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London Area
Right to Life Association Inc.

Newsletter



A London Pro-Life Newsletter

DECEMBER 2014

Volume 48 Number 4

Upcoming EVENTS

PLEASE MARK YOUR
CALENDARS

Dec. 8th from 9 pm to 1 am

Adoration chapel at
St. Mary's Church
Prayer for the unborn

Dec. 29th MASS for the UNBORN

St. Peter's Basilica Rosary
at 6:30 pm; Mass at 7 pm
Bishop Fabbro, celebrant

January to end of March

PRO-LIFE SCHOOL PROGRAM
49 Gr. 5/6 Presentations
see page 5

LAST THURSDAY of the MONTH HOSPITAL WITNESS

Victoria Hospital at the corner of
Commissioners & Wellington
3:30 to 5 pm
Call John 519-657-9009

June 5-6, AFLO Conference

Niagara Falls, ON

April 18, LARTLA Annual Gala

Dinner Speakers
7:00 pm Hellenic Centre

Jan 24 - Men of Faith Conference

www.famfi.ca

Season's Greetings

President's message by Michael Hale



December! I can't believe how fast time goes by.

We have had a very busy time since our last newsletter; Western Fair, Lifechain, and 40 Days For Life have come and gone and now we're preparing for our School Program which starts up in January. I also completed my Camino, walking 800 kms from St. Jean Pied du Port in SW France to Santiago de Compostela in NW Spain in September. That was a life changing experience.

While praying at the 40 Days for Life, I reflected on many things; how a wonderful country like Canada does not have any laws restricting abortion, how apathy is the real illness in our country, and what the future of LARTLA should look like. I will explore these topics further in this newsletter.

Inside, you will find our annual fundraising appeal letter. We have been blessed to learn some amazing stories this year which give us great hope. We will share them with you. Last month we sent out an urgent appeal by email because our coffers were bare. A big Thank You to those who opened their hearts to our plight and sent us a contribution. We still need to replenish our coffers and I would ask you to consider making a sacrificial donation to LARTLA at this time of year. Large or small, your donation will be put to good use educating our society of the benefits of honouring life. Rest assured that we continue to pray for all of you each day.

Let me close with a personal appeal for help on our Board. Due to workload in his day job, our Treasurer, Bill Dika, has had to resign. With the changing of the guard, others have indicated their desire to retire as well. I want to begin the recruiting drive for our 2015 Board now by asking all of you to consider joining us in this call. I've met many of you who are passionate about Life and I would ask you to apply that passion to help us on the Board. Many hands make the work light.

Have a wonderful Christmas and may God bless you all.

Michael

Child of Bethlehem

May your coming this Christmas not just "interrupt" our normal flow of time, may we allow Christmas to transform every moment of our lives, as well.

May your Spirit prevail in our homes and hearts every night and every day. May the song of the angels be sung and heard with joy in every season of the new year. Peace of earth.

To All God's People



40 DAYS FOR LIFE - A Big Thank You!!

by Bonnie Pember

Our fourth campaign of 40 Days for Life was both challenging and exciting this year. Our numbers grew due to participation from new prayer volunteers, seminarians, young people from the Newman Club at the University of Western Ontario, and from our friends at Western Lifeline. Along with our stalwart supporters, we had over 430 participants! What a wonderful thing that so many stood up for Life!! We need to reach out to more churches and have them embrace 40 Days For Life like the parishioners from St. Anne's in St. Thomas did when they booked an entire day!

One of the high points of the whole 40 Days was the visit to our prayer vigil by Steve Karlen, North American outreach director of 40 Days For Life. While with us, he encouraged us to stand fast in our pro-life witness before continuing on his whirlwind tour of Ontario!! He was met by 25 people who came to pray and to listen to his message of hope for us to forge onward for the final half of our fall campaign. "Never give up" was the essence of his talk; "we never know when or who will be affected by our presence, rain or shine, at the fence" in front of Victoria Hospital.

God bless each of you who prayed at home or at the fence! We know that some people were too ill to be physically present but were with us in spirit and in Truth. A young woman's conversion from a pro-choice attitude to a pro-life stance started with her glimpsing people standing up for Life. She shared her story at the wrap up party and we have included it in this newsletter. A big "Thank You" goes out to those who helped set up and dismantle the 40 Days for Life signs! Such a sacrifice on those cold rainy days. Many hands make light work and our team is terrific!! Check out our pictures below.



