



# POSITIVELY PRO-LIFE

CALGARY PRO-LIFE ASSOCIATION

WINTER 2021

## President's Message



### Mary said "Yes" to Life!

Once again the festive Christmas season is arriving! Our churches begin a new liturgical year with the Advent season. The readings remind us of the prophesied coming of the Infant Jesus who will establish His spiritual reign in this world. The secular world is also gearing up to "reap the benefits" of the Christmas season by providing the goods and services to help us participate in the gift exchange that accompanies Christmas throughout our world.



Perhaps the greatest gifts of Christmas are the memories we all share of a Christmas past. Family, friends, and strangers are all a part of our memories and I encourage you to reflect on the past as a great way to prepare for the future. Family gatherings bring joy to all who make the effort required to keep family bonds strong. Healthy conversations among family members give us opportunities to enter each other's worlds once again as we reminisce upon the good times we had and especially with those who may have passed from this world. Our reflecting hopefully encourages us to reach out in anticipation of a future Christmas with similar good will being exchanged between all who are present.

Perhaps Christmas is ordained to be a family time. A healthy family attracts others just like a magnet attracts metal. I am inspired by families who reach out to others, especially strangers, and include them in their events. Often this occurs through interactions among our children. I remember a neighbour who was blessed on two occasions with the birth of another child on different Christmas days. How awesome is that! The arrival of a newborn is always special but a Christmas baby reminds us of the transcendent promise of the spiritual reign of God that will come.

On behalf of the Board of Calgary Pro-life Association, I wish you and your family a joyous Christmas season. May you be blessed with the peace and good will that accompanies this season. Let us continue to pray for all to embrace the Christmas season without reservation and make our world a better place the whole year round.

*Paul O'Leary, President*



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Calgary Pro-Life

Life-Affirming Educational Resource Programs  
[www.calgaryprolife.com](http://www.calgaryprolife.com)

# Hike for Life Trophy Presentations & Thank You!

by Monique Achtman, Educational Resource Consultant

We thank all who participated in the virtual 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Hike for Life for your pro-life witness, and for your generosity. We met our fundraising goal. We have sent prizes, and we are presenting trophies to the winners announced in the October newsletter.

Your prayers, and your financial contribution through The Hike for Life, membership, and donation to Calgary Pro-Life Assn. supports free, pro-life education for students in grades 4-9, and more. Your gifts give witness to the beauty and sanctity of every human life from conception until natural death. During these times, amidst these years of the pandemic, we have received several phone calls and been encouraged with the number of people who say "yes" to life!

Hike participants this year hailed from Calgary, Airdrie, Canmore, Cochrane, Okotoks, Red Deer, Strathmore, and even Blairmore! Some participants have requested to know more about our programs, and to receive resources to share pro-life messages with family and friends. We have ordered banners, magnets, and decals to offer as gifts to students, and to you. Contact us by email for more info.

Teachers have sent testimonials that speak to the value of the Respect Life programs including this one:

*"Thank you so much to everyone who supported the fetal development presentation given to my grade six class today. The scientific information given, which explained this amazing miracle, was very clear and accessible to the age group, but the biggest plus was the overriding message that life is an amazing miracle and is a gift from God right from the moment of conception. The kids understand more clearly what "moment of conception" means now and will hopefully take this into consideration when making the moral decisions that they will be faced with in the near future in their lives.*

*In a world that offers strong secular messages about new human life, it was refreshing and **hopeful** that there is another side of the story being presented in a very clear and believable way. I pray that this has made a big impact on the future decisions of the people who had the privilege of seeing this presentation today.*

*Thank you to Monique and your team. You are influencing young lives to see God's truth about the miracle of life!"*

**Dawn Fox, Grade 6 Teacher, Msgr. Hetherington School**

## Hike for Life Award John Bosco Trophy



**Congratulations** and many thanks to St. Bernadette Knight of Columbus for winning the John Bosco Trophy award for the K of Council with the most funds raised. *Left to right:* Larry Muraski, Art De Sousa, Larry Dansereau, Ian Barenec, Ray Heck, Jim Dorlstauber.

**Congratulations** to Liisa Honish, teacher at Prince of Peace School in Calgary, who received the Excellence in Catholic Education Award this year. This award recognizes Catholic educators who have done an exemplary job in preparing our youth to grow into outstanding citizens.



We take this opportunity to recognize Liisa and express our grateful appreciation for her many contributions, and her annual invitation to Calgary Pro-Life Assn. to present both, the **Respect You! You Matter** and the **Respect Life: Fetal Development** programs to her junior high school students.



# Calgary Pro-Life Review

by Monique Achtman, Educational Resource Consultant

During COVID-19, we have all been doing our best to witness pro-life through our two educational pro-life programs.

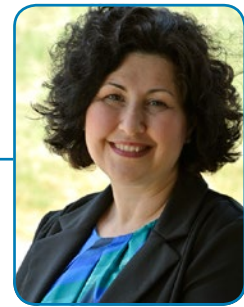
As we've been wearing face masks and keeping our physical distance from each other—all in an effort to protect health—it's certainly been a little more difficult to visit the sick, give to the poor, clothe the naked, feed the hungry, and support those who are in need in our community in the more personal ways we were used to in the past. The social aspects within our body, mind and soul have been challenged when we wanted to celebrate weddings, funerals, holidays and even birthdays with our family and friends. Now, we are starting to see a change as we get used to a 'new normal' and living with the risk of COVID infections due to possible virus mutations.

