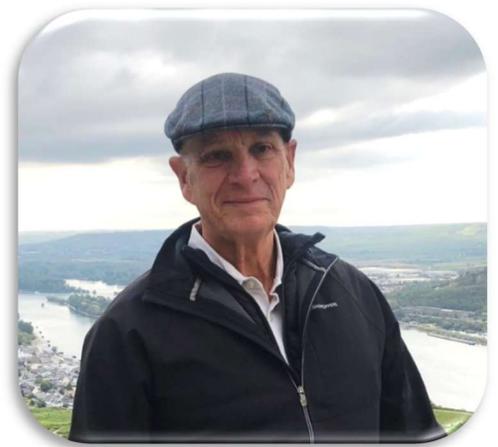


## **Message from Vic Sellier, Chairman of the Board**

### **To: Supporters of A Woman's Choice, Crisis Pregnancy Centers**



I hope that all of you have had the opportunity to enjoy the “drink vouchers” we sent you, and that you properly celebrated the role you have played in supporting the efforts of A Woman's Choice, in advancing the cause of the sanctity of life.

I would like to begin with an expression of profound thanks to all who have been part of the work of A Woman's Choice (AWC) over the past year; beginning with you, our financial supporters. You are the foundation upon which we build everything we do! Without your donations we could not provide services to the women in crisis.

Those services are offered up by our staff and volunteers, who are led by our Executive Director, Tessy Trissell. Tessy's small staff is made up of Virginia Baker, part time Assistant to the Executive Director, in Herndon; Juliana Dort, part time Administrative Assistant; Marina Miniter, full time Associate, in Falls Church; and Sister Augustina Temprano, part time Associate in Falls Church. This year the AWC staff has been challenged as never before, and they have more than met the challenge, as demonstrated by the numbers of babies saved and clients helped with material support. We have read and heard much of the heroic acts of health care providers during the the COVID pandemic. Our staff and volunteers have been no less heroic during these times, because they have been providing the ultimate health care; the protection of life of the unborn! And, during the most onerous times of quarantine and restricted activities, our staff and volunteers were finding ways to counsel our clients, get them assistance, and facilitate access to prenatal support. They never wavered, and our clients have come to rely on and seek out those life saving services. So to those staff members mentioned above, and all the volunteers who help us in the office and with our clients, “thank you for all you do!”

And then, there's our Board of Directors. Those of you who have been long time supporters of AWC have noticed, I'm sure, that the makeup of our Board has changed significantly over the past few years. We are extremely grateful to those who have served in the past, and who left their indelible

mark on AWC, but we are equally grateful to our current Board members, who are constantly showing their initiative and helping shape the future of our organization. Certainly the continuity offered by Dolores Wisecarver, our former Executive Director, and now our Secretary, has helped us maintain our focus on our guiding principles of faith and trust in God's guidance in our mission to serve women in crisis, and their babies. But, the addition of Marilou MacDonnell, our perennial chair of the annual Advocates for life Dinner, Amy Wolfe, our current Treasurer, and Paul Summers and Jayme Juncker, Board Members, has provided fresh ideas and enthusiasm for our ministry. In the past months we have learned a new skill of Zoom conferencing! We have applied that skill to support Tessy and her staff, to assure that the resources that you have entrusted to us, are efficiently and appropriately applied. I feel confident in saying that the entire Board has served you, and our clients well! I am sure you would join me in thanking them for their time and services.

At this point I would like to address how we at AWC have applied your funds in the past, and how we intend to work with the funds we are asking you to contribute in the future. A little over four years ago, with your help, we opened our second center, in Herndon. Although it took some time to gain traction, I think it is fair to say that today we are a fully integrated member of the Herndon community, and as essential and reliable in our services to clients in that area, as we have been in Falls Church for over thirty years. Under Tessy's management of our paid staff and corps of volunteers, we have been able to operate both the Falls Church Office, and the Herndon office, with only a modest increase in our annual budget, while maintaining a bank balance that assures us of our ability to operate comfortably, with funds in reserve in the event of a disruption in our flow of contributions. And most importantly, we have accomplished this while seeing the numbers of babies saved over the past two years grow to over 40 per year, and we continue to provide material assistance to those who ask for it, as well as underwriting client medical and living expenses when needed.

In the year ahead we intend to continue our outreach in each of the communities where we have a presence, to serve the clients in those communities, and to broaden our base of support to enable continued long term counseling and material assistance to women in crisis. We will be expanding our outreach to parishes in the Diocese of Arlington to have more baby bottle campaigns and diaper drives. Tessy has been very

energetic in offering to meet youth groups in the area schools, not only seeking volunteers, but also offering a pro life presence. We firmly believe that involvement of youth in the battle for life is essential long term. Those initiatives have resulted in significant increases in volunteer hours from young people at our centers.

Some might be discouraged if we were to only focus on the increasing need for our services, as measured by the numbers of abortion minded clients we see. But I choose to be encouraged by signs of a growth in faith, and what that means for the future of our ministry; faith in God, faith in the assistance provided by the Holy Spirit in all we do, faith in our youth and their commitment to life, and faith in the growing acceptance and understanding that life does in fact begin at conception, and that every life is sacred and deserves protection from the moment of conception, to the time of natural death.

Over the past several months, while living through the physical and economic effects of the pandemic, the increasing and seemingly unending civil unrest, and the very apparent social anxiety virtually every person is dealing with, I have been struck by the number of times I have heard people express, in one way or another, that hope for the future will come from faith in God's love. There have been many recent studies that seem to confirm that people are looking to God for answers to the issues that are pulling us apart. Fundamentally, God's answer is based in love, and it is love that will help us all deal with those who threaten the lives of the unborn. We welcome every client with a message of love; love for them, and love for their unborn child.

Finally, I want to inform you of changes that we are making on the Board of Directors of A Woman's Choice, with an eye toward helping us adapt to a changing world and improving our ability to respond to the needs of women in crisis in our community. Effective on 1 January, 2021, Amy Wolfe will assume the role as Chairman of the Board, and I will be stepping down from that position, but will continue to serve on the Board. Amy has been our Treasurer for the past year, after previously serving on the Board for a number of years, and she has been a dynamic contributor, offering new ideas for how we manage and communicate to our clients and our supporters. She has a wonderful relationship with the rest of the Board members, and with Tessy, and a complete understanding of the needs of our organization. And, she is a person of great faith, fully committed to

defending the sanctity of life. After serving on the Board of A Woman's Choice for over 10 years, I have every confidence that Amy is the correct choice to replace me as Chairman of the Board, and all of the members of the current Board agreed, and unanimously voted Amy into the position. We will be looking to add at least one additional person to the Board, and we will be reassigning the Treasury function, between now and the end of the year.

I had hoped that my last year as Chairman would end differently, and that I would have been able to personally thank each of you for your long and loyal support; the Advocates for Life Dinner was to have been the opportunity to do that. Unfortunately, the pandemic interfered with that plan. However, my appreciation for your assistance over the years is not at all diminished, and I will always be grateful for the inspiration I gained from you, to fight for the rights of the unborn. You have helped me grow in my love of God, and in a much better understanding of how He would have us serve him in this world. A Woman's Choice was saving babies long before I arrived on the scene, and I am certain that AWC will be saving even more babies in the years to come, with your continued support, under the extremely capable leadership of Tessy Trissell, as Executive Director, and Amy Wolfe as Chairman of the Board. I will be forever grateful for the confidence you showed in me as I asked for your financial support every year. You always responded, and in so doing made our jobs possible.

Thank you!

Victor Sellier