

CHOOSE LIFE NEWS

VOLUME XXXIX | ISSUE #1 | SPRING 2020

INSIDE

**NATIONAL CONFERENCE
HIGHLIGHTS** PP. 4-9

LIFE CHAIN 2019 PP. 12-13

**FEDERAL ELECTION
ANALYSIS** PP. 14-15



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Thus, by the Grace of God go I



by **Valerie Hettrick**

We have begun another year in the pro-life battle. In this issue of CLN you will see some of the great work done by Sask Pro-Life and others.

Thanks to our dedicated staff, volunteers and board of directors, we continue to surge forward. We eagerly anticipate hosting our annual Gala and Convention April 3-4, 2020, in Martensville, Sask. We appeal to our long-standing supporters but also to a whole new generation of pro-life warriors. With the Knights of Columbus and Campaign Life Coalition SK, we will also host the annual March for Life in Regina on May 9, 2020. See ads in this issue, or our website, for more information.

At the end of 2019, the situation seemed grim--at least on the surface. The radically pro-abortion Justin Trudeau won another federal election. His Conservative counterpart Andrew Scheer spent much of that campaign hiding from his pro-life values and has since resigned. The Liberals asked Canadians to consider extending assisted suicide to children and the mentally ill. A DART poll reported that 62% of Canadians consider themselves pro-choice, while only 13% consider themselves pro-life.

Mainstream media trumpets this as the end of the debate. "The fight is over; time to hang up the gloves and turn off the lights." Many of us may feel the same way: discouraged, defeated, even angry. But this view misses the point: although it's difficult to see sometimes, we're winning battles.

The supposedly toxic pro-life views of Andrew Scheer didn't stop over 6.1 million Canadians from voting for him to become the Prime Minister--he gleaned a higher percentage of the popular vote than any other leader. At least two-thirds of the 26 new Conservative MPs are pro-

life, comprising the single strongest issue-based voice in Parliament. The response to the Liberal's assisted suicide consultation was so overwhelming that it crashed the website on multiple occasions. Ordinary Canadians want their voices heard: vulnerable persons must be protected!

Perhaps nowhere is the surface-level view more misleading than the DART poll. The apparent pro-choice/pro-life divide masks the true story. Late-term abortion is opposed by 70% of Canadians; a strong minority of 43% oppose abortion after three months' gestation. Only 18% of Canadians support the current legal fiction that life begins at birth.

This poll is not an outlier. A massive 80% support a ban on sex-selective abortion (Public Square, 2019), 64% of women support legal restrictions on abortion (Angus Reid, 2018), and a majority in every party other than the Liberals supports a late-term abortion ban (Insights West, 2016).

We are not naïve. Is progress slow and painful? Yes. When we consider the lives lost each day, it seems agonizingly slow. But to save even one life can set the world ablaze. Consider how the Christ Child's life was spared from Herod's wrath. Through Jesus the whole world was changed. We have work to do, starting now.

The race for the Conservative leadership is well underway. The candidates know that they need pro-life support to win. Already we have seen some candidates reach out and "welcome" pro-lifers within the Party. However, being "welcome" to sit down and be quiet is not going to cut it. If leadership candidates want our support, they need to earn it.

Be ready. Ice your wounds and tape up your gloves. The next round is about to begin, and we're not going anywhere. God bless your families and thank you for the prayers and support that you send our way. ♥



Calendar of events

FEBRUARY 26 - APRIL 5: 40 Hours for Life, Regina General Hospital, 14th Ave. Every day 4:30-5:30. Organized by Regina Pro-Life Association

APRIL 3-4: Sask Pro-Life Annual Convention, Martensville, SK. **One Small Step: Families coming together to effect change in the pro-life movement.** Join us for a family-friendly Friday night Gala and Saturday Conference; learn how to build a Culture of Life through simple and effective steps. Register: saskprolife.com/convention or call (306) 992-6941

APRIL 17: Potashville Respect for Life Spaghetti Supper, Langenburg Evangelical Fellowship, 410 Wells Ave E, Langenburg, SK. 6:00 PM. Guest Speaker, Alex Schadenberg. Tickets \$12/person, \$25/Family. Contact Gerd Reetz: (306) 896-2904; Arnold Petracek: (306) 745-6210; Donna Elhard: (306) 743-3226

APRIL 24: Moose Jaw Right to Life Banquet, Church of Our Lady Community Hall, 566 Vaughan St SW, Moose Jaw. Main speaker, Denise Mountenay. Doors Open: 6:00pm | Dinner: 6:30pm Tickets: Adults \$20; Table of 8- \$150; High School students \$10; Table of 8- \$70; Clergy: complimentary. Tickets: (306) 694-4111, Email: mjrtl@sasktel.net

MAY 7: Regina Pro-Life Banquet, St. Martin de Porres Parish, 4720 Castle Rd, Regina, SK. Guest speaker, Carol Roy. Tickets: Adults \$25; Teens \$15; Children (5-12) \$10; Under 5 FREE. Tickets: (306) 569-1983, Email: rpla@sasktel.net

MAY 9: Sask March for Life, begins at Holy Rosary Cathedral, 2104 Garnet St. See ad page 11

For Joan and John and Everyone in Between



By Mariette Ulrich

Last November I attended the national pro-life conference in Calgary, along with several SPLA board members and other

Saskatchewan pro-lifers. We joined over 200 participants from across Canada for a historic conference: the first time that a national pro-life gathering was co-sponsored by four organizations: Life Canada, the Canadian Centre for Bio-ethical Reform (CCBR), We Need a Law, and Right Now.

Appropriately, the conference theme was “Change is in the Air.” Through the last four decades of pro-life work, I have seen many changes: not just specific cultural issues, but also methods of engagement. As the saying goes: “Change is the only constant,” and pro-lifers must keep pace with the constant changes in society. We face challenges today that our grandparents could not have dreamed of (such as the bizarre and dangerous manifestations of “gender theory” being promoted by the courts, media, and academia).

The national conference held something for everyone, young and old. Fifty years of abortion in Canada means the early pro-life activists are growing old; thirty-plus years since the 1988 Morgentaler Decision means our young pro-lifers have never known a nation without wide-open abortion.

