

In Defence of Life

Edmonton Prolife's Newsletter

Volume 5, Issue 1

'educating for life'
2006

Winter

Story of Christmas is a Prolife Story

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We all love the story of Christmas. We all would like the story of Christmas to echo in our lives today. But I'm not sure that anyone has ever told us the entire Christmas story, at least not in one sitting. It doesn't end, you know, when the magi leave, or when Herod slaughters the infants. The Christmas story ends somewhere around the place in the Gospel where Jesus says, ". . . whatever you did for one of these least of mine, you did for me" (Matthew 25:40).

We have heard that line many times. It is true because of Christmas. It is rooted in the fact that God took on human form and lived among us in Jesus. Jesus took on the nature of all humanity. Thus all people-men, women, children, aged, strong, weak-are part of Jesus, and whatever I do for the least of my sisters and brothers, I do for Jesus.

Thus the Christmas story does extend even up to this very day. We, however, must make sure that we hear the entire story and that we live in testimony to the entire story of Christmas. In very concrete terms, Christmas is a pro-life story, and we who come to hear the story of Christmas must respect and cherish and defend life on all ends of the spectrum. Abortion, euthanasia, assisted suicide, capital punishment, and all those decisions that lie within these major issues-supporting any of these anti-life choices runs counter to the end of the story: "Whatever you do for the least

of my brothers and sisters, you do for me."

Christmas is also a social justice story-rich, poor, men, women, black, brown, white. The end of tonight's story is always the same-"Whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me."

Jesus is brother to all. If those who hear the story of Christmas are not pro-life, then who? If those who hear the story of Christmas are not socially conscious and just, then who? This year be sure to tell your children-and all whom you love-the entire Christmas story. And remind yourself that it ends, "Whatever you do for the least of my brothers and sisters, you do for me."

President's Message

Mary a young teenager had an unexpected unplanned pregnancy. God, the Father and Creator, instilled a respect for this life within her.

He blessed her obedience by becoming the Mother of Jesus, the Son of God. She did not know the joys and sorrows this child would give her, only that it was the Fathers will.

We too do not know what life brings. We DO know that for all wisdom and strength we need, we receive enough grace, one day at a time. And sometimes we only see Jesus footsteps in the sand, for He carries us.

I suggest we all see the movie "the Nativity", Good filmmakers and movies need our support, so more bright stars of goodness shine in the dark world. Have a blessed Christmas.

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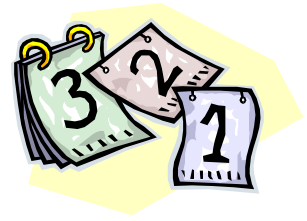
8 - Partner Groups, Crisis Pregnancy Aid, Membership Form