We have good news at Calgary Pro-Life! We are now invited back into school classrooms, at the discretion of principals and teachers, to present our respect life presentations. One fifth grade teacher shared this testimonial in her evaluation of the **Respect You: You Matter!** presentation:

*"This presentation helped my students regain confidence in themselves. The daily reminder that they matter is so important and it was so meaningful for them to understand that they are needed in this puzzle we call our world. It is now our class motto that they are each a unique piece of the puzzle that bring special talents to the world. I appreciated the faith-filled presentation.... Thank you so much for this wonderful presentation!"*

Anna Vitamog

Christ the King Academy, Brooks



We've given 13 presentations since September and more bookings are expected in the new year. We will be very busy in the spring presenting the **Respect Life: Fetal Development** presentations to students in grades 6-9.

We have ordered new stand up display banners, magnets, and stickers, and we are creating posters that can be shared in classrooms, on church bulletin boards, and at group meetings.

We will have a table and pro-life display at the 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Breakfast with the Bishop on January 22. All are invited to join us in sharing positive pro-life messages with our indigenous neighbours in southern Alberta.

## I am Pro-Life when...

by Tom Shindruk, Board Member

As a relatively new board member, I am learning about the organization and want to be a valuable member and contribute to the success of the Calgary Pro-Life Assn.

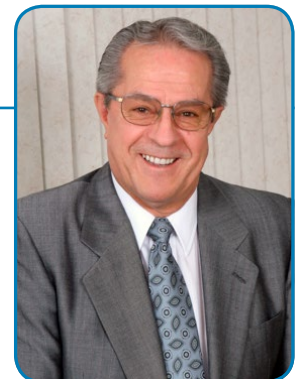
I read the Calgary Pro-Life Assn. mission statement and fully agree that we must do all we can to respect life from conception until natural death. This should be our intention every day of our lives. But there is more to pro-life than ensuring that all babies are born. We as parents, and as a society, must nurture and guide the young to know their potential and their purpose.

I have overcome four bouts of cancer and know that God loves us all. Throughout my cancer treatment I had the feeling that there was someone

present with me, even when there was no one else in the room. God sends angels to comfort and protect us in our times of need. Everyone who is alive will experience good and bad times. For those that have difficult times, know that they will pass and we move on.

What we do to create a better life for others creates a better life for ourselves. What we do on a daily basis is vitally important, not just for others, but for ourselves too.

Pro-life is giving someone a hug, a gentle touch, a kind word, or a smile. This, to me, is pro-life. What we give is what we get in return. No matter our station in life, we will all go through valleys and hills, straight roads, and winding



ones, happiness and sadness, because this is the experience of life. Everyone must decide how we receive the gift of life, from God, and go for it. The longest journey starts with the first step.

So, today let us all start living and giving. Make everyone you meet, or see, feel good. Build them up, encourage all those you know to respect all human life, starting with their own. Treat everyone with kindness and respect. Pro-life, to me, is living and giving.

# Calgary Pro-Life Assn. Membership & Donation – 2022

First Name \_\_\_\_\_

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred Method of Contact: ☐ Email ☐ Phone

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Province \_\_\_\_\_

Postal Code \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Type: ☐ Student \$10 ☐ Adult \$20 ☐ Family \$30

Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

CHARITABLE B/N: 10683-0995-RR0001

## Positively Pro-Life Newsletter

I would like to receive the newsletter by:

☐ Email

☐ Canada Post

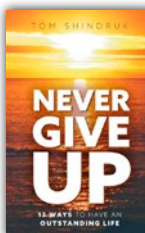
## SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS

### Congratulations and Happy 85<sup>th</sup> Birthday to John

**Siroishka**, CPL board member and active pro-life supporter since 1965!

**Congratulations to Tom Shindruk** who published, *Never Give Up!* At age 86, his pro-life witness and positive messages offer 12 ways to have an outstanding life. If you would like to receive a gift copy of this life-affirming book from Calgary Pro-Life, please contact our office at (403) 243-0691. (Note: We have five copies to offer as gifts.)

**Breakfast with the Bishop** supports ministry with southern Alberta's First Nations communities. Calgary Pro-Life Assn. gave the *Respect You: You Matter* pro-life presentation earlier this year, and now we are invited to set up a pro-life display table at this event on January 22, 2022. For more information, and to see us there, please visit [www.franciscanandfriends.ca](http://www.franciscanandfriends.ca) for tickets.



## UPCOMING DATES

*December 25, 2021*

*Blessed Christmas Day*

Celebrating Mary's "Yes" and the birth of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ!

*December 26, 2021*

*Feast of the Holy Family (Catholic trad.)*

*January 22, 2022*

*See our pro-life display at the*

*19<sup>th</sup> Annual Breakfast with the Bishop*

Tickets: [www.franciscanandfriends.ca](http://www.franciscanandfriends.ca)

*May 7, 2022*

*42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Hike for Life*

Place and time TBA



*School Presentations*

*February - June 2022*

Teachers are invited to book your free classroom presentation(s) using our convenient online booking calendar: <https://koalendar.com/e/meet-with-cpl-life-affirming-programs>



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RENEW MEMBERSHIPS AND  
DONATE ON OUR WEBSITE:  
[www.calgaryprolife.com](http://www.calgaryprolife.com)

Thank you for your  
continued support!

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Calgary Pro-Life