In this issue of *Choose Life News*, we are covering just a few of the many topics, workshops, and presentations given at the Calgary conference. These included: how to be productive and compassionate; how to connect; how best to use social media and online platforms; how to maintain courage, especially when the battle seems most overwhelming. Common threads that emerged in many talks stressed the importance of relationships,

communication, listening, and understanding—with an emphasis not just on knowledge and skills, but the very great need for wisdom.

In his opening remarks, the conference emcee acknowledged that various groups in the pro-life movement have not always seen eye to eye regarding how best to defend life. He called for an attitude of openness and respect for each other’s calling as we all strive to save lives and serve the marginalized and vulnerable in society.

I care deeply about all life issues, but the talks that resonated most pertained to euthanasia and assisted suicide. Perhaps it is because of my age: not only is my generation dealing with elderly parents’ healthcare issues, but we foresee our own inevitable death. Euthanasia seems to follow a trajectory: it starts out being “permitted,” then “encouraged,” then “pushed”...and ends up being compulsory (hello, Nazi Germany).

As I listened to the talks, I felt I might be called to minister to the dying—but I had no idea how soon it would happen, or how close to home. Barely a week later, I received word that my 93-year-old father, John, had been hospitalized. Guilt was added to fear and distress: I had not seen him for months. My husband’s gruelling work schedule, two daughters’ weddings, and other serious family issues had kept us from travelling the 330 km to Dad’s assisted living facility.

We cleared our calendar and went to see him. In fact, I managed two trips in the last four weeks of his life. During the first visit, he was still able to speak and sit up. We showed him wedding pictures and talked about the weather. We helped him eat and drink. Two weeks later, he slept most of the time, could no longer talk—refused food. Sometimes he would briefly open his eyes, or return a hand squeeze, but no more than that. I held his hand, moistened his lips, adjusted his blankets, stroked his brow—told him I loved him.

At the same time, my thoughts and prayers and well wishes went to another hospital far away, where a friend’s premature baby was struggling for her life. Via her mom’s Facebook page, I checked in on tiny Joan, born at 26 weeks, weighing 11lb, 10 oz. Many people’s prayers were answered: three months and three-odd pounds later, Joan was discharged and is now thriving at home.

Many prayed for my dad as he suffered towards his journey’s end; the Lord called Dad to his eternal home on Dec. 14. Both of these individuals are infinitely precious in the eyes of God—and should be to all of society. Yet the culture of death holds sway: people like them end up on the scrap heap of humanity nearly every day in our formerly God-fearing nation.

It should not be so. We must pray, advocate, and work tirelessly to change the status quo. Pray for the elderly, sick and dying—and all who travel the path of true compassion with them. Pray for preemies, their families, and hospital staff who care for them. Most of all, pray for those politicians and ‘healthcare’ providers whose answer to suffering is killing the helpless, weak, and vulnerable among us. ♥

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NATIONAL CONFERENCE SPEAKER

Christina Hagan and Ohio's "Heartbeat Bill"



Sask Pro-Life Staff and Board members with Christina Hagan. Left to Right: Alex Ogrodnick, Sask Pro-Life Executive Director, Mariette Ulrich, Choose Life News Editor, Celeste Mann, Sask Pro-Life Office Manager, Christina Hagan, Former Ohio State Representative, and Terri Bergen, Sask Pro-Life Board Member.

by CLN Staff

Christina Hagan was the guest of honour at the gala event of the 2019 national pro-life conference in Calgary last November. Hagan was an Ohio State Representative from 2011 to 2018, and at 23 was the youngest female ever elected to the state legislature.

Initially, she had wanted to be known for economic reform, but instead her name became attached to the pro-life cause, and soon she found out how

difficult that label could be. She told the audience she had never felt surrounded with the type of support and collaboration she was seeing at the Calgary conference (which was jointly hosted by four organizations: Right Now, LifeCanada, We Need a Law and the Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform).

In her speech Hagan said the womb is one of the most dangerous places for a baby to be in America. She spoke about her journey in pressing forward with the Heartbeat Bill despite fierce opposition and people within her own party telling her to "not go down that path." One of those people was the governor at the time, John Kasich.

"I continued to carry the bill and I reintroduced it again and again and again," said Hagan. "You wouldn't believe the disbelief in the media and our party that I would challenge the governor.... I couldn't believe a handful of people could stand in the way of 20,000 children being protected."

"It got to the point that I felt hated by so many. Some for advancing a pro-life bill at all and some for not going far enough...there was really no one I could please," said Hagan, adding it was

her faith that got her through those times.

Hagan said she was judged loudly and consistently as only being pro-birth and caring nothing for children after they are born. "Voicemails were left in my office that I would not read to my worst enemies," said Hagan.

While in office, Hagan sponsored House Bill 259, originally authored by Janet Porter, which would have prohibited abortion on any Ohio baby with a detectable heartbeat. It did not pass; however, it paved the way for the legislation that exists now: House Bill 493, which passed the Ohio Senate and Ohio House in May 2019. Bill 493 bans abortion once a fetus' heartbeat is detected.

"I can't believe I am finally saying this but in Ohio we set out to end abortion and we did it," said Hagan. "What is even more exciting is that in our lifetime we may see the heartbeat law become the arrow that pierces the heart of Roe v. Wade."

Hagan told attendees to continue their work in the pro-life movement and said she was encouraged by what she saw at the national conference in Calgary. ♥

NATIONAL CONFERENCE SPEAKER

Jonathon Van Maren

Culture: Good News

By CLN Staff

Jonathon is a writer and activist who runs a blog called The Bridgehead, where he discusses pertinent issues in the culture wars. His talk began with the surprising statistic that 80% of Canadians are unaware that Canada has

no abortion law. Everyone in Canada below the age of 31 has grown up in a country with no abortion law. Further, many Canadians don't want to hear about the issue: few wish to see the horrible reality about what abortion is and does.

