

"Of Words and Wit": The Origins of the Pro-Bikers for Life

Interview with Thomas M Upshur OFS, President of the PBFL

PART ONE

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 some questions about his organization and how their work serves to foster a culture of life at home and abroad.

*This will be the **first part** of a **three-part series** highlighting the work of the Pro-Bikers for Life through the eyes of their President, Thomas Upshur. This first segment of questions will focus on their humble beginnings, how the organization got their name, and feature some of the many activities they partake in on Long Island.*

My first question for you is who are the Pro-Bikers for Life and what is it exactly that you guys do?

The Pro Bikers for Life (PBFL) are a group of motorcyclists who are faithful to God and believe that every life is sacred. We ride for the unborn in order to help mothers and fathers receive the gift of life. Bikers serve our brothers and sisters both in the mainstream and on the outskirts of society. PPFL members are involved in prayer vigils for the unborn, sidewalk counseling at abortion clinics, and delivering furniture for new and expectant moms, as well as throwing baby showers.

The PBFL have also been invited to speak at high schools, colleges, men's retreats and Knights of Columbus events to share our challenging but beautiful experiences of being on the front lines with our prayer warriors in our work to counter the choice of death over life. We also were invited to three consecutive World Youth Days in Spain, Brazil and Poland to share our experiences with the youth through images and stories of our encounters with abortion minded moms and dads who, through the grace of the Holy Spirit, chose life for their child.

We are small in numbers, but God's awesome Glory has always gone before us amazing us each time as we are out there in His name. Each PBFL feels so blessed to have been chosen to be the hands and feet of Our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, to reach out to all his children.

This is why we ride and pray: we are God's Army in the spiritual battle for LIFE!

When were the Pro-Bikers for Life established? How did you guys go about starting this organization?

During the 2009 March for Life in Washington D.C., one of the Sisters of Life (Sister Loretta Marie S.V.) said to me, "Hey, Thomas! You're a biker. Why don't you start a pro-life biker group?" So, I related the idea to Mike, my biker buddy and I said to him, "Hey Mike you want to do this?" and he said "Why not!" So, Mike, the biker of "words and wit", came up with the name "Pro-Bikers for Life." Then I became the art director & designer of the group and set out to develop the logo, the biker colors, the website and the videos, and have worked on our social media pages ever since.

Then Lou Fielack, a businessman and part-time counselor at the Life Center of Long Island for young couples, became the third man on board, and he became a real spokesperson for the PBFL with his deep Pro-Life understanding. He's also a team member for Rachel's Vineyard Retreats, which is a beautiful healing ministry for moms and dads dealing with abortion. Mike Drozdic (a biker) met Lou while he was praying at the Planned Parenthood in Hempstead and soon joined us Bikers. Lou explains it this way: "I heard the Harley pull up but I was praying with my eyes closed wearing a Harley Davidson rain jacket. I figured the biker was heading in the apartment building next door. If not, I would pick him out easily after my prayer. Obviously, he didn't go into the apartment building. Mike came to pray like myself and the rest is history!"

Can you tell us more about some of the priests that work with you?

First, we have PBFL Chaplain Fr. Liam McDonald, who is the Associate Pastor of Holy Family Church in Hicksville and the Chaplain of Holy Trinity High School. Before becoming a priest, Fr. Liam had donated much of his time to the Life Center of Long Island and was a great inspiration for Mike, Lou, and me (especially with his presence at Planned Parenthood).

We also have Fr. Fidelis Moscinski, C.F.R who is one of the Franciscan Friars of the Renewal in NYC and a "Red Rose Rescue" priest. On every first Saturday of the month, Father Fidelis holds a morning of prayer at the Basilica of St. Patrick's Old Cathedral in NYC. The morning starts with 8 A.M. Holy Mass followed by 8:45 A.M. Exposition of the Blessed Sacrament. This is then followed by a Rosary Procession to the Margaret Sanger Planned Parenthood on Bleecker Street. Through this morning of prayer and, especially through the Morning Mass, we put on the Armor of Christ at Holy Mass before we enter into the spiritual battle for life for the unborn child!

Then there's Fr. Paulus Maria Tautz, C.F.R who is the Chaplain of our PBFL chapter in East Germany. He is also the founder of the God is Good (GIG) festival which brings talents from the USA and Europe to perform in Jesus's name. Because of the communism in East Germany, only 5% of the people there are baptized, and Father Paulus is doing such amazing evangelization work there!

*To hear more about the work of the **PBFL in Germany** and on **Long Island** and **Father Paulus's story**, be sure to **tune into next month's newsletter for part two of this series!** Be sure to follow us and give us a like on our social media pages to keep up with our Office's upcoming projects!*

*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).*
