

CHOOSE LIFE

NEWS

VOLUME XLIII | ISSUE #1 | SPRING 2024

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our Shared Mission



By Frances Stang

When Easter comes early it always catches me off-guard. Scarcely am I back into routine after Christmas, and suddenly it's Ash

Wednesday. By now, we are well on our journey toward Christ's Passion and Death, crowned by His Resurrection. This winter we have been fortunate not to have had lots of extreme cold or snow. Pray that we will receive abundant rain to prevent a summer drought.

The U.S. March for Life in Washington, D.C. was held on January 19 this year. It was so uplifting to see tens of thousands of pro-lifers braving the unprecedented amounts of snow, committed to protecting and advocating for the lives of the unborn. One of the speakers, Benjamin Watson, former NFL player, had this message:

I call this The New Fight for Life. We live in a culture that knows not how to care for life. Factors that drive women to seek abortions are ever apparent and ever increasing. God's word challenges us in the Book of Micah (6:8) to do justice, and to love kindness, to walk humbly before our God.

With uncommon courage we must do justice, not only by protecting innocent pre-born life, but by correcting injustice and rebuilding opportunity so that mothers and fathers can flourish. With deep compassion we must love kindness by offering a continuum of care that provides lasting resources and support, and lest we think we can continue this work in our own power, may we always realize that our wisdom and strength are found by humbly seeking God's direction for the path ahead.

Emotion runs high in mountaintop gatherings like these, but the Battle is won in the valleys. Men, in a country where too

*many of our marriages are crumbling, go back to your homes and fight for your families. **Civic leaders**, in the current climate of compromise, go back to your committees and your communities and legislate for life and for justice. **All of you front line workers** in pregnancy resources centers around the country and other life-affirming organizations, go back to your posts knowing that every encounter is not only about saving one child, but that you are saving Generations.*

***And all young people** with your energy and ingenuity, go back to your schools, your teams, your churches and be leaders that are unashamed to stand for life.*

***Friends**, keep pressing on, until abortion is not only unthinkable, but for those who believe it is necessary, it will no longer be necessary. Friends, keep, keep, keep pressing on." [Edited and abridged]*

This speaks to the challenges we also face. Benjamin Watson's exhortations are applicable to us as well. This is our shared mission.

Here at SPLA, our work also includes the end-of-life journey. In Canada, we are faced with troubling legislation enabling medical professionals to kill with legal protection. The chronically and terminally ill are evermore brazenly being offered Medical Assistance in Dying as the preferred option of "treatment." Those with mental illness are also in the crosshairs. We need to do all we can to stop this.

Those of us who value every life need to do our part. Apathy and convenience have brought us to where we are today. We need to change this. Civic elections are happening this fall: we need to help elect those who share our values. We must educate our friends and relatives about the dangers the vulnerable face in today's world.

Our Annual General Meeting and Convention take place in Saskatoon on April 6. A Proclamation ceremony of May as Respect Life Month is planned for May 1 at the Legislature in Regina.

The SK March for Life will take place in Regina on Thursday, May 9. Please watch for details on our social media, the website and email. We need our members to come out and support these events and bring others with them.

"The man who removes a mountain begins by carrying away small stones."

—William Faulkner ♥

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Sask Pro-Life Office is Moving!

Effective April, 2024, the new address for the SPLA office is:

120 - 2150 Scarth Street, Regina

Please note, our mailing address remains the same:

Box 27093 Avonhurst RPO,
Regina, SK S4R 8R8



EDITORIAL

Too Many People



By **Mariette Ulrich**

Back in the day, I commented on a Facebook photo of two of my nieces and their new babies. At that time, I had what I can only

call a 'friendly stalker' on FB. He was a former acquaintance (actually one of my teachers); every time I hopped onto Facebook, he messaged me in the private chat: wanting to phone, asking detailed questions about my politics, my life, my children. I tolerated it for a while, but it felt creepy.

When I posted a comment (meant for my nieces!) on the baby photo, this person immediately replied, admonishing me for celebrating the babies' births, because didn't I know the world was overpopulated? I was not amused. Not only was he inserting himself into a 'family moment,' but he was spewing nonsense. I deleted his reply from my comment thread and blocked him from seeing my posts. (I have since quit Facebook, and he has since died: may God, in whom he did not believe, have mercy on his soul.)

He was not alone in this delusion: many prominent people (hi, Bill Gates), government bodies, and NGOs still push overpopulation myths. Remember Paul R. Ehrlich? In 1968 he and his wife Anne published *The Population Bomb*, and the western world lost its collective mind. Now the book reads like comedy: they predicted, among other things, that the entire world would be engulfed in famine, resource depletion, and mass starvation by the 1970s, and that "all major marine wildlife" would die by 1980.