When abortion is discussed by the mainstream media, it is always from the pro-abortion perspective. For example, in 2018, there were many pro-life stories, but the media only reported on the story from Ireland, where a referendum was held to legalize abortion. Yet Jonathon revealed that internationally, the pro-life movement is winning on many fronts.

continued on page 5

” Many young people of the Millennial generation are more pro-life –or more open to hearing pro-life arguments– than their Boomer and GenX parents. This is great news!

continued from page 4

In the U.S., states are passing “heartbeat” bills, parental consent laws, and other legislation restricting abortion. In America, abortion rates are dropping: they are lower than they were in 1973, after the passing of Roe v. Wade. In the same month of Ireland’s referendum, El Salvador saw huge public protests to keep abortion illegal. In Argentina 3.8 million pro-lifers showed up to protest abortion—and the government capitulated. Guatemala, Dominican Republic, and Chile also had legislative victories over the pro-abortion forces. The North American media reported none of these; nor did they show the millions of pro-lifers who showed up in support of banning abortion.



Pro-life activists see it every day with street activism and discussion groups: minds and hearts and lives are changed.



Jonathon Van Maren has met with pro-life leaders in the Netherlands, Switzerland, Austria, and a group called ProLife Europe: they are all eager for training in pro-life apologetics, activism, and in the formation of pro-life campus clubs. Jonathon revealed that many young people of the Millennial generation are more pro-life - or more open to hearing pro-life arguments—than their Boomer and GenX parents. This is great news!

Knowing nothing other than a ‘pro-abortion’ society, with no laws protecting the unborn, many young people are exhilarated to find that they have the power to change the culture. This generation has been raised in a post-Christian culture, so the young today are not the generation that has rejected Christianity and the pro-life perspective. The young are more open to Christianity and Life than many might think.

Jonathon concluded by saying: “There are good things happening every day.” We can choose a side in the fight between good and evil. Pro-life activists see it every day with street activism and discussion groups: minds, hearts, and lives are being changed. ♥

NATIONAL CONFERENCE SPEAKER

Enza Rattenni: Stories from a Sidewalk Counsellor

By CLN Staff

Enza Rattenni went from being a firm believer in a woman’s right to end her pregnancy, to helping women escape from the idea that abortion is their only option. She is now the Executive Director of Aid to Women in downtown Toronto, an organization that helps women in crisis pregnancies save the lives of their children.

It was through dialogue with friends in 2008 that Rattenni changed her views on abortion and her life’s direction. Since then she has found her calling as a sidewalk counsellor: work, she bluntly stated, that is needed but not all pro-lifers are cut out for. “It is a specialized skill; it is a calling, and not everyone can do it,” says Rattenni.

Sharing her stories at the 2019 national pro-life conference “Change is in the Air,” Rattenni said she thanks God that her office shares a wall with an abortion clinic. Lives are saved when women accidentally walk into her office instead of the abortionist’s.

With tears in her eyes, she remembered encountering one woman on the sidewalk whom she met too late. The woman said to her, “If I had met you before, I wouldn’t have had the

abortion.” It’s moments like these Rattenni finds infuriating. “How dare they deny the truth to these women! Why are they stopping women from receiving real support?” said Rattenni about the abortion office next door.

She says the women who walk in are never fully informed about their options, or given the time to express why they feel trapped by their situation. Sometimes women need to hear that it’s okay for them to want their baby: Rattenni added that some women are almost seeking permission to love their baby. She has also been able to help women reverse their abortions by finding doctors who will remove the laminaria insertion before it’s too late.

She shared how one woman was flown into Toronto from the Northwest Territories, all expenses paid, because her northern health district could not give her an abortion procedure at 23 weeks. The woman worked in the media and Rattenni started a conversation with her on the sidewalk outside the clinic. Rattenni sensed the woman really cared about her work in

the media in her home community.

So Rattenni posed the question, “If you do this (have the abortion) how do you think that will affect the integrity of your work?” The woman chose not to abort her child, and the child is now part of a loving family. “Would an abortion clinic worker ever ask that question?” Rattenni asked the crowd.

Due to the 50-meter ‘bubble zone’ in Ontario, Rattenni has a limited chance to reach out to the women walking into the abortion clinic. She does this by asking the right questions and saying the right things at the right time.

Rattenni believes a sidewalk counsellor should be present at every abortion clinic in the world. She said training is available and those interested in sidewalk counselling should test their call. She encouraged everyone present to support their local crisis pregnancy centres and to begin changing the culture one person at a time, starting within their own families. ♥



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NATIONAL CONFERENCE SPEAKER

Being Young and Pro-Life

By CLN Staff

Ben Matychuk, the Western Regional Coordinator of National Campus Life Network (NCLN), put two questions to his audience at the 2019 national pro-life conference in Calgary: "Why are you here? Why are you pro-life when it is easier to be pro-choice?"

These questions are important, as they help young pro-lifers develop the skills needed to argue their position. Matychuk shared stories from his time on campus, and the moral relativism he witnessed there, including students saying people who might be born into orphanages are better off dead, or that preborn babies are a drain on the system. "This is not on the fringe," said Matychuk. He says the pro-choice position has become the default position on many campuses.

Furthering his point, he displayed a page from ShoutYourAbortion.com, once promoted by Oprah. The website describes abortion as a normal procedure with phrases such as, "It is because I believe life is precious that I chose abortion," or "Children deserve to be brought into the world with intention."

"We should not be surprised by this reasoning," said Matychuk, noting there is a desensitization of young people to

the idea of abortion. This is backed up by statistics. Of the more than 100,000 abortions performed annually in Canada, over half of women who have abortions fall in the age range of 17 to 29, shared Matychuk, highlighting why university and college campuses need to hear pro-life voices.

"We have an institutional dedication to abortion in Canada," said Matychuk, explaining how NCLN reaches out to students by helping them believe in the pro-life message, giving them a place to belong so they know they are not alone in their views, and helping them behave in a way that is respectful of life.

"Our culture leans on harmful pleasures and they don't produce healthy people," said Matychuk in reference to the NCLN's focus on helping pro-lifers behave in harmony with their beliefs. Young pro-lifers come to understand that abortion is not a healthy behaviour.

Matychuk shared how NCLN creates discussion groups on the topic of abortion. These groups attract attendees, regardless of their views—even professors sometimes show up. "People love to debate on campus," said Matychuk, emphasizing that debate is a cause for celebration. "We are a free people—free to explore and exchange ideas."



