



THE DIOCESE OF ROCKVILLE CENTRE

Office of Human Life, Family and Bioethics



"We Are One": The Heart and Soul of the PBFL

Interview with Thomas M Upshur OFS, President of the Pro-Bikers for Life

PART THREE

Thomas M. Upshur, O.F.S. is the President of the Pro-Bikers for Life, an international Pro-Life organization whose mission is “to preserve human life” at all costs through sidewalk counseling, through prayerful witness outside abortion clinics, and through evangelization efforts using social media as well as in-person events. At the crux of their mission, the Pro-Bikers “do everything [they] can to support the Pro-Life cause.” Mr. Upshur took some time recently to answer questions about his organization and how their work serves to foster a culture of life at home and abroad.

This final series of questions will focus on how the PBFL first met the CFRs and the Sisters of Life in New York City, and how their witness of trust in the Lord has inspired and encouraged the PBFL in their ministry.



From your various social media accounts, I've seen that the PBFL works closely with the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal in New York City. How did you get involved with the Friars?

My son, Billy, invited me to a Youth 2000 Conference led by Joseph Campo, O.F.S at Sacred Heart Parish in Island Park 20 years ago (when Monsignor John J. Tutoné was the Pastor). My wife Susan and I did the gardening at the CFR homeless shelter in the city, and the Franciscan Friars became like family to us. They loved my Polish stuffed cabbage...BAM!!! Grandma's recipe (I lived in a Polish neighborhood in Detroit growing up).

Then, in the Spring of 2009, Mike Drozdick and I would often ride into NYC and meet the CFR's at the Margaret Sanger Planned Parenthood to join with them in prayer. This later evolved into a monthly prayer vigil led by the Sisters of Life, which is now guided by the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal.

I've also heard of countless stories of the PBFL and the Sisters of Life working hand-in-hand on the streets of New York City to save the lives of unborn children. How did you get involved with the Sisters of Life?

As I mentioned before, my wife Sue and I were in the South Bronx with the CFRs helping with gardening, and at the time we were also helping the Sisters in NYC too. That's how we got to attend our first March for Life DC in 2009 where the Pro Bikers for Life was first born!

At the time, my wife was working at Atlantic Nursery in Freeport Long Island, so we got great deals on flowers and plants there for the Sisters of Life and have really cultivated a relationship with them since then. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Michael Sweeney (a PBFL) and his wife Colette would visit the Margaret Sanger Planned Parenthood in NYC twice a week, and they would take many abortion-minded women to the Sisters of Life. They make a great team! Now we even help escort the Sisters of Life each year with their Final Profession of Vows!

The beautiful work your organization does for the pro-life movement and for the Kingdom of God is truly inspiring, and I'm sure our readers are likewise inspired by the PBFL! Tell me, do you have to be a biker to belong to the PBFL?

YES (well, except for our 3 Chaplains who are not bikers). But if you don't ride a motorcycle and would like to become more involved with us you can become an Associate PBFL!

Any final thoughts you'd like to share with our readers?

We were all are intimidated at first. But when our Priest and Sisters showed us and taught us to let Our Lord fights the battles, we realized that all we need to do is to just be there as His hands and feet to receive His loved ones [those whom we minister to] at their most tormented moment. If you trust, as we have, you will experience God's incredible work in your life through the brothers and sisters you just stood by. Miracles do happen every day, and so we declare JESUS WE TRUST IN YOU!

We are GOD'S Army from LA to NYC to Germany. We are One. We are a Team.



If you would like to learn more about the Pro-Bikers and become more involved in the work of their mission, you can visit <http://www.probikersforlife.org/> or search "Pro-Bikers for Life" on their various social media platforms (including Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and YouTube).

Be sure to give the Office of Human Life, Family, and Bioethics a like and a **follow on our social media accounts to keep up with our upcoming projects and initiatives!**