They advocated "various forms of coercion" if voluntary depopulation methods failed, as well as letting "hopeless" countries like India starve to death. FYI: India is now the fifth-fastest

growing economy in the world (Forbes), but never let a little racism interfere with your groovy 1960s doom-mongering. The Ehrlichs were so wrong that it prompted American journalist Jonathan V. Last to call *The Population Bomb* "one of the most spectacularly foolish books ever published." Al Gore, take note—even if it's inconvenient.

We observe with irony that the "too many people" trope is always qualified. The rich, powerful elites NEVER think there are too many rich powerful elites—only that there are too many poor, sick, vulnerable, and marginalized people in the world. And that the best recourse is to prevent them from being born.

Advocates for life and human dignity have never swallowed this lie. We warned against anti-natalist rhetoric and policies from the get-go. And now many demographers, and some (albeit too few) world leaders are waking up. Some nations, like Hungary, have implemented pro-marriage and pro-family policies, but many demographers believe that a significant number of countries with population collapse have slipped below the point of no return. This topic is far too complex to treat in a short editorial. I encourage those interested in demography from a faith and pro-life perspective to check out Steven Mosher's Population Research Institute at pop.org.

As it turns out, the world *does* have too many of certain types of people: for starters, there are too many people who think the world has too many people. There are too many people actively working to destroy marriage and family life. There are too many people who think that censorship, oppression, and violence will solve cultural, economic, and political issues. There are too many people enslaved by destructive habits, from drugs to porn to social media obsession. There are too many people who live without faith, hope, joy, and love. And yes, there *are* too many people who are poor, sick, vulnerable, and marginalized.

By God's grace, we need to change that, and you have a part to play. ♥



Calendar of events

MONTHLY Latin Mass for Life, Regina: 7:00 PM, Second Thursday of every month. St. Mary's Roman Catholic Parish, 2026 Winnipeg St.

FEBRUARY 14 – March 24: 40 Hours for Life: Silent prayer, Regina General Hospital vicinity, 14th Ave. Daily 4:30-5:30 PM. Organized by Regina Pro-Life. Email: rpla@sasktel.net Phone: (306) 569-1985

APRIL 6 (Sat): SK Pro-Life Assoc. AGM/Convention. Holy Spirit Parish, 114 Kingsmere Place, Saskatoon (see poster, page 9)

MAY 1 (Wed): Proclamation of May as Respect Life Month. 1:00 PM, at the Regina Legislature. Contact SPLA office for details.

MAY 9 (Thurs): Sask March for Life, Regina. Rosary at Holy Rosary Cathedral, 12:30 PM, followed by Mass. March begins 2:00 PM (see poster page 14).

MAY 9 (Thurs): National March for Life, Ottawa. Visit marchforlife.ca

MAY 12 (Sun): Mother's Day Walk, Saskatoon. 2:00-3:00 PM on College Drive between Wiggins Ave and Hospital Drive. Sponsored by Campaign Life Coalition SK.

MAY 23 (Thurs) Regina Pro-Life Assoc. Fundraising Gala 6:00 PM. St. Martin de Porres parish. Charlotte's catering. Speaker Jeff Owen or Cam Côté from CCBR. Tickets: Email rpla@sasktel.net Ph: (306) 569-1985

JUNE 9 (Sun): Macklin Denzil Walk for Life. Registration 2:00 PM at St. Mary's church, Macklin.

FIGHTING EUTHANASIA IN CANADA

Millennial on a Mission

By **Zoe Romanowsky**

When the Canadian government began discussing the legalization of euthanasia for those whose deaths were “reasonably foreseeable,” 32-year-old Amanda Achtman said something in her began to stir. Her grandfather was in his mid-90s at the time and fit the description. “There were a couple of times, toward the end of his life, that he faced some truly challenging weeks and said he wanted to die,” Achtman recalled. “But thank God no physician could legally concede to a person’s suicidal ideation in such vulnerable moments. To our surprise—including his—his condition and his outlook improved considerably before his death at age 96.”

Achtman said she and her grandfather were able to have a memorable final visit that “forged her character and became one of the greatest gifts he ever gave me.”

The experience of walking with her grandfather in his last days led Achtman to work that she believes is a calling. On August 1 [2023], she launched a multifaceted cultural project called *Dying to Meet You*, which seeks to “humanize our conversations and experiences around suffering, death, meaning, and hope.” This mission is accomplished through a mix of interviews, short films, community events, and conversations.

Achtman was born and raised in Calgary, Alberta. She grew up in a Jewish-Catholic family with “a strong attachment to these two traditions that constitute the tenor of my complete personality.” Her Polish-Jewish grandfather, with whom she had a very close relationship, had become an atheist because of the Holocaust and was always challenging her to face up to the big questions of mortality and morality.

“One of the ways I did this was by

traveling on the March of Remembrance and Hope Holocaust study trip to Germany and Poland when I was 18,” Achtman said. “My experiences listening to the stories of Holocaust survivors and Righteous Among the Nations have undeniably forged my moral imagination and instilled in me a profound sense of personal responsibility.”