Ben Matychuk

At the Calgary conference, NCLN was promoting its latest project called "Bloody Sexism," which aims to start a conversation about the fact that 92 per cent of Canadians are opposed to sex-selective abortion. Using this statistic helps NCLN find common ground with students who may initially identify as pro-abortion but often realize after a few conversations they are more pro-life than they think.

Following Ben Matychuk's talk, there was a special networking event for youth. It is important to note that youth activism of the type Ben described is going on at Saskatchewan campuses, and has been supported by individual pro-life groups around the province, as well as Sask Pro-Life.

Philip Ottenbreit works as the youth coordinator for Sask Pro-Life and as the NCLN campus coordinator for Saskatchewan.

This article appears courtesy of the Archdiocese of Regina.
<https://archregina.sk.ca/news> ♥



Ottawa Youth Trip: National March for Life May 13-16, 2020

Calling pro-lifers 15 to 25! March, pray, witness. Become educated to be protectors and defenders of life. Supporters: if you can sponsor a youth, or know someone who would like to join this exciting adventure, please contact Colette Stang 1-306-753-9798 or the Sask Pro-Life office 1-306-352-3480

Natalie Sonnen & Anastasia Bowles: End of Life Care

By *Mariette Ulrich*

Dying Healed

Natalie Sonnen's portion of the presentation dealt with the Dying Healed program. It was developed in the wake of Canada's legalization of assisted suicide. There have been over 13,000 deaths by "Medical Assistance in Dying" in Canada since the legislation passed in 2016.

Natalie shared how exhausted she felt after so many years of fighting abortion and assisted suicide. She came to the conclusion that working with people one-on-one allowed her to feel as though the fight against euthanasia would be more manageable.

She revealed how the statistics are often misleading: they might say that a large majority is in favour of assisted suicide, but the questions are often deceptively worded to procure a certain response. It is certainly true that a large number of Canadians are very concerned about end-of-life issues. There is confusion about what constitutes "extraordinary measures" regarding healthcare and medical interventions. There is even confusion about the difference between euthanasia and palliative care.

The Dying Healed program gives formation in End of Life Philosophy. Their research drew on the wisdom of many humanitarians, philosophers and writers such as Viktor Frankl, Dr. Jordan B. Peterson, Caryll Houselander, and Edith Schaeffer. The Dying Healed program is systematic and easily repeatable: it has training sessions, manuals, workbooks, and workshops for training facilitators and volunteers. These make a difference in the lives of the sick, lonely, suffering and dying.

” *The elderly don't lack dignity; they lack people to affirm their dignity.*
Anastasia Bowles

Dying Healed recruits volunteers to work in communities—this is very important, since the pro-death side is doing it too: in Oregon, there are euthanasia advocates who actively seek out the sick, lonely and vulnerable and “shepherd” them towards choosing death. Natalie cited the shocking statistic that close to 70% of people who choose euthanasia do so, not because of physical pain, but because of ‘social isolation.’ “People are dying for lack of love,” stated Natalie.

The real crisis in our society is a lack of community: “Loneliness is an epidemic in our culture,” she stated. Dying Healed addresses the needs of people psychologically, socially and spiritually. The program is unique because it addresses the idea of human suffering and how it can have meaning and purpose—from both secular and religious perspectives.

Palliative Care Volunteer

Anastasia Bowles gave a testimony about her experience as a facilitator and volunteer in palliative care. She pointed out how everyone in the process of illness, death and dying needs help and support—not just the patient, but also the family and/or support people of the dying person.

The need is great: only 16-30% of Canadians have access to quality palliative care. On the other hand, assisted suicide is all too available: sometimes people are even pressured to consider it. Anastasia revealed how various health boards in Canada are willing to fly ‘suicide teams’ to remote areas of Canada to kill people, but no such support or effort is made to provide palliative care. Anastasia also cited loneliness as a crucial issue: it is linked to multiple health problems. Many people in long-term care have no one to visit them or talk to them.

Canada has already made moves to widen and relax the criteria for assisted suicide—which can only lead to greater pressure for people to choose suicide

” *Close to 70% of people who choose euthanasia do so, not because of physical pain, but because of ‘social isolation.’*
”

for less serious reasons. “Dignity” is becoming a buzzword, related to such things as incontinence, dependence, mobility and cognitive ability. Anastasia pointed out that babies have problems with all of the above, yet no one is currently advocating for them to be euthanized. Yet society is beginning to believe that the elderly should die for these reasons.

“The elderly don't lack dignity; they lack people to affirm their dignity,” noted Anastasia. She encouraged people to receive Dying Healed training, and to volunteer for palliative care and visitation to hospitals and nursing homes, adding that volunteers usually feel they end up receiving more than they give. She said it is up to us to restore hope, adding: “Being a comforting human presence can make a profound difference.... When we feel most lost, we need re-connection, relationship and belonging.” ♥

Key Concepts of the Dying Healed Program:

- Transcendent nature of the human person
- Goodness, love, justice are reasons for living, not materialism/pleasure
- The power of human presence (relationships)
- Empowers people to start a pastoral visitation ministry

Blaise Alleyne: Changing Hearts and Minds on Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

By Mariette Ulrich

Blaise Alleyne wears many pro-life hats: in addition to being the Eastern coordinator for the Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform (CCBR), he is also involved with University of Toronto Pro-Life, and Toronto Pro-Life.

Blaise began his presentation by stating that in Canada, we hold two mutually exclusive philosophies when it comes to suicide: 1) it is a tragedy that should be prevented; and 2) it is a right that should be accepted, promoted—even celebrated. How can this be? He noted that while any given society generally has an interest in preserving the lives of its citizens, individual rights (in this case, the “right” to die) will always trump any argument on society’s behalf. He listed the three positions that it is possible to hold in regards to suicide:

- 1) The Total Choice Position: everyone who wants suicide gets it, no matter the reason (absurd, no one holds it).
- 2) The Split Position: some get prevention; some get some assistance (current situation in Canada).
- 3) The Pro-life Position: everyone deserves suicide prevention.

