



## An ugly solution

"Abortion is an ugly way to solve a problem."

But, there are no easy outs, according to Father Hain. He spoke of the Christian tradition of the sacredness of human life and the reverence for life which is part of Western culture.

"Men are often a burden to one another." It would be easier to solve the problem by killing, he said. "But we have to suffer grave inconveniences for someone else's right to live."

Perhaps if society were more charitable, if it provided somewhere for the girl to solve her problem with dignity, then she wouldn't have to face that airplane trip, he suggested.

"Many girls get an abortion because they don't know what else to do."

The priest told of a young girl who, on the morning she was to leave for New York, decided that she couldn't do it. She came to Father Hain and together they decided she would contact an agency for unwed mothers.

But, pressure from family and friends put the girl on the plane to New York after all. As is usually the case, she felt relieved that it had solved her problem, Hain said.

It's upsetting to think that even when the girl steps on the plane, she doesn't know what she really wants, declared Father Hain. One half-hour session with an abortion counselor isn't nearly enough time to explore all the options and the special needs of the girl.

Father Hain proposed that counseling be handled professionally in a chain of sessions with a doctor, psychiatrist, the girl and her parents. The first concern should be for the child's life, he said.

Long associated with young people, Father Hain believes that many more girls would decide to have the child if they were aware of all the possibilities. The greatest pressure on the unwed mother is her fear for proper care of the child once it's born, he added.

Additional pressure comes from the intolerance of society. However, placement in a home outside the local community "would compensate for the lack of charity," he suggested.

If, after counseling, an abortion was still wanted, then "I'd know she wasn't doing it because of fear or on impulse. She knows the options," said Father Hain.

"I really believe in that personal freedom bit," he declared, and he would refer a girl to a doctor where she could get proper care if she couldn't be dissuaded from an abortion.

A frequent speaker in Biology 3 classes, Father Hain is an outspoken critic of liberalized abortion laws. He said he favors legalized abortion only when the mother's life is physically threatened.

If the law requires only the mother and doctor's consent, then it's dodging responsibility to the unborn child, the parents of the girl and the girl's future needs, he continued. "The law is inadequate if these aren't taken into account."

Abortion arguments involve the question: Is the fetus always a human being, and if not, at what point does it become so?

The Catholic church takes the stand that the fetus is a human being from the moment of conception, Father Hain said, and this will remain their stand until scientific evidence proves otherwise.

Liberalizing abortion laws hasn't solved the problem of "butchers," he declared. There are just as many illegal abortions in New York now as before their law was liberalized, Father Hain added.

The answer lies in a more tolerant society, in sex education for the young and concern for the total needs of the mother, he continued. Killing the child is not an answer at all. It destroys the concept of the sacredness of life and perhaps the self-respect of the mother as well.

by Carol Goetschius

A young girl, single and pregnant, waits in the airport lobby. There's a doctor in New York who can help her. It's a long way to travel alone. She's unsure.

What options are open to a 17-year-old woman, two months pregnant, too young to get married, unable to support a child, afraid to let her parents know and too alone to face an intolerant society?

Abortion seems to be the easy way out of a desperate situation.

Yet, there are greater life-long repercussions that abortion counselors do not discuss, and in this way, often fail their clients, according to Rev. Raymond B. Hain.

The psychological effect of an abortion, the burden of guilt, is something abortion counselors seldom have to contend with, commented the frank, soft-spoken priest.

For seven years, Father Hain was pastor of the Newman Center, the Catholic Center on campus. The 47-year-old priest was transferred to Lincoln's Sacred Heart Church last June because of the excessive demands of a campus church on a priest.

Although each case and reaction is different, in his years of counseling Father Hain found that a woman distressed about her abortion usually asks the same question: "I have been instrumental in killing a human life. What do I do now?"

Perhaps the guilt comes from violating the social norm or from a religious-moral reverence for life, but in either case the woman feels a need to share her self-reproach with someone, he said.

Sometimes she'll come alone, sometimes the boyfriend comes with her. Usually one discussion is enough to relieve her inner anxiety, sometimes it takes longer, Father Hain added.

An abortion can hurt not only the woman's self-image but her relationship with her parents as well. Father Hain spoke of a family split by deep hostilities when the parents found out that their daughter had an abortion.

The girl became bitter and totally alienated from her parents, partly because of her feelings of guilt.

There can also be long-lasting medical problems from an abortion which hasn't been done properly, he said.

"Does a doctor in New York really care about a 17-year-old girl from Nebraska with an unwanted pregnancy?" he said, more as a statement than a question.

Abortion isn't such an easy answer when the needs of the whole person, now and in the future, are taken into account, Father Hain said.

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