

# Consistent Life Annual Report 2011

## CONSISTENT LIFE ANNUAL REPORT 2011

As always, Consistent Life (CL) and its member organizations and endorsers are in the forefront of the struggle for peace, justice, and life. CL has limited financial resources but is rich in active, creative people with a vision of a world of peace.

As CL President Bill Samuel said, “Consistent Life has worked to move the mind of the community to respect every life: the prisoner on death row, the child in the womb, people threatened by war and poverty.”

CL does this in many ways. It maintains a richly informative, continually renewed website that is visited by many and runs ads advocating the Consistent Life Ethic (CLE). Board members and supporters speak at many events, with CL often being represented through tables, materials, and staff. This is effective work: awareness and approval of the CLE has grown enormously since we started our work.

## NEW PROGRAM: CL KIDS!

CL has started the new program, “Consistent Life Kids!” in order to make age appropriate materials on the CLE available to youngsters of various ages. This project is being coordinated by CL Board member Rachel Muha.

In June, 2011, Muha was awarded the Jacqueline Kennedy Onassis Award for Outstanding Public Service for her work with urban children. In her acceptance speech, she spoke of the tragic loss of her son, Brian, who was murdered, of the power of forgiveness, and of her concern for her son’s murderers. She said, “Life is so precious. All life: the unborn, the handicapped, the disadvantaged, the elderly – and the criminal. Let’s be radical witnesses to life – and make everyone’s life better.”

## LOSSES

The CLE movement lost a valued and loved ally on January 18, 2011, with the death of **Sargent Shriver**, a great worker for social justice, an endorser of CL’s Mission Statement, and a good friend to the organization. He was a strong advocate for civil rights and persuaded John Kennedy to personally call the King family when Martin Luther King, Jr., was jailed in Georgia. He was President of the Special Olympics and supportive of the rights of the disabled.

**Former U.S. Senator Mark Hatfield** died on August 7, 2011. He was a co-sponsor of the Nuclear Freeze and of the Human Life Amendment. CL President Bill Samuel said of him: “He was the most prominent [CLE] politician of the 20th century. He was anti-war, anti-abortion and anti-death penalty, and a great statesman, a man of principle.” CL regrets the loss of a great friend.

**Frank McNeirney**, who 20 years ago co-founded CL member group Catholics against Capital Punishment (CACAP) with his wife Ellen, died on December 1, 2011. Ellen is unable to continue CACAP. She encourages members to continue the effort to abolish the death penalty by supporting other groups. CL is deeply thankful for the work of this dedicated and prophetic couple.



Public witness at the 2012 conference

## NEW ENDORSER

The newest endorser of the CL Mission Statement is the Rev. Samuel Rodriguez, the President of the National Hispanic Christian Leadership Conference. CNN calls him “the leader of the Hispanic Evangelical movement.” The Wall Street Journal calls him “one of America’s most influential Hispanic Leaders.” He has met with President Obama to discuss immigration reform; he writes for many journals and serves on President Obama’s White House Task Force on Fatherhood. The Rev. Mr. Rodriguez has spoken out on many issues. He has said, “The American faith narrative repudiates torture under all circumstances and without exception.” He also commented that “To have within our borders 9 million children without health care coverage is a moral travesty. Health care coverage for children is a natural extension of a Pro-Life agenda.”



Public witness at the 2012 conference

## PEACE & LIFE CONNECTIONS

This weekly email publication contains brief notes, including action suggestions, news of events past and present, notifications of resources available, and relevant quotations.

[www.consistent-life.org/weekly.html](http://www.consistent-life.org/weekly.html)

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## A SAMPLE OF BOARD MEMBERS' WORK IN 2011

**Board member Richard Stith**, who is a professor of law at Valparaiso University, visited the University of the Andes in Chile. Professors there who knew he was a CLE advocate asked him about the killing of Osama Bin Laden. Dr. Stith, who is fluent in Spanish, answered with a moving defense of the rule of law.

He said, "It was an example of illegal violence. Bin Laden was not even armed when he was killed. This is not the best way to show the United States to be a civilized nation, nor an exemplary way to combat illegal attacks on life...America itself turned to violence... In so doing, we failed to focus on the most important issue at stake, the sanctity of human life. This is the issue around which we could and should have rallied the world."

**Board member and Consistent Life Vice President Rachel MacNair** coordinated a petition drive for a referendum in Kansas City to prohibit a city-financed plant from making components for nuclear weapons. Dr. MacNair also founded the pro-life Quaker organization, Friends Witness for a Prolife Peace Testimony, and was elected president of Division 48, Peace Psychology, of the American Psychological Association.

**Board member Carol Crossed** is founder and director of the Susan B. Anthony Birthplace Museum, which offers exhibits connected with Anthony's life and teachings. Among the many informational events offered at the museum, an exceptionally meaningful one was a talk on October 23 by Brian Lee, Executive Director of All Girls Allowed. This organization's mission is to defend the life, value, and dignity of girls and mothers who are suffering because of China's one-child policy and the widespread preference for sons. These conditions have caused massive numbers of abortions of baby girls and a very high gender imbalance among Chinese children. Even pro-choice activists are dismayed at the huge numbers of unborn children killed only because they are female.

CL Board members have presented the CLE view at dozens of events, including conferences of the School of the Americas Watch, Call to Action, University Faculty for Life, and many more.



## CONSISTENT LIFE MEMBER GROUP AND ENDORSER ACTIVITIES

**Veronica Whitty**, the leader of our UK affiliate, Respect Life, and a member of CL's Advisory Board, participated in a Christian and Muslim women's prayer for peace event on May 7.

Member group **Democrats for Life** has created a Campus Outreach Program.

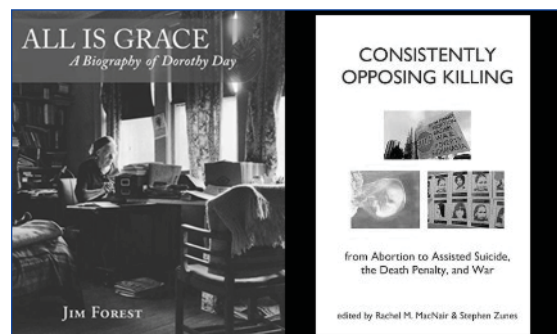
Member group **Mary's House Catholic Worker** co-sponsored a February conference, "Matters of Life and Death: Alternatives to the Death Penalty."

CL endorsers **Fr. Roy Bourgeois**, founder of School of the Americas Watch, and Nobel Peace Laureate **Adolfo Perez Esquivel**, signed a letter in October asking Latin American presidents to withdraw their troops from the military presence in Haiti.

**Fr. Daniel Berrigan, SJ**, signed a petition asking Amnesty International not to endorse abortion as a right. He said, "... abortion and the rights of the unborn are more serious than a point of view. It's as close to my conscience as war and the death penalty."

## BOOKS

New books by CLE activists came out in 2011. The paperback version of *Consistently Opposing Killing: From Abortion to Assisted Suicide, the Death Penalty, and War*, edited by Rachel MacNair and Stephen Zunes, became available.



Longtime CL supporter Jim Forest has written a new book about Dorothy Day, *All Is Grace*, which shows her embrace of the radical message of the gospel.

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[www.consistent-life.org](http://www.consistent-life.org)