Blaise believes that the solution is to start from a point of common ground and move forward through the cognitive dissonance (i.e. Canada does both suicide prevention and suicide promotion). The default position should always be to prevent suicide. The question at the heart of the matter is who gets suicide prevention, and who gets suicide assistance? This logically requires us to split people into two classes: those who are better off dead, and those who are better off alive, and the question is: **who decides, and how do we decide?**

Research done with the terminally ill has revealed that feelings of wanting suicide come and go and can vary

greatly, not just from one day to the next, but from one moment to the next. Blaise referenced the work of Viktor Frankl, Austrian neurologist, psychiatrist, and Holocaust survivor. Frankl did research into suicide prevention, and wrote *Man’s Search for Meaning*. Frankl wondered: Why do some despair, while others hope? He concluded with a verbal equation: “Despair equals Suffering minus Meaning” (D=S-M). In other words, no matter how deep a person’s suffering was, if he found meaning in his life, he was less prone to despair.

Blaise revealed that this theme is present all through the topics of euthanasia and assisted suicide. “Feeling suicidal is a symptom of an unmet need, even amongst the terminally ill.” Over 70% of Canadians do not have access to good palliative care. Blaise pointed out that the average doctor receives less education in pain management than does the average veterinarian.

There is also a very clear element of discrimination. It has been noted that able-bodied people are often offered suicide prevention/counselling, but physically disabled people are more often offered assisted suicide. The same can be said of the elderly. Why? Are their lives held to be of less value? Blaise made the unsettling observation that **Canada’s Assisted Suicide policies are an extreme form of discrimination on the basis of age and ability.**

Blaise also spoke about suicide regret: most who fail suicide attempts, regret their decision. Only 10%-14% who attempt suicide go on to die by a future suicide. In the general population, the overwhelming majority of people who attempt suicide are suffering from some form of mental health crisis. Therefore, can there be such thing as a “rational suicide”? He also pointed out how lobbying for the use of euthanasia and assisted suicide always begins on behalf of the terminally ill, but it never ends



The question at the heart of the matter is who gets suicide prevention, and who gets suicide assistance? ”

there: soon it is extended to the disabled, the elderly, the depressed, even babies. It becomes “non-voluntary” (in other words, homicide) and is given for any reason, including blindness, eating disorders, or just being “tired of life.”

Blaise says the solution includes offering mental health resources, pain management, palliative care, and forms of “dignity therapy” (one example: interviewing/journaling with a terminally ill patient and offering their responses and thoughts in a journal to their loved ones). He quoted a doctor who specializes in palliative care: “When death is the only solution, creativity goes out the window.”

Blaise showed us some video clips of a very moving TV series called *My Last Days* (on the CW network). The program follows the journeys of several people with terminal illnesses, showcasing their creative and imaginative—and inspiring and hope-filled—solutions to the reality of death. “You can always live a meaningful life if you evolve to your circumstances,” said Anthony, an ALS patient featured in the series.

At the heart of this dilemma, as with so many other problems in our postmodern world, is the lack of true compassion (to suffer *with* someone, rather than just kill them), and the lack of meaningful relationships for so many. Get involved: not just in advocating for suicide prevention, but also with volunteering to help alleviate the loneliness and lack of meaning that so many people suffer.

Blaise Alleyne: “Let us never underestimate the power of our presence in the lives of others.” ♥

NATIONAL CONFERENCE SPEAKER

Abortion Law: Women and Children

By CLN Staff

Tabitha Ewert, representing the organization We Need a Law (WNAL), began her talk with the famous Dr Seuss quotation, "A person is a person, no matter how small." She shared how Canadian law (specifically, the lack of any laws regulating abortion) is hurting women and children in our country. 100,000 abortions annually in Canada is 100,000 babies killed and 100,000 women wounded.

She referenced the 1970s book *Our Bodies, Ourselves* (which is no longer in print) saying how the language was very intentional –and very misleading. The book made it sound as though abortion would become a quick, easy, casual procedure, perhaps no more complicated than having a manicure. One photo from the book even showed a woman wearing street clothes while lying on the abortion table.

Ewert says that this has not come to pass: rather than being quick and casual, abortion continues to be

dangerous and highly contentious. Abortion impacts women deeply: even those who consider themselves pro-choice have described the choice as traumatizing. Yet 'bubble zones' make it illegal for pro-life activists to talk to women about these terrible choices. Ontario has no conscience legislation for doctors: it is unacceptable for doctors to point out facts (such as that a baby will be killed) or possible results (side effects, long term effects) of abortion.

Only pro-abortion information or advice is allowed. Result: the medical system makes sure women are in complete ignorance and isolation. Tabitha quoted a feminist publication: "Relatedness is a literal precondition of autonomy." In other words, we don't make tough decisions in a vacuum. Isolating women doesn't increase autonomy, yet increasingly it is deemed unethical (or

illegal) to hear the pro-life side in the abortion question.

Tabitha pointed out that the pregnant woman must become her own "philosopher, embryologist and judge." One of the goals of WNAL is to help facilitate informed decisions by advocating for abortion legislation. The legal goals are based on International Standards Law, regarding gestational limits, waiting periods and mandatory counselling.

WNAL wants Canadians to discuss what abortion is, what it does (to babies and women) and what abortion legislation could involve. Tabitha encouraged conference participants to reach out to Members of Parliament--become someone who talks to them regularly. MPs won't be bold unless and until they hear from their constituents on this issue. ♥



Reach out to your Member of Parliament--become someone who talks to them regularly. MPs won't be bold unless and until they hear from their constituents on this issue.



PARKLAND RIGHT TO LIFE, YORKTON Memorial Vigil

On Tuesday, January 28, nine individuals from the community and members of Parkland Right to Life gathered at the corner of Broadway Street E. and Dracup Ave. in Yorkton between 12:00 noon and 1:00 p.m. for a silent vigil. It commemorated the 3 million babies aborted in Canada since January 28, 1988, when Canada's abortion law was

struck down, removing all legal protection for pre-born babies at any stage of fetal development. This event is held every year on January 28 at the same location and same time. Please mark your calendars and consider joining us in 2021. ♥



Donations In Memoriam 2018/2019

Donations were made in memory of the following persons:

Arlene Nieman
Barbara Saretsky
Fernand Blerot
Mike Chopty
Raymonde Grimard
Robert Nieman
John and Gabriella Hudec

If you would like to make a donation in memory of someone, go to saskprolife.com/memoriam. ♥

MOOSE JAW NEWS AND EVENTS

Pro-life Walk, Bench Dedication

On Sept. 14, 2019, about 100 people participated in Moose Jaw Right to Life's annual Walk for Life. After registering at Victory Church, the walkers completed a route encompassing Main Street, Manitoba Street, First Avenue NW, Athabasca Street, and finally circled back to the church.