Shortly after her grandfather’s death, Achtman discovered a new English-language master’s program offered in John Paul II philosophical studies at the Catholic University of Lublin in Poland. “Immediately, I felt as though God were saying to me, ‘Leave your country and go to the land that I will show you—it’s Poland.’ At the time, the main things I knew about Poland were that the Holocaust had largely been perpetrated there, and that Saints John Paul II, Maximilian Kolbe, and Faustina were from there,” Achtman explained. “I wanted to be steeped in a country of saints, heroes, and martyrs in order to contemplate seriously what my life is actually about and how I could spend it generously in the service of preventing dehumanization and faithfully defending the sanctity of life.”

In 2016, the Canadian government legalized euthanasia nationwide. The criterion to be killed in a hospital was informed consent on the part of an adult who was deemed to have a “grievous and irremediable condition.” The death request needed to be made in writing before two independent witnesses after a mandatory time of reflection, and consent could be withdrawn any time before the lethal injection.

In 2021, the Canadian government began to remove those safeguards. “The legislative change involved requiring only one witness, allowing the possible waiving of the need for final consent, and the removal, in many cases, of any reflection period,” Achtman explained. “Furthermore, a new ‘track’ was invented



Amanda Achtman pictured with Christine, an 88-year-old woman who got a tattoo that says: “Don’t euthanize me.” Photo courtesy of Amanda Achtman

for ‘persons whose natural death is not reasonably foreseeable.’ This meant that Canadians with disabilities became at greater risk of premature death through euthanasia.

Once death-by-physician was perceived as a human right, there was practically no limit as to who should ‘qualify.’ If killing is seen as a legitimate means to eliminate suffering, there is no limit to who could be at risk.” Euthanasia (MAiD) is set to expand on March 17, 2024, to those whose sole underlying condition is “mental illness.” [Editor’s note: this has now been postponed until 2027.] Last year, Dr. Louis Roy of the Quebec College of Physicians and Surgeons testified before a special joint committee that his organization thinks euthanasia should be expanded to infants with “severe malformations” and “grave and severe syndromes.”

Achtman followed the debates around end-of-life issues in Canada and wanted to work to restore “a right response to the reality of suffering and death in our lives.”

“The fact is, our mortality is part of what makes life precious, our relationships worth cherishing, and our lives worth giving out of love. That’s why we need to bring cultural renewal to death and dying, restoring our understanding of its meaning to the human condition.”

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On Jan. 1, 2021, Achtman made a New Year's resolution to blog about death every single day for an entire year in a way that was "hope-filled and edifying." It ended up being very fruitful to Achtman personally, but she said "it also touched a surprising number of people, inspiring them to take concrete actions in their own lives that I could not have anticipated."

The experience made her realize that it's possible to contribute to cultural renewal through things like coffee shop visits, informal interviews, posting on social media, being a guest on podcasts and webinars, organizing community events, and making videos. "Basically, there are countless practical and ordinary ways that we can humanize the culture—wherever we are and whatever we do the rest of the time."

Through the mission of Dying to Meet You, Achtman said that "God has put on my heart two key objectives: the prevention of euthanasia and the encouragement of hope," and added that "the aim of this cultural project is to improve our cultural conversation and engagement around suffering, death, meaning, and hope through a mix of interviews, writing, videos, and events."

"There is a strong basis for opposition to euthanasia across almost all religions and cultures, traditionally speaking," Achtman said. "Partly from my own upbringing in a Jewish-Catholic family, I am passionate about how the cultural richness of such a plurality of traditions in Canada can bolster and enrich our value of all human life." To that end, one of the projects Achtman has in the works is a short film on end of life from an Indigenous perspective. "It's not so much that we have a culture of death, as we now seem to have death without culture," said Achtman, who hopes her efforts will help change that.

In September of 2023, Achtman organized a daylong open-house style event called "The Church as an Expert in Humanity" in her home city of Calgary, which took place at Calgary's Cathedral, the Cathedral Hall, and the Catholic Pastoral Centre. The morning featured a

ministry hall of exhibits with 18 table displays of ministries throughout the diocese doing the best work on suffering, death, grief, and caregiving. In the afternoon, there were three panel presentations.

The first involved Catholics of diverse cultural backgrounds speaking about hospitality and accompaniment in their respective traditions. It included a Filipino diaconal candidate, a Ukrainian laywoman working with refugees, an elderly Indigenous woman who is a community leader, and an Iraqi Catholic priest. The second was called "Tell Me About the Hour of Death," where participants heard from two doctors, a priest, and a longtime pastoral care worker. The third panel focused on papal documents pertaining to death, hope, and eternal life. A Polish Dominican sister who has worked extensively with the elderly spoke about John Paul II's "Letter to the Elderly."