Carry

President
Edmonton
Prolife

Upcoming Events



- **December 14, 2006 – Edmonton Pro-life volunteer appreciation**
Every year Edmonton Pro-life takes an opportunity to thank our volunteers for all their help this past year. We will hold an open house from 11:00 am to 1:00 pm. Lunch and activities with an opportunity to visit will take place at our office, #212 11125 107 Avenue. Please feel free to join us. RSVP to Karen at 425-1637.
- **January 13, 2007 - Human Rights of Children with Disabilities: Progress or Promise Unfulfilled?**
Guest Scholar: Dr. Dick Sobsey, Professor, Educational Psychology; Director, John Dossetor Health Ethics Centre.
Moderator: Dr. Martin Tweedale, Professor Emeritus, Philosophy.
Event URL: www.uofaweb.ualberta.ca/publicaffairs/philosopherscafe.cfm
Date Saturday, January 13, 2007 □ 2:00 PM - 3:30 PM Location Stanley A. Milner Library (Basement in the Edmonton Room), 7 Sir Winston Churchill Square. Contact Information: Fatima Jaffer fatima.jaffer@exr.ualberta.ca 780-492-2325
- **January 26, 2007, Law Courts Demonstration from 11:30 to 12:30 p.m.**
Join your fellow citizens in showing solidarity with the unborn as we mark the 19th anniversary of the Supreme Court decision to decriminalize abortion in Canada. We will meet in front of the Edmonton Law Courts buildings (West side). Signs available at 11:25.
- **April 27, 28 and 29, 2007 - Rachel Vineyard Retreat – Post Abortion Healing**
An Inter-denominational Rachel's Vineyard weekend retreat for spiritual and emotional healing after abortion, miscarriage or stillbirth, will be held in Edmonton and Rural Area, April 27, 28 and 29, 2007. The retreat is a confidential and emotionally safe environment for those struggling after abortion, stillbirth, or miscarriage. Contact Marlene at MAJButterflies@aol.com Carla at 780-963-4048 or visit www.rachelsvineyard.org. One on one counseling is available anytime by appointment, please call 424-4538 to make an appointment
- **May 25 and 26, 2007 – Euthanasia Conference and End of Life Issues**
Local, national and international speakers, from a medical, legal, cultural, spiritual and alternative support perspective. Sponsors: Caritas Health Group, RC Archdiocese, HumanLifeMatters, St Luke's Guild, Christian Medical Dental Society. More details in the next newsletter. Mark your calendars today and plan to attend.
- **August 2007 - United Nations Youth Human Rights Conference - Edmonton**
The city of Edmonton has invited the Youth Assembly to travel there for an unprecedented second Youth Assembly in 2007! Both in August, one will take place on the west coast of North America, in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada during the first week of August. See article on page 6.
- **Join others in an hour of peaceful, prayerful activism against the daily slaughter of innocent babies. Morgentaler Abortion Clinic: 12490, 109 A Ave.**
Every Wednesday from 10:00 am to 11:00 AM
The third Sunday of every month. Candle light Rosary at 7:30 pm. Contact Maryellen at 476-4026

For information on any of the above events, call the Edmonton Pro-life office at **425-1637** or email us at edmpl@interbaun.com

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EPL Board: President: Corry Morcos, Treasurer: Glenn Woolger, Recording Secretary: Anne Wansink, Directors: Judy Koopmans. Michael Cooper and John MacDonald

Office Manager: Karen Richert

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New board members welcomed. Meetings held bimonthly first Tuesday, 5:30 pm, at EPL office. All EPL members welcome to attend

What can one person do?

OUR DUTY!

Behind Politics By Jim Hnatiuk

This commentary first appeared in the Enfield (NS) Weekly Press Nov. 3, 2006

It never ceases to amaze me what our Supreme Court and politicians get away with. In the past I've been somewhat critical to those who don't get out to vote. On average that's 40% of the Canadian population. Yet, of those who did vote in Nova Scotia, I remember that they voted NO to Sunday shopping!

So what happened? The squeaky wheel got the grease? A government without backbone? A province ruled by a Supreme Court, which fails to recognize our founding principles? Our Canadian Constitution states that: "Canada is founded upon principals that recognize the supremacy of God and the rule of law." Some judges and politicians may do well to brush the dust off that rulebook. Whatever happened to "The majority wins!"?

In picking up my mail at the post office last week I overheard: "I'm never voting again!" In a sense it's hard to disagree. However, could it be that this is exactly what some of our leaders and Supreme Court judges want to hear from those who oppose them? After all, if all good men and women quit voting we'd soon have a dictatorship masquerading as a democracy.

Some say, "What could I possibly do? I'm just one person."

Many years ago Sir Sanford Fleming (1827-1915) said: "I have always felt that the humblest among us has it in his power to do something for his country by doing his duty, and that there is no better inheritance to leave his children than the knowledge that he has done so to the utmost of his ability."

When you stand for a righteous cause, you may be amazed at how many of your fellow-Canadians want to support you, and are waiting for someone-maybe you-to lead them.

Politics and the pro-life movement

Political involvement is a necessity for those who value life. It is imperative that elected officials understand and act upon the tenant that the right to life must be preserved, and that without this fundamental right, all others are meaningless.

As we exercise our civic duty to vote, it is a necessity to learn each candidate's stand and track record on life issues, particularly abortion and euthanasia.