The participants' goal is to make people aware that life is precious, and that there are life-affirming alternatives to abortion or euthanasia. President Jean Landry explained: "By our witness...we attempt to awaken the public conscience to think about respecting and supporting every life, from the women with an unplanned pregnancy to the elderly who may feel that his or her life is a burden to others...We implore God to turn our hearts and minds away from this culture of death and lead us back to a culture of life."

The event also served as a fundraiser, with participants bringing in \$2,170 before the walk and in contributions at registration.

On Sept. 15, 2019, a ceremony took place in the Garden of Angels, a special part of Sunset Cemetery. A new bench was dedicated to the memory of children lost through miscarriage, stillbirth, abortion, or in infancy. It is meant to be a comforting place where parents can grieve the loss of a child. Moose Jaw Right to Life members had planned the bench project for two

years, and it became a reality with the help of Marc L'Hoir, manager of Sunset Cemetery.

The dedication ceremony included words from Cindy Latrace, of the Informed Choices Pregnancy Centre. "It's beautiful to see the community ...validate that the loss is real, and to support each other through the grieving process," said Latrace, adding that it was beautiful for families to "have a place to go to remember the life that was yours for such a short time." Moose Jaw Right to Life president Jean Landry hopes the bench serves as a visual reminder to those who have experienced a loss that they are not alone.

Upcoming and Ongoing Events

Moose Jaw Right to Life is excited to announce that the guest speaker at this year's Banquet will be Denise Mountenay, the founder of Together For Life Ministries, offering hope and healing to people affected by abortion and pregnancy loss. Denise has shared her "Mess to a Message" testimony of rape, teen pregnancy and abortion more than 500 times in various universities, high schools, churches, conferences and prisons, and on TV and radio shows.

Denise is the UN Chief Administrative Officer for NGO Endeavour Forum Inc; she has led many teams to the United Nations, hosting workshops and



speaking to UN Ambassadors. She has given inspirational talks all over the world. Denise brings education as well as awareness to the forefront, and teaches on fetal development and the complications of legal abortion to women.

Banquet date: Friday, Apr 24 (See Calendar page. 2). Tickets: Adults \$20; Table of 8- \$150; High School students \$10; Table of 8- \$70; Clergy: complimentary. Talk is PG13: not recommended for children below high school age. Phone: (306) 694-4111 Email: mjrtl@sasktel.net

Baby Clothing Giveaway

On the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month, we run our Baby Clothing Giveaway. We provide new and gently used clothing, accessories, shoes, and toys for babies up to age 2. There is also maternity clothing available. This event is open to everyone, and we always have a great turnout. Volunteers sort donations, display items, and help welcome visitors. If you would like to participate in this outreach opportunity, please call Amy at (306) 684-1774 or Jean at (306) 694-4111. We would love to have more volunteers join our team! Follow us on our Facebook page. @RightToLifeMooseJaw

Editor's Note: Information regarding the events was found at www.moosejawtoday.com ♥



TEEN-AID SASK

A Fond Farewell

It is with mixed emotion that Teen-Aid Sask bids farewell to Shawna Sparrow, former Teen-Aid coordinator. She is pursuing a law degree --another commitment to uphold the truth! Best wishes in your new endeavor.

With over 20 years of dedicated devotion as both Teen-Aid educator and provincial coordinator, Shawna leaves a positive legacy. Our curriculum has been updated every year with new, relevant insights.

Other administrative duties included fundraising letters, processing donations and speaking to interested groups on request. She has skillfully trained, supported and mentored regional educators. Shawna is truly a positive role model, which is as important as the message in a society becoming more secular and challenging.

Her strong communication and organizational skills have enhanced our public relations. This is highly evident in *Tough Crowd*, a book she authored, which relates her experiences working as a Teen-Aid educator. It is an excellent resource. Another initiative is the Grade 12 scholarship for essays and public speaking competition. As Teen-Aid is the educational arm for pro-life, Shawna's work has definitely been an asset to Saskatchewan Pro-Life.

We are delighted to announce that Bonita Hus has been hired as the new Saskatchewan Teen-Aid coordinator. Bonita has extensive work experience in



Shawna Sparrow

various areas and her education includes a Bachelor of Arts, Bachelor of Education, and Master's Degree in Education. She is a former Carlton Trail Teen-Aid educator and has just completed a temporary position as Saskatoon Teen-Aid educator.

Submitted by
Mary Kehrig
Saskatchewan Teen-Aid President

” *As Teen-Aid is the educational arm for pro-life, Shawna's work has definitely been an asset to Saskatchewan Pro-Life. Shawna is truly a positive role model, which is as important as the message in a society becoming more secular and challenging.* **”**

SASKATCHEWAN MARCH FOR LIFE

SATURDAY MAY 9, 2020, REGINA, SK

***Marching for the protection of all human life
from conception to natural death***

10:00 am Mass at Holy Rosary Cathedral (13th Ave and Garnet St.)

11:00 am Dedication to the Unborn: Holy Rosary Cathedral

11:15 am March from the Cathedral to the SK Legislature

Lunch Booth provided at Cathedral and SK Legislature

12:00-3:00 pm Registration SK Legislature

1:00-2:00 pm Rally, Prayer, Program & Picture at SK Legislature

2:00 Silent Prayer and Witness on Albert St.

3:00 Closing Prayer and Wrap-up at SK Legislature

Bring your own chairs to the Legislature.

