

The Fr. Norman Weslin story

An unlikely priest displays unbridled valor

Of all the well-publicized scenes at the Notre Dame University commencement protests last May, probably none was more poignant than the arrest by police of the feeble, 78-year-old priest struggling under the weight of a wooden cross.

But getting arrested at abortion protests was nothing new for Fr. Norman Weslin.

As the founder of Lambs for Christ, described by *Time* magazine in 1992 as perhaps “the most zealous and aggressive of the pro-life organizations that seek to shut down ‘killing centers,’” Weslin has been arrested and jailed over 70 times.

A more devout, dedicated, and downright feisty pro-life priest would be hard to find.

It would also be hard to find a man seemingly less likely to become a priest in the first place.

Norman Weslin was the son of Oscar and Hilma Weslin, both immigrants from Finland who met and married in Michigan, settling down in Iron City to raise 18 children.

The first ten died in infancy. Norman, baby number 16, grew up to be a little rascal in school, and came in for his share of whippings from the school principal.

“I was never a sarcastic kid or one always looking for trouble,” Weslin wrote in his book, *The Gathering of the Lambs*. “I just always happened to be there when it happened.”

In the fifth grade he met a pretty little girl named Mary Lou. The fact that she was Catholic and he was Lutheran didn’t deter him – he fell madly in love, and stayed that way until he graduated from high school and joined the army at age 17.

But Mary Lou said she wouldn’t marry him unless he made something of himself and became an officer.

So after getting off to a dismal start, he pulled his act together, graduating from Officer Candidate School in March of 1951.

Then it was on to artillery and missile school at Ft. Bliss, Texas. While there, the smitten young second lieutenant converted to Catholicism.

Norman and Mary Lou were married in August, 1951.

Airborne school at Ft. Benning, Georgia, followed, then paratrooper duty at Ft. Bragg, North Carolina, with the 82nd Airborne Division.

It was there, Weslin relates, that he began a 20-year run as a “hopeless alcoholic.”

Stationed in Panama in 1952, he nearly killed Mary Lou while driving drunk. The doctor told him she had suffered a massive brain concussion and was going to die.

A nurse gave him a green scapular, told him to pin it on Mary Lou’s pajamas and pray, “Immaculate Heart of Mary, pray for us now and at the hour of our death.”

Weslin did so. His wife sat up in bed and asked when she could leave the hospital. She left three days later.

During his assignment in Japan, the



Fr. Norman Weslin is tagged during his arrest for trespassing at Notre Dame University last May.

couple adopted two Japanese-American children, a 2½-month-old boy and an 11-month-old girl.

Then it was back to Ft. Bliss for the officers’ advanced course in their nuclear missile school. Weslin graduated second from the top of his class.

He became a missile operations officer, responsible for the army nuclear missile air defense of New York City and New Jersey against Soviet Russian air attack.

More high-level positions followed. All the while he continued to drink heavily.

In 1963, drunk after a party at his house, he accidentally set himself on fire while trying to relight the barbecue grill and nearly burned himself to death.

Weslin retired from the army in 1968 with the rank of lieutenant colonel.

That same year he came to grips with his alcoholism, joined Alcoholics Anonymous, turned his life and his will over to God, and never drank again.

In retirement, his religious faith deepened. He delved into the writings of Teresa of Avila, St. John of the Cross, and especially St.

Louis de Montfort's *True Devotion to Mary*.

At age 49, he decided to see if he could abandon everything to Jesus, through Mary, as Louis de Montfort advised – literally.

He hitchhiked to Denver and hired himself out as a shepherd, ending up in the Black Mountains on the Colorado-Wyoming border with “one thousand sheep faces all looking at me,” and having no idea what to do.

A Basque shepherd from Spain appeared from nowhere and taught him the ropes, probably rescuing him from death by starvation or other mishap.

He was hooked: abandonment to Jesus through Mary worked.

After the shepherding episode he received his Master's degree in Theology at the Roman Catholic School of Applied Theology, part of the Graduate Theological Union at Berkeley, California – but not without being utterly appalled by the often heretical and blasphemous teaching going on at the school.

His participation in the pro-life movement began in 1969 when he led a fight to defeat a bill in Colorado to legalize abortion.

Weslin and Mary Lou had been planning to teach the Indians about Christ on the reservations in Wyoming.

All their plans came to a screeching halt on July 2, 1980, when a car rear-ended the Weslin's car – their daughter was driving – and Mary Lou was killed.

After 28 years of marriage to his beloved Mary Lou, Weslin was like a lost soul, wandering from the home of one relative after another.

But finally accepting his loss as God's will, he turned his home in Colorado Springs into The Mary Weslin Home for Pregnant, Unwed Mothers. The home would eventually house over 250 mothers.

In 1982, at age 52, Weslin entered Sacred Heart Seminary in Hales

Corners, Wisconsin, to study for the priesthood.