Christmas Appeal

Dear Pro-life Friends,

We are weeks away from celebrating Jesus' birthday. This is a time of giving gifts to our friends and loved ones to show them how much we love and appreciate them. It is also the time of the year when most charities send out fundraising appeals. London Area Right to Life is no exception. We rely upon your generosity to allow us to do the good works that we do. So that we can present information to those who are in need. You never know when and where our activities will make a difference.

I'll share a story of Jen. We can only touch briefly on her story here, but her entire witness can be seen on our website www.right2life.ca. Jen was driving by one of our prayer vigils near the hospital. She only caught a glimpse of the signs and people praying, but it registered. Her immediate reaction was "who do those people think they are". Who are they to tell a woman what she can and can't do with her own body. That initial kernel of an idea settled into her mind and over time, she examined many of her ideas and attitudes as it related to the pro-life debate. Eventually her analysis left her with two choices: either abject denial of reality or discovering truth of at the end of a long and sometimes painful process. Jen chose Truth. Her story and analysis is compelling. I urge you to read it.

Had we not been praying outside that hospital that day, maybe Jen would never have been faced with that idea.

This year while at The Western Fair, a young woman came by the booth with a young child, under one. She told us that last year she was pregnant with her child and she was undecided about what to do, have an abortion or keep the baby. She talked with one of our volunteers there and learned some very interesting information. It was because of this encounter with LARTLA at the Fair that she decided to keep her child. The child that was sleeping in her stroller right then.

Had we not been at The Western Fair, maybe this woman would have chosen a different path.

Every year we receive great feedback from our school program. Children write comments like "every child deserves to be born", "I never knew how babies grew in the womb", and my favourite "thank you for coming and telling us about babies. I learned a lot".

Had we not been at the schools in the London district, these young children would remain unaware.

We need your help so that we can continue to carry out our mission. Our cupboards are bare and we need your generous donations. I thank you for your generosity and we will be praying for you to have a wonderful Christmas.

God Bless.

From the Office by Bonnie Pember

God works in mysterious ways...

Have you ever been given a gift that was totally unexpected? That is how I feel these past few months as God continually showers graces upon me in people I met and situations in which I found myself. Darren Cooper and Kari Darrow are two new volunteers in the office; God gave them to LARTLA for His service. I have been office coordinator for 2 ½ years now and each year someone new comes forward to help me. Our beloved Maria Amaral died a few months ago; I believe she is sending me new friends from Heaven. Thank you so much for all of you who help spread the pro-life message! Without you, my dear pro-life family, my job would seem overwhelming but we are all members of the Body of Christ, aren't we? Have a blessed Christmas and New Year!!



Breaking the Silence at Western University,

by Sonja Ramondino



At the heart of a culture which readily embraces moral relativism and its superficial “freedom”, individuals have inevitably begun to search for truth. The search often begins or ends within the university setting, a place which can be awfully confusing for an impressionable eighteen year-old (or anyone, for that matter). University culture prides itself with an enormous variety of ideologies, some of which are accepted, praised and promoted; others which are less so. When addressing the topic of crucial life issues such as abortion, there is always a need for more voices, more witnesses and more support.

Western Lifeline is a pro-life group at Western University which exists to connect with those searching for the truth about abortion and provide them with avenues of inspiration, encouragement, education and strength. A powerful way this has been facilitated on various university campuses is through the Silent No More Awareness Campaign. The campaign consists of individuals who speak to the pain associated with their own personal stories of abortion crises, and of the journey of finding peace and forgiveness. On Thursday, November 6th this campaign was held in a classroom at Western. The group, along with invaluable wisdom, brought signs that read “I regret my abortion” and held these while each speaker shared their story. The bravery of those who spoke emanated from their mission to reveal the truth of the horrors of abortion. They stood as witnesses to its lasting effects within all areas of their lives, including their relationships, jobs, family life and feelings of personal efficacy and worth. They presented anecdotal evidence that abortion can be linked to depression and various forms of psychological distress. These adverse effects (which are not overtly stated before the procedure) can be triggered by many factors which the mind subconsciously associates with the trauma of having an abortion. This phenomenon is not solely associated with women; men also greatly mourn the loss of their children. The campaign speakers wished to save others from this trauma by emphasizing the fact that abortion is never a forgotten act, and is never a solution to an unplanned pregnancy.