Later, an evening program was held in Calgary's Catholic Cathedral and included seven short testimonies by different speakers that "were narratively framed as echoes of the Seven Last Words of Christ." Among the speakers were a privately sponsored Middle Eastern Christian refugee, a L'Arche core member who has a disability, and a young father whose daughter only lived for 38 minutes. Afterward, Calgary's Bishop William McGrattan gave some catechesis on the Anima Christi prayer, with a special emphasis on the line "In your wounds, hide me."

"The day was extremely uplifting and instilled us with confidence that the Church indeed is an expert in humanity, capable of meeting Christ in all who suffer with a gaze of love and the steadfast insistence, 'I will not abandon you,'" Achtman said.

Many believe euthanasia is compassionate care for those who suffer. Shouldn't we be able to do what we want with our own lives? And can suffering have any meaning for someone who doesn't believe in God? Achtman said these questions remind her of something Mother Teresa said: "If we have no peace, it is because we have forgotten that we belong to each other,"

as well as the John Donne quote "Each man's death diminishes me, for I am involved in mankind."

"Our lives are not wholly our own and how we live and die affects the communities to which we belong," Achtman said. "That is not a religious argument but an empirical observation about human life. If someone lacks ties and is without family and social support, then that is the crisis to which the adequate response is presence and assistance—not abandonment or hastened death. As one of my heroes, Father Alfred Delp, put it, a suffering person makes an ongoing appeal to your inner nobility, to your sacrificial strength and capacity to love. Don't miss the opportunity."

Achtman also organized a "Mass of a Lifetime," a special Sunday Mass for residents of a local retirement home, last October. "I was inspired by a quotation of Dietrich von Hildebrand, who said: 'Wherever anything makes Christ known, there nothing can be beautiful enough,'" Achtman said. "Applying that spirit to this Mass, we made it as elaborate as possible to show the seniors that they are worth the effort."

Achtman also recently produced a four-minute short film about an 88-year-old woman named Christine who got a tattoo that says, "Don't euthanize me." Throughout 2023-2024, Achtman is basing herself in four different Canadian cities for three months each, "in order to empower diverse faith and cultural communities in the task of preventing euthanasia and encouraging hope." She started in her hometown of Calgary and then moved on to Vancouver.

In addition to her work with the Dying to Meet You project, Achtman does ethics education and cultural engagement with Canadian Physicians for Life and works to promote the personalist tradition with the Hildebrand Project. She can be found at **DyingToMeetYou.com** and is on X (formerly Twitter)

@AmandaAchtman ♥

Article courtesy of Catholic News Agency. Reprinted with permission; edited for length and clarity.

CONSERVATIVE POLICY CONVENTION 2023

Politics in Canada: Sask Delegates Remain Hopeful for the Future

By *Jim McLane*

The Conservative Party of Canada's Policy Convention took place in Quebec City, from September 7-9, 2023. Among many pro-life, pro-family delegates from Saskatchewan were a group from the Northwest (Battlefords and area) region: Larry and (SPLA President) Frances Stang, Colette Stang, Micheal and Maureen Hudec, and Jim and Maureen McLane.

On Thursday, prior to the opening of the convention, the Hudecs and McLanes went on a walking pilgrimage to churches in Quebec City to pray and intercede for all those attending the convention. Some of the museums, shrines, and churches included the Marie of the Incarnation Centre and Notre Dame Basilica. We also stopped by a Jesuit house of formation and were shown a beautiful old chapel from earlier days of the Church in Quebec.

The formal opening of the convention was held Thursday evening at the Hilton Convention Centre. Over two thousand delegates and staff from across Canada filled the venue and were encouraged by presentations by several different speakers. The entertainment offered by a Quebec family of musicians and acrobats was spectacular.

The convention proper began Friday morning with concurrent sessions: Workshop A: Defense, Foreign Affairs and Democratic Reform; Workshop B: Economy and Environment; Workshop C: Health, Social Policy and Criminal Justice. Our delegate group attended Workshop C. The purpose of these workshops was to vote, with a show of hands, to reduce the number of Constitutional amendments to be voted upon at the plenary sessions the following day. A similar format was used in the afternoon to choose policies that would be brought to the entire delegation on Saturday.

While some of the Constitutional amendments that the Saskatchewan delegates hoped to pass were defeated, there was considerable optimism when it came to the policies put forward that were accepted to be included in the plenary sessions the following day.

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Micheal and Maureen Hudec



Left to right: Jim McLane, Fran Stang, Colette Stang



Jonathan & Esther Frazer from Quebec, with the Convention's youngest participants.



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At the sessions on Saturday, several important policies were debated and passed by a majority of delegates. The most crucial of these included:

- Support for freedom of speech
- Stronger legislation to protect children against predators and pornographers
- Prohibition of life-altering medical or surgical interventions on minors to treat gender confusion or dysphoria
- Opposition to euthanasia and assisted suicide, especially its extension to young people and those suffering from mental illness
- Recognition of palliative care as a separate and distinct right for all Canadians
- Protection of women and their safety, dignity and privacy in female spaces (sports competitions, shelters, washrooms, locker rooms, prisons)



- The right to informed consent and bodily autonomy regarding medical treatments or disclosure
- Ensuring domestic production of ethical vaccines and the freedom of Canadians to refuse vaccines for moral, religious, or ethical reasons

The convention closed with inspiring speeches from Pierre Poilievre and his

wife Anaida Poilievre on topics covering freedom, work, housing, finances, immigration and the serious need to protect Canadians from the devastation of the Trudeau era.

