



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on August 24, 2015

## Tens of Thousands Pray at Planned Parenthood Clinics to Protest Abortion

Tens of thousands of pro-life supporters engaged in prayerful protests at Planned Parenthood abortion clinics across the country on Saturday. During the nationwide prayer events, which took place from 9 to 11 a.m. local time, an estimated 50,000 to 75,000 people gathered in front of more than 350 Planned Parenthood facilities located in 47 states.



*USA Today* interviewed Mark Harrington, the national director of Created Equal, one of the organizations coordinating the prayer protests, who said:

We don't believe this will be solved in Washington D.C., or the state legislatures. This will be solved in local communities when they take ownership over their own communities. That's why we are trying to empower local organizers and pro-life organizations.

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Monica Miller, the director of Citizens for a Pro-Life Society, one of the groups participating in the event, told *USA Today* that although there have been thousands of individual protests against Planned Parenthood, this is the first time she knows of there were hundreds of demonstrations on the same day.

"We want to draw attention to the injustice of legalized abortion," said Miller. "The American public needs to be awakened to the atrocity of what is happening to innocent unborn children."

Planned Parenthood is the nation's largest abortion provider, performing 327,653 abortions in a recent year, according to the organization's 2013-2014 annual report. It has become the subject of increased controversy recently after undercover videos recorded by the Center for Medical Progress. One video showed Planned Parenthood's senior director of medical services, Dr. Deborah Nucatola, discussing the harvesting of body parts of aborted babies. In the second video, Mary Gatter, the medical director at the Pasadena and San Gabriel Valley (California) Planned Parenthood affiliate, is seen in discussion with undercover investigators who posed as officials with a biotech company that served as a middleman to sell aborted baby body parts to universities and other research facilities.

Planned Parenthood was quick to respond to critics and Eric Ferrero, a vice president of the organization, said in a statement:

These rallies are meant to intimidate and harass our patients, who rely on our nonprofit health centers for basic, preventive health care. The people behind these protests have a clear political agenda: They want to ban abortion, and block women and men from accessing basic reproductive health care.

Those who have been active in the pro-life movement immediately will see several fallacies in Ferrero's statement, including:



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- It is difficult to see how a group of people standing well back from Planned Parenthood's private property on public sidewalks, engaged in prayer barely above a normal conversational level, can "intimidate" or "harass" a patient driving past them into the facility's parking lots, which generally are located several hundred feet away from those who are praying.
- While it is true that the pro-life people taking time out of their day to pray in front of Planned Parenthood want to ban abortion — just as abolitionists of the 19th century wanted to ban the awful practice of slavery — they never "block" anyone from accessing "basic reproductive health care." In fact, the demonstrators cannot and do not even block anyone from obtaining an abortion, which those who value human life would only consider to be "healthcare" in the sense that Dr. Joseph Mengele, in his capacity as a physician at the infamous Auschwitz concentration camp, provided "health care" to his victims there.
- As for any genuine healthcare, following his failed attempt to have Planned Parenthood defunded earlier this month, Senator Rand Paul (R-Ky.) pointed out that any other health service (other than abortion) that Planned Parenthood offers is "already done by another government agency" or by community health centers. The issue here is not whether the federal government should be funding other health services (constitutionally the federal government should not be doing so); it is simply that the federal government does not have to fund Planned Parenthood in order to fund basic health services for women.

"We have 9,000 community health centers," said Paul. "There is no reason for one penny ever to go to Planned Parenthood."

This writer and his wife, who have been active in the pro-life movement almost as long as there has been a pro-life movement, joined a group of more than 500 people engaged in prayer who had formed a long line on the sidewalks on either side of and across the street from Planned Parenthood's large facility in Fort Worth, Texas. Without exception, the prayer warriors followed the law to the "T" and respected the property rights not only of Planned Parenthood, but of adjacent medical buildings and the large hospital across the street. We noted with much irony that a facility engaged in the callous taking of human life has ensconced itself among medical facilities dedicated to preserving life and health, as if it were just another respectable medical practice. Its large sign bearing the Planned Parenthood name in unabashed letters at least two-feet high seemed to mock the neighboring medical practices. Such effrontery could only be attributable to the widespread ignorance of exactly who and what Planned Parenthood is. Knowing what regularly occurs at that facility, we could not help being flooded by a sad emotional reaction, lamenting how our once-Christian society is sinking to the depths of the Roman Empire at its lowest level.

We were offered signs to hold up that had served double duty for use at the annual National Life Chain that is held on the first Sunday in October across the nation. The signs carry a number of messages in both English and Spanish, including: "Abortion Kills Children" (El Aborto Mata Niños), "Abortion Hurts Women," and "Pray to End Abortion." Because our signs had been recycled from the National Life Chain, printed on the backside were guidelines and a code of conduct formulated for that event, but that also applied to Saturday's prayer protest — including asking the demonstrators to maintain a quiet, prayerful demeanor, to not engage any counter protesters, and to respect all private property.

The event went on peacefully for two hours, with small groups of people quietly praying among themselves. We joined a nearby family with young children in their prayers. Though the organizers had notified the Fort Worth police in advance about the event, not one police car drove past, probably



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because the police were familiar with these pro-life events and knew from past experience that pro-lifers are peaceful people who don't cause trouble.

We learned afterwards that these prayer vigils were held all across the country, and among the cities where prayer protest took place were St. Paul, Minnesota; Aurora, Illinois; Houston, Texas, Plano, Texas; Falls Church, Virginia; Columbus, Ohio; Toledo, Ohio; Lincoln, Nebraska; Washington, D.C., Lansing, Michigan, Boston, Massachusetts, and Worcester, Massachusetts.

*Photos: AP Images*

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