He estimates that at Sacred Heart, located in Bishop Rembert Weakland's diocese, about 40 percent of the seminarians were practicing homosexuals.

After two years at the seminary, the academic dean kicked him out for refusing to go to a class with heretical teachings.

Weslin continued his studies at Mater Dei Seminary in Spokane, Washington.

Following his priestly ordination at age 56, he joined a small, orthodox order called the Oblates of Wisdom.

Weslin had “rescued” – blockaded the doors at abortion clinics – several times, beginning in 1976, once with Bishop Austin Vaughan, his spiritual director.

On retired status from his order in 1988, he took part in a rescue in Atlanta and went to Key Roads prison with 260 others.

Jail officials clapped him in solitary confinement for nine days for offering Mass while in prison.

The Lambs of Christ concept came to him while he was in solitary.

Shaping his philosophy and method for fighting abortion was the theology he had found in St. Louis de Montfort's “total abandonment to Jesus through Mary,” combined with the mystical theology of the victim soul exemplified by Blessed Josefa Menendez.

He decided that the “scrawny Lambs of Christ” would confront satanic worldly authority as proxies for the helpless babies killed by abortion.

They would perform acts of civil disobedience; Weslin reasoned that this was permissible because the laws they would break were unjust

and therefore, according to Catholic teaching, no laws at all.

When arrested, they would assume the helplessness of an unborn child refusing to speak or assist in their arrest.

They would go limp when arrested refuse to give their names or respond in court, and refuse to pay bail or any fines.

They would offer up their suffering as “victim souls” to satisfy God's justice so that He would intercede and stop the killing.

Gathering together Catholic followers of like mind, Weslin and his Lambs of Christ crisscrossed the country, staging blitzkrieg abortion mill blockades in one city after another.

Whenever possible, they actually entered the clinics. But inside or out, using heavy kryptonite locks they would chain themselves to concrete blocks or inside old automobiles

making it as hard as possible for police and firemen to remove them.

Often, it would take police all day, a full day in which no baby deaths occurred. And as Weslin points out, Center for Disease Control studies show that 20 percent of mothers who are turned away from abortion mills never return to kill their babies.

The Lambs employed various methods for pumping up their esprit de corps, including humor.

They had their own lingo: their leaders were “shepherds” and “shepherdesses.” They traveled in a “Bedlamb” bus or a “Lambousine.”

Locked together in the clinic entry way, they would sing:

Paul and Silas went to jail,
Had no money for the bail.
Keep your eyes on the prize
–hold on! Or:

Jail officials clapped him in solitary for offering Mass while in prison

Mr. Policeman, tell me why
Unborn babies got to die.
Keep your eyes on the prize
– hold on!

One of Weslin's roughest experiences occurred in 1989 at an abortion mill blockade in West Hartford, Connecticut.

Under the direct supervision of the local police chief, police handcuffed Weslin behind his back.

Then two officers yanked him off the ground by holding a nightstick between his handcuffed wrists – a torture technique called the strapado hold. They carried him to the paddy wagon and then up the courtroom stairs hanging by his wrists in an inverted “V,” with his head and feet banging and dragging on the floor. The hold caused excruciating pain, stopping the blood circulation in his wrists and pulling his arms out of their sockets. He never completely recovered the full use of his arms. The other Lambs endured the same

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treatment.

CBS's “60 Minutes” covered the Lambs' arrests in Fargo, North Dakota, in 1992 in a report highly biased against the group.

Weslin, never one to mince words, called reporter Lesley Stahl “the 60-Minute Jezebel – a barracuda feminazi

of the first order.”

The Lambs spent over 100 days in North Dakota jails. Stahl won an Emmy for the story.

But Weslin's worst jail experience came in Houston. There, a guard spotted pro-life attorney John Broderick palming a Consecrated Host to Weslin, which the priest slipped into his mouth.

Three guards jumped him, kicked him in his back and handcuffed him, trying unsuccessfully to pry the Host from his mouth.

Then they stripped him naked and left him lying on the floor for all to see.

After blockading the door of a Planned Parenthood clinic with an old car in Rochester, New York, Weslin served 4 months in McKean Federal Prison near Erie, Pennsylvania, in 1997, for violating the FACE (Freedom of Access to Clinic Entrances) Act.

The food and treatment at federal prisons weren't so bad, he found. While at McKean, he completed a 39-day water only spiritual fast and wrote almost 300 pages of his book.

Over the years, the Lambs of Christ's ranks were thinning. Police brutality – breaking arms, beatings and torture holds took their toll. Long prison sentences did too.

Federal officials went after the property of pro-lifers using the RICO (Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations) Act. And the FACE Act, passed in 1994, was a major factor in stopping the clinic blockades.

But Father Weslin soldiered on.

In 2002 he was back in McKean Prison again, serving a 5-month sentence – this time for criminal contempt – for praying inside a court-ordered 60-foot buffer zone at an abortion mill in Buffalo, New York.

