

# Leaders 4Life – September 2021

## A newsletter from Y4Life

### A Call to Action

by Katie Reid

One of the most profound experiences I had during my freshman year at Hillsdale College was when Rebecca Punches, the high school and young professionals coordinator for Protect Life Michigan, gave a presentation on the many different professions we could pursue in the pro-life movement. While the content of her presentation was interesting and helpful, it was this story she told that left an imprint on my mind and still inspires me in my work today:

*There was a church in Nazi Germany that sat next to a train track. The parishioners of this church would gather together in worship each Sunday, only to be interrupted by terrible screams coming from the passing trains. These screams didn't come from any ordinary passengers but from captive Jews being transported to one of the Nazi concentration camps. The pastor was aware of the effect this was having on his congregation, so one Sunday when he heard the train approach, he decided he had to do something—and told his organist to play louder in order to drown out the screaming.*



I was shocked. At the beginning of the story, I had begun to smile as I anticipated an inspirational story about a group of remarkable Christians who did their part to help their fellow man. But as she continued, my face fell. Tears came to my eyes as I realized that this lukewarm version of Christian love was something of which I too was guilty. Proverbs 31:8-9 bids us, **“Open your mouth for the mute, for the rights of all who are destitute. Open your mouth, judge righteously, defend the rights of the poor and needy.”** As followers of Christ, we are called to stand up for those who can't speak for themselves. We are called to protect the needy and the helpless and not remain silent when we hear their cries, but I knew there were times that I hadn't. I had ignored the suffering of those around me for the sake of my own comfort and avoided conflict with those who have sought to undermine this injustice.

The law is certainly heavy, but God comforts and removes our sin **“as far as the east is from the west”** (Psalm 103:12). It's important to recognize when we've fallen short of God's plan for our lives, but we can't let that discourage or distract us from the work we have ahead of us.

Paul teaches us in Romans 5:3-5 that we can **“rejoice in our sufferings,”** we can rejoice in our failures, knowing that we can find hope in God's love and forgiveness where we expect to find shame and judgment.

We've fallen short of His glory and ignored the cries of the broken, but we find hope in His forgiveness and strength in His love. There's so much work to be done, so many lives to protect. The unborn, the mentally ill, the hungry, the broken, and many others still need to hear about our hope in Christ and the love He has for us, and it's our duty to bring it to them.

*Katie Reid was a 2021 Y4Life intern (y4life.org).*





# My Cup Runneth Over

by Michelle Bauman

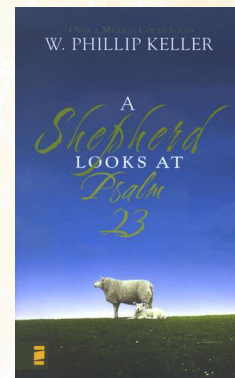
One of my favorite devotional books, *A Shepherd Looks at Psalm 23* by W. Phillip Keller, resides on the top shelf of the bookcase near my desk. I don't remember how I came to own it, but based on its location, I know I must have received the book during our baby and toddler years—the years when all things precious needed to be placed high enough to protect them from chocolate-covered fingers, Nerf guns, and occasional wrestling matches.

The version I have isn't Keller's complete work. Rather, it's a collection of excerpts from his original text transposed on and around pastoral paintings depicting sheep and the Good Shepherd. It is a beauty to behold.

More important than its physical beauty, though, are the invaluable observations Keller makes about the relationship between shepherd and sheep. His reflections shed light on how the Good Shepherd loves and provides for His sheep just as they unabashedly depict how utterly incapable sheep are of caring for themselves. When we recognize that we are those sheep, the implications provide a stark reality. Though we believe we are independent, capable beings, the truth is the opposite. We are completely dependent—in body and soul—on the good and gracious care of our Good Shepherd, Christ Himself.

The theme for this quarter's *LifeDate*, **The Lord Is Our Shepherd**, gave me an excuse to pull Keller's book off the top shelf again. As usual, I wasn't disappointed, especially as I reread his musings on the phrase "My cup runneth over."