Meeting several young and enthusiastic delegates from Saskatchewan and other provinces gave us a general sense that there is hope for the future in the Canadian political arena. ❤️

Celebrate World Down Syndrome Day March 21



Teen-Aid Northwest

The 2023 grand prize winner of the Teen-Aid Northwest cash calendar is Georgine Thomas of Wilkie. The \$1000 draw was made last December. Congratulations, Georgine! ❤️



Pro-Life Flags Available! \$50

Contact Sask Pro-Life Office

(306) 992-6941

Email:

info@saskprolife.com



Common Ground as the Catalyst for Productive Conversations

By Cam Côté and Jeffrey Owen

As pro-lifers attempting to change the minds of pro-choice friends or family, we often encounter adversity and perhaps frustration when confronted with a seemingly endless number of difficult situations in which abortion is deemed 'necessary.' These may include: financial constraints on the parents, the stability or health of the mother's relationship with the father, or other challenges parents may face. We may simply want to respond by shouting, "But it's a baby!" However, for the sake of the pre-born children we are working to defend, we must take a more strategic approach.

At the Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform (CCBR), we recognize that the most important question in the abortion debate is whether or not abortion kills an innocent human being. Nevertheless, the outcomes of over 50,000 conversations over the last decade tell us if we are going to change hearts and minds on abortion, we must start by **bridging the gap** between where we are coming from (that abortion intentionally kills a precious child) and where they are starting (that mothers are faced with terrible situations that demand solutions). The tool for taking this first step is **building common ground**.



The primary reason why common ground is so important is because it almost always changes the perception of a conversation about abortion from an **adversarial debate** with a winner and a loser to a **collaborative discussion** where both parties are working together to find an appropriate solution for an agreed-upon problem.

Nobody likes losing. We see in our outreach that if someone is afraid of 'losing' the argument, they will either avoid the conversation entirely or attack us and our worldview with accusations and red herrings to prevent us from 'winning.' If we can instead transform the interaction into a collaborative dialogue, thereby removing the competitive element, it is far more likely we will win people to the pro-life worldview and protect pre-born girls and boys from abortion.

Some of you are surely asking, "How could I possibly agree with a pro-choice person about anything?" It might surprise you, but we almost always have at least a little in common with someone who supports abortion because of the difficult situations parents may face.

If someone says, "**I think abortion should be allowed for a mother living in poverty who couldn't possibly afford to care for another child,**" rather than refuting this argument, or even seeking to simply resolve this situation by solving the problem (which we need to do eventually, just not quite yet!), we can find common ground: "**I agree with you that poverty is a very real problem that far too many are faced with today.**"

We can find common ground when someone references a teenage pregnancy by saying, "**I agree with you that it can be incredibly difficult to care for a child when you are still completing your studies, or even still**



learning to care for yourself:"

Even if someone were to say to you, "**My body, my choice!**" we can respond by building common ground: "**I agree with you that bodily autonomy is really important, and that nobody likes being told what they can and can't do!**"

For every justification that abortion advocates may bring up, we can respond by agreeing that there are very real problems that demand meaningful solutions. While establishing common ground is far from the end of the conversation, this first step will very often open the door for more productive conversations where we can use analogies, ask questions, and ultimately share the truth that we can never kill innocent humans to solve even the most challenging of problems. We have seen how this approach far exceeds the benefits of an argument that spirals into a shouting match.

Building common ground as the first step in these conversations is part of a pro-life approach that **completely changes minds** - in fact, **27% of the abortion supporters** our western team spoke with during the last two years became **fully pro-life** through our outreach!

We would love to help you practise building common ground. To sign up for our free one-on-one workshop, or to inquire about involvement in our community outreach initiatives, including with the Regina Against Abortion team, you can contact Jeff Owen, CCBR's Western Community Outreach Coordinator, at jowen@endthekilling.ca. ❤️