It is important to recognize that the abortion and euthanasia attack the most innocent human life and are inherently evil.

These issues must take precedence over all others, even over war and capital punishment, which may be necessary in certain circumstances for the protection of human life.

Along with the duty to vote comes a responsibility to hold our elected officials accountable during their terms in office, especially if they have pledged to uphold life but their actions tell otherwise.

Although legislation is one way that we can change the culture to affirm dignity for the unborn and vulnerable, we also need to pray for a conversion of hearts. Dr Bernard Nathanson, one time abortionist, now prolife advocate said "A nation that needs prolife legislation is never able to pass it, but a nation that can pass prolife legislation does not need it.

Please help build a culture of life wherever you are most comfortable. If politics is your thing then get involved, if you would rather work through, friends, churches and other social contacts then do that. To steal a well-known phrase "just do it"! Contact the prolife office if you need resources to help get you started.

Poll confirms Albertans support protecting unborn

Two-thirds of Albertans support some legal protection for unborn babies, according to the results from Environics poll commissioned by LifeCanada and supported by provincial and local groups across the country.

Support was up significantly from last year when 60% supported legal protection. The poll of 2,021 Canadians found that 64% of Canadians supported legal protection before birth.

On the issue of tax-funding, 60% said abortions should be paid for with tax dollars only in medical emergencies when the mother's life is threatened or in cases of rape or incest, and an additional 15% said it should never be publicly funded. That means that 75% of Albertans oppose the current provincial government policy of paying for all abortions performed in the province, including those at private abortion clinics.

To read the Environics report on the poll results go to www.albertaprolife.com.

What's been happening with Edmonton Prolife?

WALKATHON

This year's walkathon fall walkathon fell on the first day of winter! Although fewer in numbers our walkathon raised about \$14,000 dollars. We thank all walkers and



supporters. A big thank you to the volunteers who helped with registration and lunch. Hope to see more of you next year, September 15, 2007

ABORTION BREAST CANCER AWARENESS BOOTH

On October 14 and 15, Edmonton prolife exhibited at the Women's Show, held in Edmonton (picture are to the right). The theme for our booth was "Breast Cancer Awareness", and our focus was the Abortion Breast Cancer Link. We received many positive responses, and we hope to be able to display more booths at various shows, to highlight health concerns related to women and abortion. If you would like to sponsor the production of these booths, approximately \$250.00. Please see the insert in this newsletter.



ABC LINK

Edmonton Prolife participated in the national Stop the Cover up campaign, highlighting the link between



From left to right, Life Chain attendee, Linda Gibbons, Corry Morcos, President of Edmonton Prolife and Karen Richert, office worker for Edmonton Prolife.

abortion and breast cancer. Our bus shelter ad was located near the Royal Alex hospital.

LIFE

CHAIN

Life Chain was held October 1, 2006 on a

beautiful fall day. Due to extra volunteer helpers, who made sure information made it to the churches, approximately 300 people attended this years Life chain. Linda Gibbons, who has made activism and protection of the unborn child her vocation, and has been jailed for over 1,627 days for silently expressing her opposition to abortion, was present, as well as many other prolife people. Next years Life Chain will be held October 7, 2007. Plan to attend now and be a church contact to encourage others to attend. Call the office for more information.





The human heart begins to beat at 22 days.
 Canada's government *allows* women
 the *right* to **STOP** it for
 the next 258 days.

Abortion. Have we gone *too far*?



9 months

That is the amount of time the
 government says it is *legal*
 to *have* an abortion.

Abortion. Have we gone *too far*?



Because Canada has no laws restricting abortion,
 the government says you can choose abortion.

- After the heart starts beating
- After the arms and legs appear.
- After all organs are present. After it sucks its thumb.
- After it responds to sound.
- After it could survive outside the womb.
- After it is partially born.

Abortion. Have we gone *too far*?

LRT Advertising

Edmonton Prolife received this very encouraging email regarding our recent ad campaign.

