



Ontario pro-life leader Phil Arnsby passes away: was 'the face of pro-life'

by John Bulsza

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April 22, 2013 (LifeSiteNews.com) - It saddens us that Phil Arnsby has passed away, leaving when he did. Phil died on April 17th of complications after a heart attack he suffered on April 14th while playing his favourite game, tennis. Perhaps the Lord knew it was time to come home. Perhaps He knew he would do his service for the pro-life cause to the maximum, willing to do so even to the point of giving up his life for it – for the pre-born, their mothers, for those threatened by euthanasia, doctor-assisted suicide, human embryonic stem cell research, contraception, and IVF. His faith and prayer life were priorities, which Phil carried into his daily living, a good part of which was his dedication to Elaine his spouse,

and to his children.

Phil served as president of the London Area Right to Life Association from 2003 to 2012. At the association's annual dinner, held in London on Thursday April 19th, 2013 only a day after his passing, long-standing member Reverend John Obeda read to the audience verses from Romans 14: "For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, if we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's." Theresa Fenik, active member of the association, stated: "Phil Arnsby is the face of pro-life." Do not both of these quotes give an accurate description of Phil's *modus operandi* and *persona*?

Alissa Golob, Youth Coordinator for Campaign Life Coalition, told LifeSiteNews that Phil was a "pro-life hero" who inspired her to take up the cause when she was only 13. "I owe a lot of my passion to Phil and others on the Show the Truth tour who were so determined and motivated to make a difference," she said. "Even though Phil lived two hours away, I always saw him on a regular basis because he was always supporting and organizing pro-life events. I think that all young pro-life activists should take a moment and appreciate those who fought this battle before us! They are some of the most inspiring people you'll ever meet!"

John-Henry Westen, editor-in-chief of LifeSiteNews, said Phil was one of the "humble heroes" of Canada's pro-life movement. "He was, as his beloved wife Elaine continues to be, a real soldier for life constant in faith and good works," said Westen. "He will be greatly missed, but while I feel sadness for those he loved, I feel so very happy for him. Phil lived for his faith in Christ and I can see him being told by the Great Judge, 'Come, you who are blessed by my Father. Inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.' And I can hear the rest... 'For my life was threatened in the womb of my mother and you worked to save me.' Rest in Peace my friend."

As the London Area Right to Life Association's president, Phil lead a whole host of educational activities – research literature for elementary and high school students, the annual Walk-a-thon fundraiser, the booths at the Western and Ilderton Fairs, producing high quality newsletters, giving interviews to students, radio, television and newspaper media, liaisoning with Sisters for Life out of Toronto, Alliance for Life, and Western and Kings pro-life clubs. Phil especially enjoyed his involvement in the elementary school pro-life programs that were a joint effort between the Diocese of London, the London Catholic District School Board and the London Area Right to Life Association.

You would also find Phil involved in separate pro-life endeavors. You would see him and feel his joyous presence and assistance in leading a "line" in the Show the Truth Tour presentations in the summer months for one or two week stints. These past two years Phil was inspired to act as lead organizer of the 40 Days for Life, hauling signs and tote boxes and being on the site more frequently than not.

Phil would make every effort to be present at the annual National March for Life events in Ottawa. He was a

faithful participant in the monthly Pro-Life Information Walk in front of the London Health Sciences Centre's Victoria Hospital, faithfully, in rain or shine, sleet or snow. The association's guest speaker at its dinner on Thursday, Jonathan Van Maren, told the audience that Phil was one of the first supporters of the Canadian Centre for Bioethical Reform (CCRB) when it got started, and that Phil led the way to host and house members of the CCBR's New Abortion Caravan that came through London in June of last year.

Of course, Phil could not do all these initiatives on his own. He had a great support team behind him, the most important being his beloved spouse. Elaine would be with Phil, by his side with all the help and guidance she could muster as a loving and devoted wife (and vice-president of LARTLA) in most of the events mentioned above.

Phil will be sadly missed, but we can be confident that he is in Heaven with the Almighty, and reunited with his dear daughter Angela who passed away just one month prior to his passing. We can also be confident that Phil will keep us in his prayers and intercede on our behalf in our daily pro-life struggles, and in our daily faith-belief struggles, in aspiration and in praxis.

We can hear Phil saying to us: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith." (2 Tim 4:7)

God bless you Phil and thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

Visitation will be at the [John T. Donohue Funeral Home](#), 362 Waterloo Street, London, today from 2-4 p.m and 7-9 p.m.. The Funeral Mass will be on Tuesday at 11 a.m. at Mary Immaculate Church, 1980 Trafalgar Street in London.

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