SASKATCHEWAN
PRO LIFE
ASSOCIATION INC

EVERY **LIFE** MATTERS

06 April 2024 at 9.00a.m.
**Convention AGM
and banquet
Saskatoon, SK**

Holy Spirit Parish, 114 Kingsmere Place,
Saskatoon, SK

**20
24**



Register

Phone: (306) 352 - 3480

Email: info@saskprolife.com

www.saskprolife.com

SASKATCHEWAN ACTIVISM Life Chain 2023

Although it was a rather gloomy day, 145 people came out to silently witness to the sanctity of life. It was good to hear the support of many who honked their horns as they drove past us on Albert St. It was very encouraging to see four priests and one of our deacons in attendance, as well as many Christians of other denominations who happened to hear of the event for the first time and came out to support it. As usual, it was wonderful to share in fellowship with coffee, hot chocolate and cookies afterwards. We were blessed to have the rain hold off until everyone departed, and we had everything loaded up in our vehicles and heading for home. Thank you, Jesus! It's easy to become discouraged, thinking that we will never see the end of abortion, but we must remember that this is a LIE! We must continue to work faithfully to uphold the sanctity of all life, from conception to natural death, for we are made in the image and likeness of God. - Jeanine, Regina



REGINA



We had a downpour and thunder and lightning about an hour before the Life Chain, which may have scared a few people away, but we still had a good turnout. It was a very positive witness with lots of honks and waves. Quite a few new people expressed interest and wanted to get involved, so that is always encouraging! - Bridget, Estevan

ESTEVAN



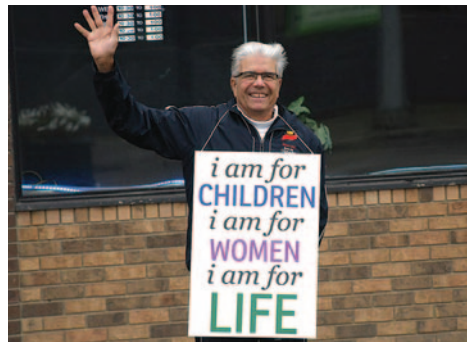
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PRINCE ALBERT



MOOSE JAW



50-Year Member Honoured



Regina Pro-Life Association (RPLA) board member, Michael Zenkawich, with the love and support of his wife Imelda, reached an epic milestone this year, having

served as an active board member for 50 years! He also turned 90 last October, so the RPLA doubly honored Michael for both his birthday and his outstanding commitment to pro-life throughout his lifetime, presenting him with a first-class relic of Saint Gianna Beretta Molla.

Michael was very active throughout his tenure on the board and in fact, spearheaded a radio campaign in early 2023 featuring a 30-second clip of fetal development information.

In regards to his history with RPLA, Michael shared that in early February of 1993, he was one of four people who met with Mr. McDonald of Vancouver, who had started a group called 'Voice for Human Life.' This was the name the Regina group adopted in the beginning, moving years later to the name 'League for Human Life,' and then to its current name.

When asked what the greatest achievement of the board was in his years of service, he first talked about the 'Run for Life,' which was held in 1983.

This was a joint initiative with Saskatchewan Pro-Life and was spearheaded by Alex and Mary Banga. Those participating all completed the journey from Saskatoon to Regina in eight days! Michael Martorana was the main runner, along with sixteen other runners and nine walkers, including a woman with her seeing-eye dog. It was a huge success where over \$483,000 was raised! Money was given to the various pro-life groups throughout the province, with a large portion of that money used to support ten Teen-Aid teachers and several pro-life billboards throughout the province.

Another major project during his tenure was 'Plant a Tree for Life,' which was a province-wide initiative in 1989, to plant 70,000 trees, one for every child aborted in Canada each year. People were given a seedling tree in return for a donation. As well, ceremonial trees were planted in every community in the province with a population of over 350 by local officials/community leaders. Those trees stand tall to the testament of the pro-life movement in this province in those early years and to the huge success of this project, which raised \$459,000.

Over the years, speakers such as Joe Borowski of Manitoba; lawyer, Dr. Morris C. Shumiatcher of Regina; and Dr. Jérôme LeJeune of France were brought in by the RPLA to speak about the fetal development of an unborn child.

Public prayer was not restricted in those days and Michael remembers praying near the doors of the General Hospital. One particular achievement for him personally, was obtaining \$1500 for pro-life from the Secretary of State, with RPLA becoming the only pro-life group in Canada to receive money from the government!

In reflecting on the earlier years, he said people were not belligerent like they are now. They were more interested in protecting all human life. He found it very rewarding to meet people from all walks of life and attended, at his own expense, pro-life conferences all across the country. He remembers meeting some incredible pro-life people over the years, such as Fr. Alphonse de Valk, a very pro-life priest in Saskatoon; Dr. Malcolm Muggeridge, a journalist from London, England; as well as Dr. Bernard Nathanson, a former abortionist who turned pro-life and became Catholic.

He encourages anyone who may be considering becoming a board member of RPLA to be a good soldier of Christ and 'to fight the good fight,' as St. Paul tells us. He commented that we now have the added evil of euthanasia to fight against and it's unfortunately increasing at alarming rates in Canada. Above all, he said it's most important to be close to God and to ask for and rely on his help in this fight. And to remember, Jesus promised to be with us all days! ♥

Submitted by Jeanine Mann, RPLA

Have Your Say!

