

Anti-abortion groups link up for Life Chain

East Oregonian

Groups of anti-abortion advocates will bear witness to their belief in the sanctity of human life by participating in upcoming Life Chain events.

In its 30th year, Life Chain gatherings are held in cities across the nation. It features people spreading out in a human chain along the side of a major thoroughfare. Participants pray and hold signs with anti-abortion messages. The gatherings are silent and prayerful.

Locally, people are invited to participate in events in Pendleton and Hermiston. Both are scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 1 from 2:30-3:30 p.m. Those interested in participating are asked to arrive 30 minutes prior to the event.

•Meet at 2 p.m. in the parking lot at First Church of God, 712 S.W. 27th St., Pendleton. The group will stand along Southgate (Highway 395) near Southwest Hailey Avenue.

•Meet at 2 p.m. in the parking lot behind Banner Bank, 101 E. Main St., Hermiston. The group will stand along North First



Pro-life supporters stand along Highway 395 during a past Life Chain in Hermiston. The public is invited to participate in Life Chain events Oct. 1 in Hermiston and Pendleton.

Street (Highway 395) near Hermiston Avenue.

For more information about local Life Chain events, call Deanna Leonard at 541-667-8537 or Tiffany LeGore at 541-276-9013. Additional details about the LifeChain. Net(work) is available at www.lifechain.net. The website includes ideas for signs for Life Chain events.

Submit community and faith information to: community@eastoregonian.com or drop off to the attention of Tammy Malgesini at 333 E. Main St., Hermiston or Renee Struthers at 211 S.E. Byers Ave., Pendleton. Call 541-564-4539 or 541-966-0818 with questions.

Pope admits church realized sex abuse problem ‘a bit late’

By NICOLE WINFIELD
Associated Press

VATICAN CITY — Pope Francis on Thursday acknowledged the Catholic Church was “a bit late” in realizing the damage done by priests who rape and molest children, and said that the decades-long practice of moving pedophiles around rather than sanctioning them was to blame.

Francis met Thursday for the first time with his sex abuse advisory commission, a group of outside experts named in 2014 to advise him and the Catholic Church on best practices to keep pedophiles out of the priesthood and protect children.

In his prepared remarks, Francis promised to respond with the “firmest measures possible” against sex abusers. He said bishops and religious superiors bore “primary responsibility” for keeping their flocks safe from



Pope Francis meets members of a children's choir from Mexico during his weekly general audience, in St. Peter's Square, at the Vatican, Wednesday.

abusive priests and would be held accountable if they are negligent.

But Francis also spoke off-the-cuff, admitting that the church's response to the scandal was slow. Indeed, the Vatican for decades turned a blind eye to the problem and local bishops, rather than defrocking abusers, instead moved them from parish to parish,

allowing them to abuse anew.

Part of the problem was that under the papacy of St. John Paul II, the Vatican was reluctant to defrock young priests, even if they were abusers.

“The consciousness of the church arrived a bit late, and when the consciousness arrives late, the means to resolve the problem

arrive late,” Francis said. “Perhaps the old practice of moving people around, and not confronting the problem, kept consciences asleep.”

Francis also addressed the way the Vatican was handling appeals of canonical sentences, saying he wanted to add more diocesan bishops to an appeals commission that is currently dominated by canon lawyers. He said lawyers “tend to want to lower sentences” and that he wanted the influence of diocesan bishops with experience of the problem in the field to balance it out.

“I decided to balance out this commission and also say that if abuse of a minor is proven, it's sufficient and there's no need for recourse. If there is proof, period. It's definitive. Why? Not because of revulsion, but simply because the person who did this, man or woman, is sick. It's a sickness.”

LIMEY PASTOR

Next steps in the journey of a limey pastor at large

Last week, I played the role of the everyman. I stayed away from the flaming Gorge. I stayed at home with my books and papers. The previous week, when we had basked in the sunshine by the river's edge by Boardman's marina, I had prayed with my flock for a final time. I knelt at the altar one last time. I kissed the front door of Good Shepherd Lutheran Church as I parted. I said a temporary farewell as I took my leave for a while.

It is time to set out into the journey again. GSLC was left in good hands with a loyal community, a new and talented musician, and two, maybe three people who love to preach. Even though I am now moving on a year and a bit after my arrival, God is there, and that is all that matters. God always stays behind as well as waits at the place for our next arrival. Alpha and Omega.

It is time to take a break and plan where to go next. At the time of writing, the 20th of September (also my late mother's birthday), I am due to go to a meeting of Lutheran pastors in Salem tomorrow, where my old master will be the speaker, Pastor James Nestingen. I've already met with a committee of friends in Aurora, Oregon, and have arranged to use the old hall that belongs to the Knights of Pythias to preach and have a worship service.

Aurora is a relic of the state's founding, founded by a team of pilgrims moving far from the impending Civil War. A tribe of refugees, emigrating from Harmony, Pennsylvania, Indiana and Bethel, Missouri, led by a pastor inclined to mysticism — perhaps a little bit “out there.” His name was Doctor William Keil. He was associated with the Methodists but had Lutheran roots, and had a passion for the theology of Jacob Boehme, the mystic shoemaker. By trade, Keil had been a tailor. Everyone of age who came on the wagon trains with Keil had skills and a craft. He was a practical dude, very good with money.

For a number of years I had served on the Aurora

Colony's Historical Society and participated in its modern life. I became fascinated by this man and his vision of a new dawn, a new Aurora, which besides being the name of the town was also a name of one of Jacob Boehme's books — and which was also the name of Keil's daughter, Aurora, who unfortunately died of smallpox. He regarded it as a new Eden. As indeed, I do also.

I was lucky enough to preach at my home church, Christ Lutheran in Aurora, as part of my training as a pastor and feel that this is where my call to preach and to serve was first felt in my breast. Since my dear Pastor Craig still preaches there every Sunday morning, I never felt that this was my place to do this. But I always wanted to.

But ... a word emanating from one of my dear congregation members at Good Shepherd, Mike S. — who is sometimes called in to work on Sunday — made me realize that there is work to be done in bringing church to a place where people may receive the comfort of Christ when they are able.

A Church of the Night, perhaps even a Church of Nicodemus (who visited Jesus at night) that can appeal to all the shift workers who miss the opportunity to worship because of their duties to us. Nice idea, huh? Thanks Mike! It won't disturb the traffic currently flowing into Aurora and step on toes, and will be a blessing on its people.

This afternoon I talked to my Jewish friend, Harvey, who is of the tribe of priests, a Levite who always supports my efforts however hair-brained they may be. He said he would come and help. He knows Jesus as Yeshua. Of course, the Jewish Sabbath is on a Friday night — but he's flexible. Religions do a lot better with flexibility.

Amen.

Colin Brown is the former pastor of Boardman's Good Shepherd Lutheran Church. He will continue to write in this space.



COLIN BROWN
Faith

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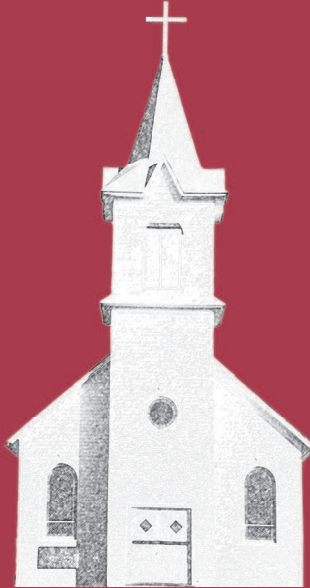
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Colin Brown, Pastor

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