

Dreams No Longer Shattered: Why We Celebrate the Closing of Louisiana's Oldest Abortion Center

Located in a New Orleans suburb, the oldest abortion center in Louisiana—Causeway Medical Clinic—was permanently closed two weeks ago. Media reports note the sudden retirement of the abortion provider as a primary reason; this past week, new regulations requiring abortion providers to have hospital admitting privileges went into effect.

As workers came to shutter the clinic, the shoddy conditions of Causeway Medical Clinic were on full display: unsanitary medical equipment, dirty carpet—and a yellow sticky note on an ultrasound machine that particularly caught my eye.

The yellow note listed the cost of an abortion depending on a baby's developmental stage: "16-18 wks \$. 19-21 wks \$. 22-24 wks \$. Twin fees extra \$."

It's easy to recreate the scene. Glancing at the ultrasound, which the vulnerable young woman would not see, the abortion provider would read off the price of ending her baby's life—as if manning the meat counter at a grocery store. Thank God for State Rep. Katrina Jackson, a pro-life Democrat standing for women's health and safety, who lead the effort to pass the newly enacted law Act 620.

Yet regulations alone did not close this abortion center. As one deeply involved in local pro-life advocacy, I believe there's a factor many have not considered: an ongoing, years-long prayer effort at this location that united Christians of every background.

On Saturday, Feb. 27, dozens gathered at the shuttered Causeway Medical Clinic to celebrate the women and children who would now be protected from harm.

“The saints came out and the gates of hell cannot prevail—today we have victory!” shared Pastor Bill Shanks of New Covenant Fellowship in Kenner, Louisiana. Pastor Shanks currently leads the faith-based coalition United for Life, which coordinates local pro-life involvement and education. “God arose and His enemies were scattered,” he said.

Rod Aguillard, founder of United for Life, echoed these words in his remarks: “Today, looking back on 40 years of faithful prayer at one place, heaven smiles and we rejoice that the oldest abortion center in Louisiana has been shut down.”

When I sent out a text message about the clinic closure, my dear friend Natalie Brumfield replied: “40 years of destiny just came into fruition—God is so faithful! Our prayers are full of destiny in the midst of the destruction around us. It’s only a matter of time before we see the fruit—for you and the local team especially, today is that day!”

Countless raw scenes come to mind for any of us who’ve prayed in front of those doors, where many thousands of lives have been lost. I have seen over-drugged women walking out of this abortion center, stumbling to their cars alone. When women would dash out the doors and vomit in the bushes, no nurses or medical staff came out to assist.

One woman was left lying on the sidewalk out front of the abortion center—in the fetal position, clearly in debilitating pain. When no one came to help her, I admit for once I crossed the red line to assist her.

Teenagers often went in crying, being forced by parents to have an abortion. Boyfriends screamed at their girlfriends and pushed them through the center’s doors. So many heart-wrenching stories ... and now with this closure, the end will be

not be violence and shame. Death will no longer rule.

Prayers from many faithful ones have gone up day after day for the ending of abortion at this particular place. In 2009, I heard about Bound4LIFE while attending the OneThing Conference in Kansa City, Missouri. The flame in our heart was fanned, and soon we started a Bound4LIFE Chapter at LifeHouse Church where my husband and I pastor.

Along with our faithful Catholic friends, Operation Save America, United for Life, White Dove Fellowship, Youth With A Mission New Orleans, and many others faithfully show up and pray for the ending of abortion. We have stood weekly in front of Causeway Medical Clinic, appealing to the courtroom of heaven; we recently began times of singing worship together as well.

Yet the story really begins decades earlier. In 1976, only three years after abortion was legalized in the Supreme Court decision *Roe v. Wade*, my father-in-law, Rod Aguillard, believed the Holy Spirit desired to begin a prayer movement centered on saving the lives of the unborn and rescuing women.

“On one particular Saturday we were assembled together in prayer and fasting at Reserve Church,” he shares from his pastoral experience. “The Holy Spirit spoke to us that His arrow of judgment was pointed at America because of the shedding of innocent blood. Over the following months, our hearts were greatly burdened.”

He continues, “Then in 1978, Causeway Medical Clinic opened not far from our church. God was calling us to put feet to our prayers. A few of us began to go out during the week to pray in front of the small brick building. Gradually we founded United for Life, which kept the torch burning by leading a prayer movement in front of all the abortion sites in the New Orleans area.”

Their prayers laid the foundation for us to stand on ... and now

I'm grateful to be part of a generation where the light of life shines brightly. I've learned we cannot grow weary in the delay. God hears our prayers, and He will answer! There is an appointed time for the end to come.

My heroes are those who have gone before me and are still at it through every delay, every fire, every persecution, every doubt. Today, because of their partnership in prayer, the dream of our Father has been fulfilled—where so many precious ones will live out beautiful possibilities, and so many women will be saved from violence against them.

One such hero, my father-in-law concludes: "Out of the 10 abortion centers once in the New Orleans area, today only one small one remains open in its diabolical business. Who knows how God may work next in Louisiana?"

As we continue to stand in prayer until all abortion facilities are closed in Louisiana, one Scripture verse comes to mind. Proverbs 13:12 says, "Hope deferred makes the heart sick, but when the desire comes, it is a tree of life." On some days, witnessing the awful treatment women received from abortion providers, I have felt a sick heart.

Yet faithfulness in the delay is never a waste. Today, we know the fullness of this truth: A dream fulfilled is a tree of life! When we remain faithful to the truth God reveals in His Word, it produces life.

Laura Aguiard partners with her husband, Stephen, in pastoring their local church in Reserve, Louisiana. She serves as Principal of Lifehouse Daniel Academy and leads the local chapter of Bound4LIFE International, a grass-roots movement to pray for the ending of abortion, carry the spirit of adoption and believe for revival worldwide. They have five amazing children and she loves being their mother.

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