Share your news and views with Sask Pro-Life:

- Report or photos of your pro-life group's recent event
- Letter to the Editor
- Promotion for an upcoming pro-life project or activity
- Feature Article or Op-Ed

Contact the Sask Pro-Life office, or email our Editor: editor@saskprolife.com
The next issue of *Choose Life News* is scheduled for June 2024.

SUBMISSION DEADLINE for the Summer issue: April 30, 2024



REFLECTION: BATTLEFORDS WALK FOR LIFE

Piercing the Darkness

By Marie Weiler

Pro-Life supporters in the Battlefords and area braved cool winds on September 23, 2023, to witness peacefully for the sanctity of human life. Upon receiving Fr. Greg Elder's blessing, both young and old strode out to the City Cemetery with "Choose Life" signs held high. The event garnered an impressive total of almost \$4,000, and culminated in a prayer service led by Jim McLane with 120 individuals present. Though the number of participants seems to fall more each year, despite many efforts to raise awareness, there's a noticeable trend taking place that I think is worth mentioning.

Whereas in past years, I can remember people driving by and swearing at those who care about the vulnerable in society, for the last two years, there has been zero negativity towards the group—only positive reinforcement. In fact, on this particular occasion, along Highway 16, a semi-truck driver repeatedly honked then finally laid on

his horn for us. When people like him see us faithfully marching like the Israelites did around the walls of Jericho, it pierces the darkness and bears light to them, and they noisily reciprocate, encouraging us to keep moving forward.

This reminded me of the 2022 Freedom Convoy and the hope, the national pride the truckers brought to Canadians. It united citizens who longed for their freedoms to be restored, including the freedom of speech on behalf of those referred to by our culture as undesirable and unnecessary: the unborn, the elderly, and the handicapped. Now, just as then, the growing favour towards goodness is evidence enough that this nation is frustrated with the secular, Socialist lies it has been fed for decades.

Dare I say, Canadians are even beginning to hear their spiritual alarm clocks going off, awakening them to the present darkness (we're still in the early hours of rebuilding a culture of life), and ultimately rousing them to hasten the imminent sunrise sooner than later. The



light of Christ is not only going to pierce the darkness, this culture of death, but it is going to overcome it so that not even a shadow will remain.

Therefore, regardless of "the numbers" (be it in people or dollars) for any given Pro-Life event, we must keep going. Don't stop now, for as Jesus told His disciples, "... *the one who perseveres to the end will be saved.*" (Matt. 24:13 NAB) Only a foolish person finishes half a race and then decides to quit because they fear they might not win, or says they're too exhausted to go any farther. We need to finish this race for life! We're already halfway home, knee-deep in this struggle, but wearily questioning if we'll ever win it. The answer, however, is already certain: victory will be ours! ❤️

Prayer for National March for Life

Dear Heavenly Father,

I humbly pray that You will help and protect all the organizers and volunteers at the National March for Life. Please keep them safe from all harm and give them the grace they need to meet the challenges before them.

Please protect all the people attending the March. And please, dear Heavenly Father, I humbly pray that you will touch those who will see our pro-life message in Ottawa and open their hearts to Your Gospel of Life.

I pray for all this in the Holy Name of Your Son, my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Amen

Shared by Campaign Life Coalition



OTTAWA, MAY 9
"I will never forget you."



“I will never forget you.”

March for Life Regina, SK

**March from Holy Rosary Cathedral to the
Legislature Building**

09 May 2024 at noon

- Join Regina's faith community, schools and service groups.
- Demonstrate respect for life from conception to natural death.
- Come for all or part of the day.
- Before the March, we will have the Rosary and Mass.



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Phone: (306) 352 - 3480
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INTERNATIONAL Good News from Peru

By CLN Staff

Last November, as reported by Catholic News Agency (CNA) and other online sources, Peru's Congress passed a bill that recognizes the rights granted in its constitution to unborn children. The CNA story was reported by journalist Diego Lopez Marina in *ACI Prensa*, CNA's Spanish-language news partner. Lopez Marina reported that the vote passed by a large majority (72-26 with six abstentions).

Peruvian congressman, Alejandro Muñante, spoke on behalf of the Life and Family caucus, telling *ACI Prensa* that the law's purpose was "to consolidate the right to life from conception, which is already established in our constitution and in the Civil Code



and the Children and Adolescents Code." According to Peru's constitution (Article 2), "the conceived child is a subject of law in everything that favors him or her."

According to the UK Catholic news website *Exaudi*, Milagros Aguayo, a congresswoman from the conservative *Renovación Popular* party, introduced the bill in 2021. In April 2023 it was approved in Congress, but the executive branch made some amendments before bringing it to a final vote in November, 2023.