Typically, when I think of an overflowing cup, I envision a cup filled with blessing. I picture a cup so full of goodness that it cascades down, spilling over in abundance. And that image reflects reality. God certainly provides cups of blessing for us. He not only gives us daily bread, but He often fills our pantries to bursting, offering us both variety and pleasure. His cup of blessing provides many other things we need as well:





home and shelter, health and community, family and friends, and so much more. As Christians, we know that all good things come from God; they are gifts meant for our good and for the good of our neighbor.

But Keller points out that some cups aren't filled with blessing; instead, some are filled with sorrow. Sometimes the cup placed in our hand runneth over with hardship; sometimes we drink from pools of suffering.

And that's difficult to swallow.

It's clear Jesus feels the same way. Matthew 26:39 records how Christ responds to the cup prepared for Him in the Garden of Gethsemane:

**“And going a little farther he fell on his face and prayed, saying, ‘My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me.’”**

Jesus knows that the coming hours will be filled with hardship and pain; He knows He will be mocked, beaten, and whipped. More than that, Christ knows He will be tortured to death. It is a deep cup full of intense suffering, and Christ prays that He might not have to swallow it.

But that's not where Christ's prayer ends. His final words, hard as they may have been to speak, model for us how we are to approach suffering. **“Nevertheless,”** Jesus says, **“not as I will, but as you will.”** Christ submits to the suffering in store because through it those He loves might be saved; through it, He might redeem not only our lives but also our suffering.

This too is a difficult reality to embrace. We want to be self-sufficient; we want to believe that Christ would never give us more than we can handle. But we forget that as sheep, we really can't handle anything on our own.

Like a sheep cast on its back, we are incapable of righting ourselves. We need a Savior to intervene on our behalf, One who will carry the weight of our worry and suffering on His shoulders. Christ didn't die to prevent us from suffering, nor did He die to give us the power to handle it. He died to handle it for us. Washed in the blood of the sacrificial Lamb and wearing the clothes our Good Shepherd has dressed us in, our suffering is made holy in Christ.

Whether drinking from cups of blessing or sorrow, we are called to live as sheep, ever dependent on the mercies of our Good Shepherd. As we wait on His salvation, we rely on His promise to work through His Word, His Sacraments, and His people for our good, and we draw closer to Him.







### March and Conference:

Open to all high school and college students!  
Register with Y4Life for free conference and reduced rates on rooms!

<http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=e6jfwdwab&oeidk=a07e1aaaawg94d916590>

### Location:

Hilton Crystal City at Reagan National Airpt.  
2399 Richmond Hwy, Arlington, VA 22202  
(703) 418-6800

### Reservations:

Register for conference and Hilton at link above. Y4Life group rate is \$120 per night w/ breakfast. Up to 4 people per room. Limited availability; reserve soon!

### Schedule:

#### **Thursday**

7-9PM: Gathering – Introductions, Music, Devotions, Games, Sign-Making

#### **Friday**

9-10AM: Pre-March Devotion & Directions

10:30AM: Metro to March for Life

11AM-4PM: March for Life (Rally, March, and Testimonials)

7-9PM: Music, Devotion, Post-March Discussion, Life Conference Session

#### **Saturday**

9AM-12PM: Life Conference Sessions, Group Discussions, and more!

To register for the conference or for more information, contact Michelle Bauman by January 1:

[michelle@y4life.org](mailto:michelle@y4life.org) or (812)350-2732 [www.y4life.org](http://www.y4life.org)



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**For Life Live!** – The first and third Tuesdays of each month at 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET. These 90-minute events allow speakers to go in-depth with plenty of opportunity for Q & A.

**Chats 4 Life** – Offering high school and college youth an opportunity to learn about contemporary life topics from expert guest speakers. Held every first and third Thursday at 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET.

**What about ... Mondays?** – On the second Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. CT/7:00 p.m. ET, students gather to talk about life issues they'd like to address and to find hope-filled, Gospel-motivated answers.

**Frontline Call** – For all LFL Frontline volunteers! Monday, July 12, 2021 – 7:00 p.m. CT/8:00 p.m. ET. There will be a devotion, activity update, life project ideas, guest speakers, and Q & A.



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4 Steps to Becoming a Y4Life Messenger

I'm 4Life ... Now what?



5 Steps to Becoming a Y4Life Messenger

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