Please contact Sask Pro-Life for more information (306) 352-3480

SASKATCHEWAN ACTIVISM

Life Chain 2019

On the first Sunday of October, the pro-life movement across Canada gathers for an hour to hold signs and pray at busy intersections and street corners in peaceful protest against the injustice of abortion, and to witness to the value of pre-born life. ♥

PRINCE ALBERT RIGHT TO LIFE - 100 people



SHAUNAVON - around 20 participants



REGINA PRO-LIFE ASSOCIATION - 200 people



SWIFT CURRENT AND DISTRICT -

About 35 people gathered and stood along Trans Canada Highway



PRO-LIFE ESTEVAN -

23 people



UNITY - 47 people came and witnessed along Highway 21



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One Step Backwards, Two Steps Forward



By Alissa Golob and Scott Hayward

We weren't thrilled with the outcome of the October 21, 2019 Federal Election, but we knew that Canada was more pro-life than it had been the day before. Our goal had been to replace 50 pro-abortion Members of Parliament with 50 pro-life MPs in the top swing ridings across Canada. We knew it was going to be difficult. The last time a Prime Minister was ousted after holding a one-term majority government was 1935.

As election night progressed, it became apparent that the Liberals would hold onto government status. Our first instinct was frustration and anger that we are stuck with Justin Trudeau, one of the most pro-abortion politicians in Canadian history, as Prime Minister. Even though we didn't completely achieve our goal, there were some very serious victories. We are here to show you not only the numbers, but the good, the bad, and the future.

THE GOOD

Of 53 pro-life MPs running for re-election, 52 retained their seats. This is an increase from 2015, when 80 pro-life MPs ran and only 40 retained their seats. Of the 22 newly elected Conservative candidates, at least 15 of them are pro-life. **Over two-thirds of all newly elected Conservative Members of Parliament are pro-life.**

Because we won the nominations in those 50 swing ridings, we now have 35 candidates of record who will likely run in the next federal election, which means the pro-life movement can focus on key ridings in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) next time around.

The total number of pro-life MPs has increased from 53 to (at least) 68. The House of Commons is now more pro-life than before; the Conservative Party of Canada caucus is more pro-life than before, and some of the staunchest pro-abortion Conservative female MPs have been replaced by younger, more diverse, pro-life Conservative female MPs.

A number of prominent pro-abortion Liberal and Conservative MPs lost their seats. This has a magnified impact for the pro-life movement.

- **Ralph Goodale:** first elected to the House of Commons in 1986 for two years, and returned in the 1997 federal election. Since 2003, he was the only elected federal or provincial Liberal in Saskatchewan. As of October 21, 2019, Saskatchewan now has no federal or provincial Liberal politician, something that has not occurred since 1986.
- **Sylvie Boucher:** the only female Quebec Conservative MP since 2015 (failing pro-life voting record--only 33%).
- **Lisa Raitt:** part of Stephen Harper's cabinet after her election in 2008. She became an instant rising star within the Conservative caucus. Was deputy leader under Andrew Scheer. Lost her riding by more than 9,000 in 2019.

Justin Trudeau was demoted to a minority government. Now Trudeau must have the confidence of at least one other party to pass any bills, including his budget. If it fails, a new election is called. Another interesting note: the makeup of the committees in the House of Commons and Senate reflect the makeup of the House and Senate themselves. For example, when the Liberals held a majority in the House of Commons, they would also hold a majority on committees of the House

(e.g. having seven of eleven seats of the Committee on Justice and Human Rights). However, now the Liberals will have a minority of the seats on these committees.

This means that if the Members of Parliament from other political parties on those committees vote together and pass a motion for a committee to investigate the current Liberal government and cabinet regarding issues such as SNC-Lavalin, then this minority Liberal government may last months, not years.

THE BAD

Even though pro-life candidates hold at least 68% of the newly added Conservative seats, 35 of our candidates in our target ridings still lost. One of the constant battles was with fellow pro-lifers who voted and volunteered for pro-life People's Party of Canada (PPC) candidates who ran against winnable pro-life Conservative candidates. In seven ridings, the vote split with the PPC candidate caused Conservative candidates to lose.

According to public polling firms that tracked second choice amongst decided voters, no fewer than 67% (two-thirds) of those who supported the PPC said they would support a Conservative Party of Canada candidate. Applying that discount rate to the PPC votes in the seven ridings, this still would have caused six Conservative candidates to lose, including all three of the pro-life candidates.

We lack volunteers. RightNow only has two full-time staff--not by choice. We cannot afford to hire more people at this time. Both staff members decided to forego vacations, work six days a week at 12 hours per day since January 2, 2019, and spent six months traveling across Canada to over 50 locations in our 50 target riding areas hosting workshops explaining how easy it is to doorknock for your local winnable pro-life candidate.

continued on page 15

continued from page 14

Having a database of over 20,000 people, we hammered them with notices about various workshops via text, email, voice blast, live calls, and snail mail. By mid-August, RightNow had posted a video of the entire workshop for others to access who were not able to make the workshops in person. An easy-to-fill online form was created for those who wanted to sign up to help doorknock for their local, winnable pro-life candidate.

At the outset, it was calculated that each campaign needed approximately 20 volunteers to win those seats. We partnered with other organizations, like 4MyCanada who was able to introduce us to new pockets of pro-lifers. Out of the 20,000 people contacted, 650 signed up for weekly doorknocking shifts-- less than 4%.

In the target ridings where we met our weekly doorknocking requirements, we won 10 of those 17 ridings. Three of those 17 were lost due to vote splits with the PPC. In the target ridings where we did not meet our weekly doorknocking requirements, we only won 5 of 33 ridings. ***We could have won an additional 12 of the 28 ridings we lost if we had met our doorknocking requirements.***

If the doorknocking requirements had been met for all 50 of our target ridings, then we would have won 27 of the 50 target ridings. Without a vote split from the PPC, we would have won 30 of the 50 target ridings, doubling our result from 15 new pro-lifers elected.

When pro-lifers show up, we win. When we don't, we lose. It's just that simple. And we lost at least 15 seats because of it.

In the Greater Toronto Area (does not include the City of Toronto) there are 28 suburban ridings that contain young families and many religious communities. These ridings constitute almost as many seats as Alberta, or the Atlantic Provinces, or Manitoba and Saskatchewan **combined**. It is essentially the population size of a separate province.

