. Her son was no exception. It was not long before she realized she needed something more suitable for the little fellow, but the single mother of two knew that financially it just was not possible.

She made a call to her local social services agency, which referred her to ZOE. Thanks to God's providence, and the generosity of many, we were able to provide her not only with a crib, but also with the necessary bumper pads to make it safe, as well as bedding. "I just didn't know where else to turn. I called ZOE for Life! hoping for a bassinette, and was given a crib instead. That's something we'll be able to use for a lot longer than a little bassinette." We are grateful that through the generosity of so many, we were able to share the abundant love in Orthodox Christian hearts with this little fellow and his family.

Notecards of The Lament of Rachel

In response to numerous requests, our icon of The Lament of Rachel is now available on notecards. They are packaged in groups of five. Please use the following form when ordering: _____ number of packages @ \$5.00 minimum donation per package, plus postage and handling

St. Vladimir's Hosts Shower for ZOE

The entire community of St. Vladimir's was invited to a baby shower for Zoe on Sunday, March 3, 2002. St. Vladimir's Senior Chapter of the Ukrainian Orthodox League hosted a scrumptious luncheon, complete with a cake decorated in a pink and blue baby theme. Thanks to Irene Costaras-Vasilakis, D.D.S., everyone who attended gained an inside look into what ZOE is all about. Baby items of every sort were given as gifts, allowing us to assist many women in crisis pregnancies. Many thanks to Pani Matka Mary Ann Nakonachny and Nina Samiljenko for hosting this love filled afternoon.



Shower for ZOE

ZOE Statistics:1/1/02-12/31/02

Calls: 280
Hotline Calls: 36
Email inquiries: 162
Adoption inquiries: 43
Women in crisis: 18
Abortions averted: YES!

What is ZOE? Through the grace of God, ZOE for Life! began in 1998. A group of individuals in the Greater Cleveland Orthodox Christian community recognized that there was no church-based resource to assist Orthodox Christian women through crisis pregnancies. ZOE has evolved as a non-profit, Christ-centered initiative with three major goals:

1. To help all women in crisis pregnancies.
2. To assist Orthodox Christians seeking to adopt.
3. To create an Orthodox Christian abstinence program to educate our young people.

_____ total donation enclosed
Please mail your order to:
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The Lament of Rachel icons will soon be available.

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Nina Sahiljenko and Dani Matka Marry Anne Nakonachny, Shower Chairmen.

Support

ZOE for Life! is a non profit outreach. It operates solely on the strength of its volunteers, and is funded predominantly by private donations. Join us. Together, with God's guidance, we can change our world! For ZOE to survive and perform life-promoting services, we need your help. Please support this important outreach with your contribution, which is recognized by the Internal Revenue Service as tax deductible.

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- _____ \$500 Benefactor
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- _____ \$50 Supporter
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Please send your donation to:

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3352 Mayfield Road
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Thank You!