The newly passed "Law 785" establishes the unborn as a subject of rights with full status as a human person, from the

moment of conception. "The Peruvian state recognizes and guarantees respect for the dignity of the conceived child, as well as its right to life, individual identity, mental and physical integrity, as well as to freely develop in the womb [i.e., without external interference]." For Congressman Muñante, this law "has achieved good progress in terms of protecting the right to life." ♥

Sources: Catholic News Agency www.catholicnewsagency.com and *Exaudi Catholic News* exaudi.org.
Quotations used in accordance with the *Fair Use and Fair Dealing Exemptions of the Canadian Copyright Act*, for the purposes of research and education.

Feast of the Holy Innocents: On Dec.28, 2023, pro-life supporters gathered near the Regina Legislature to hold a peaceful candlelight prayer service in atonement for the sin of abortion in our province. Thanks to all who came out to support this annual event. See you in 2024!



Note of Thanks

Saskatchewan Pro-Life Association wishes to express deep gratitude to long-time pro-life supporters Barry and Linda Forbes of Gilbert, Arizona. Not only have they been recurring monthly donors for some time, but they recently (last October) sent an encouraging note and the generous gift of \$5,000 USD (this exchanged to \$6,739.50 Canadian). May God bless you for your faithful support of pro-life work in our province and beyond. Thank you for generously proclaiming the Gospel of Life! ♥

40-HOURS FOR LIFE

FEBRUARY 14 – MARCH 24

4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Regina General Hospital – 14th Ave.

25,000 lives saved

120 abortion centers closed

242 abortion workers quit



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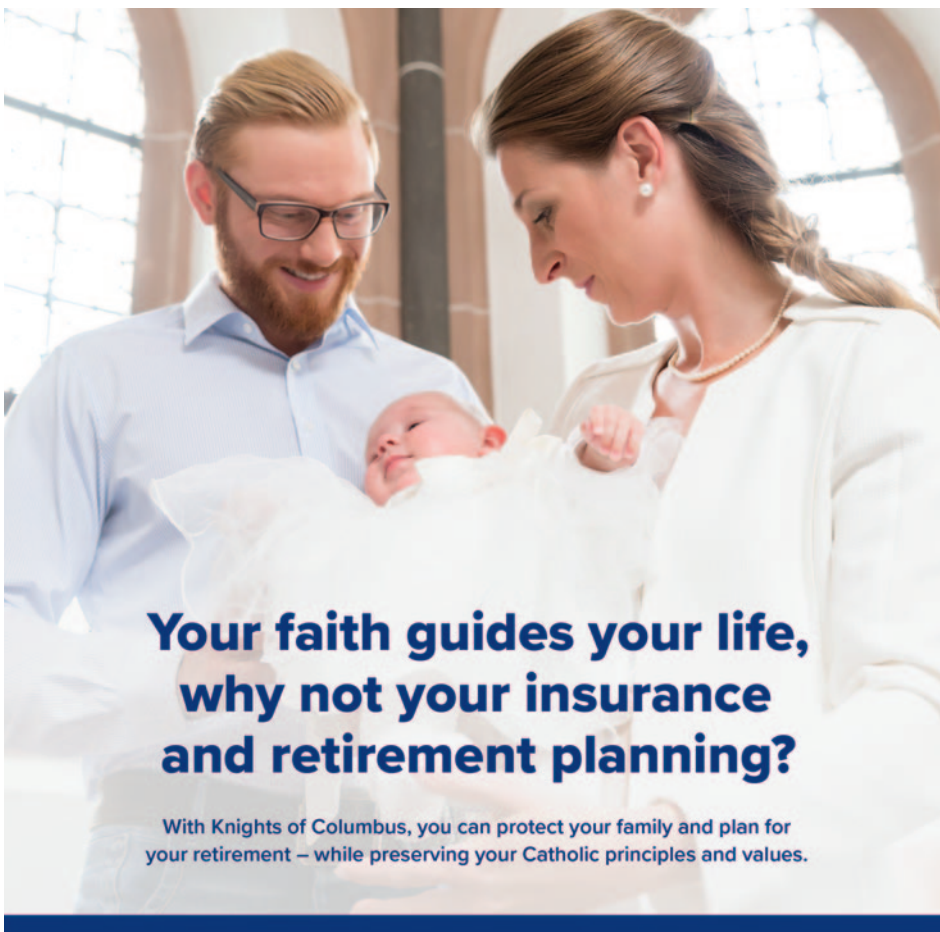
*This lent, come – even for just one day
and pray to end abortion ... because
nothing is more important than
protecting the most vulnerable in society!*

SK Billboard Update



This sign witnessing to the sanctity of human life is located in front of St. Mary's Church on Winnipeg Street, Regina. It has been up since mid-December, 2023.

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Happy Mother's Day, May 12



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Donations In Memoriam

Donations were made in memory of the following persons:

Laura Katherine Berscheid
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Stanley Fornwald
Johanna Gruber
Anne Keck
Jeanette Haberstock
Rosita Ulrich

If you would like to make a donation in memory of someone, contact the office or visit saskprolife.com/memorial. ❤️





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**"I DIRECT MY TRUSTEE TO GIVE TO THE Saskatchewan
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