In 2007 a federal jury in Omaha, Nebraska, found him not guilty of violating the FACE Act. He had entered an abortion clinic, knelt and prayed, and offered help to pregnant women and clinic workers.

More recently, he has traveled to Illinois, Washington, D.C., Colorado and Missouri.

When Father Weslin is not on the road, he spends hours praying at late-term abortionist LeRoy Carhart's mill in Bellevue, Nebraska.

Father currently lives in Omaha.

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evil truth about abortion**

Lambs of Christ founder needs your help

By Missy Smith

I first saw Father Weslin when I was in South Bend, Indiana.

Having been arrested the week before while saying the Holy Rosary on the grounds of Notre Dame, I was

there a week later, commissioned to take pictures for *Defend Life* of the peaceful presence of Dr. Alan Keyes and of Father Norman Weslin carrying a cross.

I had no idea who this beautiful priest was. But we were arrested at

the same time, and when he looked across the desk in the St. Joseph County Jail, our eyes met and he said something that made my heart sing.

He said, “They are waiting for you in heaven!”

Having lost four beautiful

children, all I could think of was seeing those precious children again.

It turned out that I would have the greatest honor of my life, which was to accompany Fr. Norman Weslin to Washington from South Bend and spend hours in his presence.

He had given me his book, *The Gathering of the Lambs*, and although it is a full 500 pages, I couldn't put it down.

Father wrote this most exciting book while he was in federal prison.

He wrote it to bring readers out of their comfortable lifestyle and into the street as "victim souls" – to bring you in front of the place of evil, where they are killing God's children, and there to shout the Gospel of Life from the rooftops as Our Holy Father, Pope John Paul II, has asked *him* to do, as a missionary priest of Jesus Christ – and asked *you*, as a Roman Catholic – one of "The Remnant."

Father Weslin has been trying to do this for 25 years. He is now asking you to join him. He has found God's method of doing this by living out "The Mystical Theology of the Victim Soul" as a "Lamb of Christ."

This means total abandonment of oneself to Jesus Christ, through Mary, in the way of Divine Love.

By means of this book of "lived experiences," he shows you – the 65.1 million Roman Catholics of the United States – how to become one of the millions of ordinary people whom he is asking to come out into the streets as God's people did in Russia just a few years ago.

His writings show you that this is the ultimate method of defeating Satan. To prove this, he draws a portrait of his own life in which he was prepared by Mary to "confront satanic worldly authority" with "helplessness."

He draws this portrait of himself for you in the hope that you will look into your own life to recognize the

"Divine set-ups" by Mother Mary which prepared you for your role in her army.

Father Weslin hopes that you will then be receptive to Mother Mary's interior promptings, which will cause you to recognize the inspirations of her Spouse, The Holy Spirit.

These inspirations will then cause you to want to respond to His urgings, which will move you to come into the streets and shout the Gospel of Life from the rooftops!

This is now being done using legitimate, non-violent, direct action in civil disobedience which risks arrest – or by prayerful means which do not risk arrest – using the Rosary and the image of Our Lady of Guadalupe as our weapons of Divine Love to stop the killing of Jesus Christ's children while they are still in the womb, his old folks while they are silent and defenseless, and his retarded children while they are unaware of the evil being done to them.

Father Weslin says in this book that if you have assets or are raising a family, it is best that you do not risk arrest.

There are those of us who are unattached – who do not have assets, nor are we raising families. We are free to risk arrest in civil disobedience to confront the tyranny in our government and to stop the killing.

He explains that this is why they put Jesus in jail – He was civilly disobedient.

He is asking you to join him in this God-given method of defeating Satan in this colossal war between good and evil.

If you are reading this book, you are very likely a member of "The Remnant" being called by the Blessed Lady to live out your role as a "victim soul" – as a "Lamb of Christ" – to fulfill the scripture passage of Genesis 3:15.

Father Weslin needs you to join him and all the other Lambs of Christ in our efforts to stop the killing. Will you join him?

If you are not sure, read this book from beginning to end.

The devil will try to stop you. He will move the book from your bedside table. But he is a loser; Father Weslin will make that abundantly clear to you in his book.

I couldn't recommend this book more. It is not only a wonderful read but a one of a kind book written by truly a living saint.

All donations are given to the Mary Weslin Home for Pregnant, Unwed Mothers, which was started by Father Weslin after his wife Mary Lou was killed in a car accident.

He turned their home in Colorado Springs, Colorado, into a home for unwed mothers and saved over 200 babies.

To order the book or for more information, contact Missy Smith at mreillysmith@yahoo.com or phone her at 202-337-1966.

Or contact The Mary Weslin Homes for Pregnant, Unwed Mothers, P.O. Box 241281, Omaha, Nebraska 68124, or phone 402-3336167 or 402-697-0533.

Email: jandlthomsen@cox.net or go to www.maryweslinhomes.org.