As students immersed in a wave of modern paradigms, the Lifeline members who attended this event were inspired by the unwavering commitment demonstrated by those involved in Silent No More and strive with renewed fervor to continue their mission of education and awareness within the university community. Lifeline’s involvement on campus extends to biweekly discussions which address important topics surrounding abortion, including scientific studies of its effects on women, personal stories, how to respond to pro-choice questions or views, apologetics, and much more. Lifeline strives to build a familial community on which students can rely for support, and has organized BBQs, socials and volunteering events to aid in fostering this fellowship. Along with participating in LARTLA initiatives including 40 Days for Life and Life Chain, Lifeline has hosted debates and talks at the university, organizes information tables within the University Center and looks to use different media avenues to promote awareness.

As demonstrated by the members of the Silent No More Campaign, it is essential that pro-lifers become proficient at speaking out against the injustice that has been tolerated at a societal and national level. It is with extreme courage that men and women have turned their abortion experiences into messages of hope, forgiveness and action – courage which must flourish and continue to be shared by every individual who is touched by these testimonies, so that the very idea of abortion can become unthinkable.

LARTLA's booth and volunteers at the Western Fair — we make a difference!

by Bonnie Pember



Sometimes we can wonder if our presence at the Western Fair makes a difference in people's lives. Our "Right to Life" team as one young woman said to me, does have an impact upon others. I was privileged to volunteer with our Vice-President Mary Lynn Barr and her daughters Laura and Kayla when a young woman approached me to share her story. These are her words:

Last year when we came to the fair, I was only a few months' pregnant. I had just met my boy-

friend and we got pregnant within a week. I came to the fair and they showed me what my decision would cost me if I chose to abort.

Now my boy is 6 months old and we made the best decision because of the right to life team. I saw my child, the one I chose to make. I CHOSE. You can't just get rid of a "problem" because it exists. Think. Educate yourself before you do anything. Please save the babies.