Of the 50 target ridings for RightNow, 19 were in the GTA. The Conservative Party saw its lowest share of the popular vote in these ridings since 2006. Many in the media will attribute this to the idea that Andrew Scheer was 'out of touch' with urban and suburban Canadians because he is socially conservative. However, this theory does not apply to the suburban and urban ridings in British Columbia, particularly in the MetroVancouver and Lower Mainland regions, where the total raw vote and popular vote increased for the Conservative Party of Canada, resulting in numerous pro-life candidates being elected to the House of Commons.

By looking at the empirical data and considering the growth rates (or lack thereof) of total raw votes for the Conservative Party in the GTA over the last eight years, the problem is not holding a socially conservative position.

- Social conservative candidates placed (on average) over 50% on the first ballot in the 905 region in total raw votes for the 2017 Conservative Party leadership race
- Doug Ford and Tanya Granic Allen combined for over 50% of the total raw first ballot votes in the vast majority of the 905 GTA provincial ridings (which share the same geographic boundaries as the federal ridings) for the 2018 Progressive Conservative Party of Ontario leadership race.

Which means that a significant number of social conservatives stayed home on election day this federal election in the GTA. This is further clarified by the fact that pro-life Conservative Party candidates lost by an average margin of 1,445 fewer votes than the pro-abortion Conservative Party candidates in GTA ridings.

When conservative leaders and political parties campaign without having social conservatives in the platform, they lose in the GTA. When they do include social conservatives in the platform (re: 2011 federal election and the 2018 general provincial election regarding conscientious objection rights and parental consent for abortions), they win.

THE FUTURE

So where do we go from here? Some political pundits think the Conservatives need a leader that follows in Trudeau's footsteps on abortion and gay marriage. But the numbers tell us that it was because of suppressed social conservative vote due to Scheer's convoluted and ambiguous statements on life issues that he lost many seats in the GTA. It wasn't because he said he's pro-life. When pro-lifers show up, pro-lifers win.

As of October 22, 2019 we started working towards the next federal election. We are further ahead today than we were four years ago but there's still a lot of work to do, and we need your help to do it. In order to hire more staff, we need more monthly donors.

We also need more pro-life supporters to step up and volunteer for their pro-life candidates, especially in the GTA. If we can accomplish these two objectives, we can continue to build toward that pro-life majority in the House of Commons, which means passing laws and saving babies as soon as possible.

The future of the pro-life movement is in your hands, and it starts RightNow.

This abridged article was taken from RightNow's website: itstartsrighnow.ca. Used with permission. ♥

Good News for the West:

With the defeat of Ralph Goodale (0% pro-life voting record) by a pro-life Conservative candidate, the Liberal Party now has no elected MPs between Vancouver and Winnipeg (besides Yukon and the Northwest Territories), which spans almost half the continent and approximately ten million people.



MACKLIN-DENZIL EVENTS Statue Honouring Mother Teresa

A statue of Saint Mother Teresa was commissioned and placed in St. Joseph's Park in Macklin on Sunday Sept 8, 2019. The celebration started with the unveiling and blessing of the statue, in memory of the 50 years of unborn children lost to abortion. The inscription reads: LIFE IS SACRED FROM CONCEPTION TO NATURAL DEATH. The faith community gathered at the grotto in St. Joseph's Park. Mass was concelebrated by Bishop Mark Hagemoen and Father Binu, followed by a barbecue and fellowship. St. Joseph's Park Committee, in conjunction with Macklin Denzil Pro-Life, wish to thank the generous donors who enabled the successful completion of this project. ♥

If other pro-life groups or church communities are interested in erecting this particular Saint Mother Teresa statue please contact:
Larry Stang
Box 204
Macklin, SK S0L 2C0
larry.stang@gmail.com
(306) 753-2059

Saint Mother Teresa statue created by Dave & Judy Bereza
River City Statuary, Saskatoon
(306) 978-3988

RAMA PILGRIMAGE 2019 Mass for the Unborn

The 7th annual Mass for the Unborn was held at Our Lady of Lourdes Shrine on Sunday, August 18, 2019. The Rosary preceded Holy Mass, and was led by the Knights of Columbus. After Mass, Rev. Fr. Michal Pajak OMI led the procession to the statue of St. Gianna Beretta Molla, pro-life saint, where all prayed one decade of the rosary as well as the Prayer to St. Gianna and a special prayer for the Unborn

All were invited to the Parish Hall for lunch and a program. Guest speaker Shawna Arnold of Saskatoon delivered a powerful and inspirational testimony of her life's journey. She highlighted the symptoms and effects of abortion and

the trauma that goes with it. She strongly emphasized that no matter how 'broken' one is, God always loves you. She talked about her book *From Darkness into Light: Finding My Way to the Father's Merciful Love*. It's a story of her journey from abuse and abortion to grace. Rev. Fr. Joseph Mary of EWTN read her book and was so moved by her story that he invited her to appear on EWTN in the USA.

Lorne Sliva thanked Shawna and concluded the day with prayers. ♥

Submitted by
Mary Kowalyszyn

U OF S CAMPUS CLUB Thank You, Sask Pro-Life

I want to send a formal thank you to Sask Pro-Life for helping fund the screening of the movie *Unplanned* at the U of S campus. I was able to purchase a year screening license and 30 *Unplanned* DVDs that I would like to sell for about \$10 at the event. I would also like to show the movie again in the spring of 2020 and hopefully get the

next year's club to show it next fall. Thank you so much for helping our pro-life club. We really appreciate it! ♥

Thanks for everything,

Kailee Gaboury,
President, U of S Students for Life

Teen-Aid Northwest



Congratulations to Wes Dombroski of Goodsoil, winner of the \$1000.00 Teen-Aid raffle, which was held at St. Joseph Parish Hall, Dec 1, 2019 at North Battleford.

"The message of chastity in this day and age is the only answer for addressing all the human sexuality issues that confront our teens today. Teens who embrace chastity are free from much sorrow. On behalf of the Teen-Aid Board, I thank you very much for supporting Teen-Aid and in doing so, helping to steer our future moms and dads in the right direction." ♥

- Dr. Jim McLane Teen-Aid President, of North Battleford

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