*"I'm just emailing to congratulate whoever is responsible for the "posters" that are now found in LRT stations. These are the first non-offensive prolife advertisements that I have _ever seen. They induce thought, without causing an immediate "F*** you" response, something that many other organizations fail to do. Additionally, their visual layout/color scheme is excellent. It draws the eye, without clashing or being simply ugly. The wording used is perfect, as it conveys information without drawing conclusions, allowing the reader to think for themselves, rather than pushing a conclusion upon them. There is no rhetoric, theology, mysticism or anything else that alienates, offends or drives others away from considering the subject. I'll honestly say that most pro-life organization polarize the situation, automatically resulting in people siding against them, simply because they are so offensive. Additionally, they tend to take an "All or Nothing" approach, (often using "holy conception" rather than your "posters" biological/medical facts) which further discredits their views. I guess what I wish to say is that I hope you continue to place such "posters" in Edmonton."*

Edmonton Prolife hopes to be able to continue with this type of advertising too. If you would like to help sponsor more of these ads please see the insert inside the newsletter.

ASLAN

Edmonton Prolife hosted the 2006 ASLAN youth prolife conference in Edmonton on 28th October. We were delighted that the turnout was good (87) as the roads had turned to sheets of ice that morning; several carloads could not make it, but the ones who did, had an informative and active day. The band Profile kept the crowd on its feet, they were "rocking, awesome and inspiring": thank you Wes, Dean, Rob and Patrick!

The theme was "Lead the Followers". Speakers Colleen and Tony LaGrange first talk was on "Unwanted children and other oxymorons" to challenge us on language used and abused and to be observant and critical when debating the issues.

"Choices: what do they really mean" showed the consequences of different choices for everyone involved in an unwanted pregnancy. We finished the morning with a Life chain along 118 Ave, although the youth participated enthusiastically, the cold weather chased us back inside after half an hour!

The afternoon started with "Sound Bytes-Bite back" how to counter attack popular slogans that give false information. "Leadership 101" helped us to become more effective leaders. We were challenged to go outside our comfort zone, we wrote letters to newspapers, many made use of the open microphone to give examples of how lives change if you stand up for what you believe. Gifts of prolife bracelets were a great incentive for this.

The Edmonton CWL served up a great lunch of chili and salad, and cookies for snacks.

The ASLAN banner was handed over to Cold Lake Prolife, who will host the 2007 conference.

Un Conference

From October 20 to 22, the United Nations conference *Building World Peace: The Role of Religions and Human Rights* was held in Edmonton. Noticeably absent from the agenda was the rights of the unborn child. Mary Ellen Robinson accompanied by sporadic supporters highlighted the lack of attention to the first inalienable right, the right to life, on which all other rights hinge. MaryEllen had an opportunity to discuss this issue with many people attending the conference. Another opportunity to raise the most important human rights issues at the United Nations level will be taking place the first week of August 2007.

Youth Assembly 2007 is a learning experience for students and young professionals (16-28 years old) to learn about and become involved with programs that address global and local issues. Students are able to

network with larger international corporations, which encourage them to take leadership roles in their communities. They are also able to voice their opinions on the prevalent issues of today, helping to make permanent changes across the globe.

Edmonton Prolife would like to see many delegates from Edmonton attend the United Nations Youth Assembly during the first week in August 2007. Prevalent issues facing our prolife youth today may include:

1. Peace in the womb
2. Coercion of women to abort from outside pressures
3. Personhood of the unborn child
4. Concern for euthanising the disabled and elderly

There are many other issues that could be raised by delegates or for those who would like to be a presenter the opportunities are endless. If you are interested in working to bring the most important Human Rights issues to the world please call Karen at 425-1637.

JIM DEMERS WINS HEARING FROM INTERNATIONAL BODY

By Joanne Byfield – Alberta Prolife, Staff

Ten years ago this month, Nelson, B.C. resident Jim Demers was arrested for standing outside a Vancouver abortion clinic holding a sign that read: "Every person has the right to have his life respected. This right shall be protected by law, in general, from the moment of conception. Art. 4-1 American Convention of Human Rights."