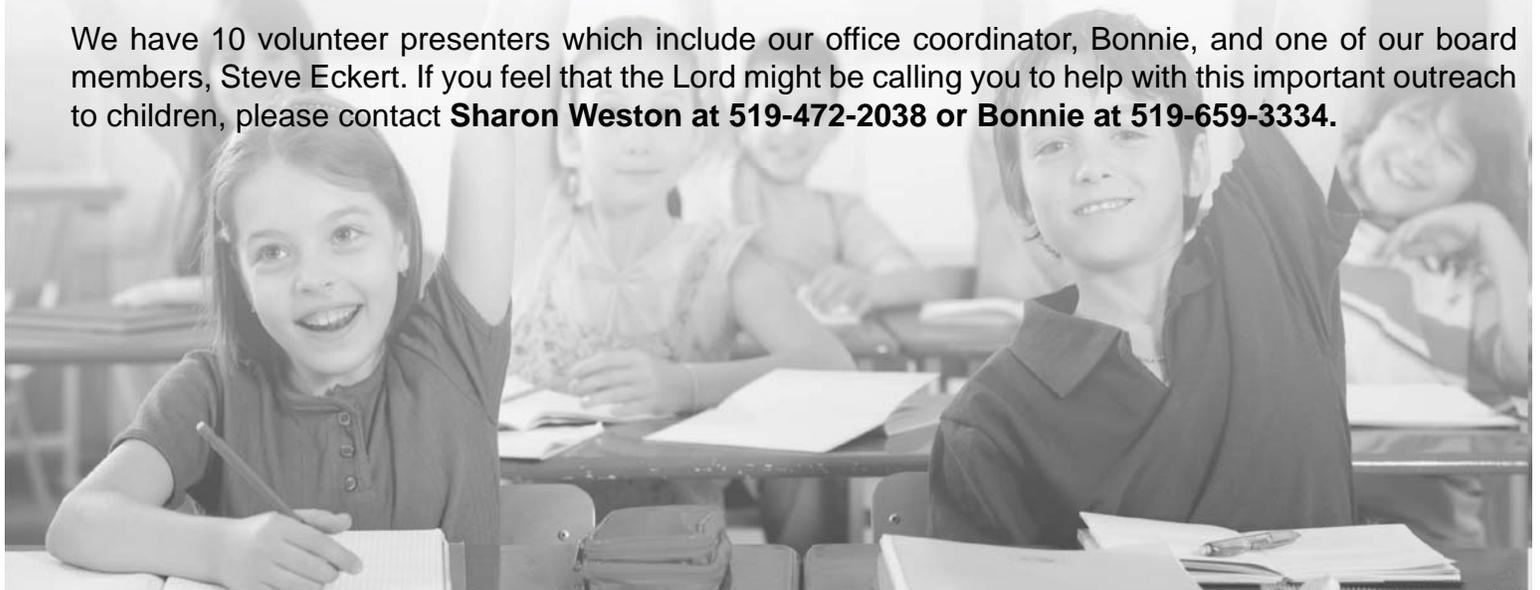


And a little child shall lead them...

Instilling values and faith in our young people is so very important in our world which reflects only a culture of death and self-interest. London Area Right to Life Association's pro-life elementary school program for grades 5 & 6 continues this year with the collaboration of Joe Bezzina, Coordinator of Curriculum for Family & Life at the London District Catholic School Board.

This year there are 22 schools involved and 1, 501 students will learn that they are **special, unique** individuals **created in the image and likeness of God**. Each child receives a pamphlet entitled "Milestones of Early Life" which outlines the development of the baby in the womb, a poem entitled "I am special" and a bookmark with the phrase from Isaiah, "I will not forget you...I have held you in the palm of My Hand".

We have 10 volunteer presenters which include our office coordinator, Bonnie, and one of our board members, Steve Eckert. If you feel that the Lord might be calling you to help with this important outreach to children, please contact **Sharon Weston at 519-472-2038 or Bonnie at 519-659-3334**.



“Act of Love” *(lyrics and music by Larry Santa)*

It started softly: on a sultry, silver night.
Music and starlight did Magic.
Eyes and minds becoming one — leaping in passion.
Seeking pleasure and to please. Infatuated unity.
Ohhh...oh...oh Act of Love. Ohh...oh...oh This is Love.

The lovers vow: fidelity that never dies—never, for better
or for worse.
Eyes of hope shine in the dark Exchanging sparks.
Shout and cry joyously. Swimming in ecstasy.
Ohhh...oh...oh Act of Love. Ohhh...oh.. This is Love.

**BRIDGE: Such a love we share.
A treasure so rare.
Our hearts and words affirm.
Love eternal burns.**

Then it happened: your monthly messenger awaited...did
not appear. Something different growing here. Making you
smile or shed tears?

Fickle fate messing lives. Cutting like a hungry knife.
Ohhhh...oh...oh do you love me? Oh...oh...oh more than
it?
Ohhhh...oh..oh Act of Love. Oh..oh..oh This is Love.

Then the visit: the doctor's vacant eyes are grey, his feeling
gone away. Everything is cold: Sterile people and
steel.

Moan and groan; feel partition. Scraping out an intrusion.
Ohhhh..oh...oh Act of Love. Oh..oh..oh.. This is Love.

Visit's ended: impediment to love removed. Hidden tears
...
In a basket tiny protest no one hears...woe...

Little body, little soul: no person. Little body, little soul: no
spokesman. Ohhhh..oh..oh Act of Love. Oh..oh..oh...This
is Love?

**BRIDGE: What did we share?
Something quite rare.
A haunting in my mind.
Seeking something I can't find.**

On a dark day do you see little hands and feet....never
walking, never holding? Little voice that never
cries....drowning in lies.

Little body, little soul: no person? Little body, little soul: no
spokesman. Ohhhh...oh... Act of Love? Oh...oh...oh...
This is Love??



Larry Santa is a long time friend of pro-life. When you meet him you sense a man who has deep feelings for Life. One day when he was thinking about the plight of the unborn he sat down and wrote this song about how when two people come together in a passionate act, without the proper total commitment to each other and the result of their passion, the result may not be what they had intended. Larry's lyrics paint a picture, one which is all too commonplace in our society. Let us take Larry's song to our prayer this month and ask the Lord to help all those women (and men) who get themselves into this situation and feel they only have one recourse available to them. Listen to Larry's song by clicking on the link on our web site, www.right2life.ca

40 DAYS FOR LIFE - *Musings*

By Michael Hale

There is so much encouragement we can take from this past 40 Days for Life campaign. We know that 40 Days for Life vigils were held in 11 countries and 297 cities around the world. We can also take comfort in knowing 726 babies were saved world-wide. And that is just the ones that we know of! How many more were saved by someone who saw the silent prayerful witness to end abortion? We may never know.

We know Jen, one of our prayer warriors at 40 Days this year, had her heart and mind moved at a prior 40 Days for Life vigil. How many like Jen we also moved? Again, we may never know.

I reflected upon the many thousands of cars that drove past while we were praying. Yes some would honk their horns and give us the finger or shout negative comments to us, but what struck me the most was the many that drove by without making a comment. It struck me that those that saw us and reacted negatively at least engaged in the topic. They recognized us and our message and reacted. I applaud that reaction. Not their message, but that they were engaged enough to react. Apathy is what is harming our society. That is what we need to battle.

On the last day of our 40 Days for Life vigil, our silent corner of prayer was inundated with a half dozen or more protesters chanting slogans and holding up contrarian signs. Signs which, as always, had to attack the good people who were praying. They showed up around 11:00 am and stayed till 6:00 pm. If you recall, that day was a bitterly cold one with a biting wind blowing. I have to give them credit that they stuck it out that long. While we don't agree with their message, we at least respect the fact that in our great country we have the right to hold different views and hold protests to share that message.

For a while that day I was feeling very depressed because a lot of people driving by were honking in support of them. This made me sad because of the many hours when hardly anyone beeped or waved to support us. It also made me sad when I reflected upon the herculean task to change our culture away from death to one of life. Then I had a brain wave. I contacted my friend, Brian, who was running a marriage conference that day and asked him to ask any participants who could, to come and pray with us when the conference was over. Over 12 people showed up to pray with us - boosting our numbers higher than the protestors. This really warmed my heart and gave me a shot of encouragement. While we were all there I pondered things further and realized that my sad sack state came from thinking it was up to me and the rest of those LARTLA supporters who came out to pray. It struck me that we are just the players in HIS plan and that no matter how much we do (or how little) HE will use those efforts.

So take heart. We are engaged in a war but we know, in the end, HE wins. That should give us all comfort.

The wrap up party was held at Faith Lutheran Church on Southdale. We had a good group of people come and share fellowship on a cold wintry night. Beside the normal thank you speeches, Larry Santa came and entertained us by singing a few songs (even his pro-life song - see page 6.) We also had some in the audience share their stories with us. Stories which were very compelling and moved us. Ngan reminded us that we need to forgive like Christ forgave. Jen shared her story of transformation, Margaret shared of her trials in our contracepting world, Steve shared his impressions of praying at the hospital and how it moved him to pray for those in the industry and the women affected by abortion, Marian to remind us that we never know when our efforts will pay off. Elaine, as always, gave us a message of hope. While we don't know for certain that a baby was saved here in London by our witness at this year's 40 Days For Life, let us remember that God will use our efforts as he sees fit and Trust that our efforts were fruitful. Thank you again Judy for organizing the Church for us.

Thank you once again to all those who came out, in the sun and rain and sleet and snow, to pray with us to end abortion. Your prayers will not go unanswered. Thank you especially to Bonnie for her stalwart efforts to keep the prayer sheet full of names. It was a difficult task at times but she stepped up and did an awesome job.

See you all next year!

Santa's Prayer On Christmas Eve

The sleigh was all packed, the reindeer were fed,
But Santa still knelt by the side of the bed.

"Dear Father," he prayed "Be with me tonight,
There's much work to do and my schedule is tight.

I must jump in my sleigh and streak through the sky,
Knowing full well that a reindeer can't fly.

I will visit each household before the first light,
I'll cover the world and all in one night.

With sleighbells a-ringing, I'll land on each roof,
Amid the soft clatter of each little hoof.

To get in the house is the difficult part,
So I'll slide down the chimney of each child's heart.

My sack will hold toys to grant all their wishes.
The supply will be endless like the loaves and the fishes.

I will fill all the stockings and not leave a track.
I'll eat every cookie that is left for my snack.

I can do all these things Lord, only through You.
I just need your blessing, then it's easy to do.

All this is to honor the birth of the One,
That was sent to redeem us, Your most Holy Son.

So to all of my friends, least Your glory I rob,
Please, Lord, remind them who gave me this job."

~Warren D. Jennings