Although he did not speak to or harass anyone entering or leaving the clinic, he was charged with protest and sidewalk interference under the draconian B.C. Access to Abortion Services Act. He was arrested on December 11 and held in jail for seven weeks awaiting trial, missing Christmas and New Year's with his wife and five children.

Mr. Demers argued that the act and his arrest violated both the right to life provision in section 7 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the section 2 free speech protection. He lost at trial and in his subsequent appeals. The Supreme Court of Canada refused his request to hear the case.

In 2004 he petitioned the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights, a body that represents nations in North and South America, to hear his case under the American Declaration of the Rights and Duties of Man. The government of Canada has signed onto the declaration. Mr. Demers claimed his arrest violated

eight articles of the declaration and he asked the IACHR to initiate proceedings on his case.

Last month the IACHR notified Mr. Demers that it would hear his case but only on two grounds, freedom of expression and freedom of association. It rejected his petition for the other rights' violations, including the right to life. IACHR Executive Secretary Santiago Canton, in a letter to Mr. Demers said his case would "continue with the analysis of the merits of the case" under Article IV of the Declaration. He also said "the Commission places itself at the disposal of the parties with a view toward reaching a friendly settlement of this matter, in compliance with Article 41 of the Commission's Rules of Procedure."

Mr. Demers has two months to file any further documentation or comments on the case. He can be reached at Jim Demers, C/O Nelson Right to Life Society, Box 324, Nelson, BC V1L 3Z2.

Jim Demers Local Connection

Jim Demers was a resident in Edmonton during the 1980's, and is a carpenter by trade. Occasionally he wrote on life issues for than Alberta Report. He is soft-spoken and peaceful. He is on a one-man mission to change the absurdity of denial of right to life of the unborn, and our right to speak out, verbally or silently with signs. He is courageous, and needs our support.

Creating a Successful Pro-Life Presence In Your Church and Your Community

Few activities get talked about more in pro-life circles than how to organize and sustain a pro-life presence within a church. Often that discussion is laced with frustration, as in "I just don't know where to begin, let alone how to keep the pro-life issue alive."

There seem to be three simple ways to create and sustain a pro-life presence in your church.

First, you need a cadre of people, not a crowd of people, to plan the work. You need a dedicated core that understands that every program based on volunteer power works with the commitment from a

cadre of people who are willing to work together on a regular basis over the long term.

Second, it is crucial to appeal to all segments within the church, which is accomplished by offering over the course of the entire year a variety of projects from which people can choose to participate. The result will be a marvelous tool to illustrate to your church and your community why opposition to abortion and euthanasia is not only right but also loving and even noble.

Third, the more visible and frequent your efforts are, the more people will flock to help and to speak up, both within the congregation and in the community.

Educate parishioners through officially sponsored events, gather signatures on a petition, hand out educational materials, make pro-life bumper stickers available after each service. Spiritually adopt for nine-months an unborn child, hold a parish baby showers, stand together and pray with Christ for one hour in October, at the Life Chain, for the unborn, dedicate a

Memorial to the Unborn. Hold an hour of Prayer times during the year to pray for an end to abortion and spiritual and emotional healing for women who have had abortions staff convention exhibits

As mentioned at the outset no Respect Life Committee has to be large in number to be successful. The successes of Respect Life Committees are a result of a small core of members willing to meet regularly over the years to plan projects that reach out and involve others who are pro-life.

Over the long term each project, building on past projects, magnifies the visibility of respect life issues and builds its part of the church's mosaic to proclaim the Gospel of Life and the dignity of every human person.

Edmonton Prolife would love to see small committees operating in each of our churches. The committee may be a liaison between the members and the Edmonton Prolife organization. They may be the contact person to ensure info gets into their church bulletin or that pro-life material is always available to the members. People could be as active as they choose to be, but what is really important is having a small core group willing to share the pro-life message. Please contact Edmonton Prolife to let them know who will be the contact person for your church Respect for Life Committee.

