

POSITIVELY PRO-LIFE

MARCH 2022

Prayer to Our Lady of Guadalupe

Patroness of the Americas, and of the Unborn

Our Lady of Guadalupe, we turn to you who are the protectress of unborn children and ask you to intercede for us, so that we may more firmly resolve to join you in protecting all human life.


Let our prayers be united to your perpetual motherly intercession on behalf of those whose lives are threatened, be they in the womb of their mother, on the bed of infirmity, or in the latter years of their life.

May our prayers be coupled with peaceful action which witnesses to the goodness and dignity of all human life, so that our firmness of purpose may give courage to those who are fearful and bring light to those who are blinded by sin.

Encourage those who will be involved in the Hike for Life; help them to walk closely with God and to give voice to the cry of the oppressed, in order to remind our community of its commitment to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness for all people.

O Virgin Mother of God, present our petitions to your Son and ask Him to bless us with abundant life.

Amen



“Let not your heart be disturbed...Am I not here, who am your mother? Are you not under my protection?”

Our Lady to St. Juan Diego

President's Message

by Paul O'Leary, President

More than two years ago, we set a goal to change the way people "see" pro-life advocacy. We asked each other to finish the statement, *I am pro-life when....* This question was later posed to our membership at the 2021 Annual General Meeting. We acknowledged that often there is debate between "pro-life" groups who target different audiences and then choose different methods to promote their cause. These debates cause dissension among the groups and leads to a lack of cooperation. We resolved to take a holistic approach that presumes most people are "pro-life" and our goal now, is to recognize them through their pro-life witness in their everyday activities.

While pursuing the thought-provoking statement *I am pro-life when....*, we decided to make banners that display a variety of postures that model "pro-life" behavior. To name but a few, praying for the pro-life cause is imperative. We also believe that teaching is imperative for proper conscience formation. Lastly, we must put into action, our conviction to be "pro-life." This may sound simplistic, but all successful journeys start with a basic plan and a resolve to see it through to completion.

We have pursued a goal to purchase and create banners that educate—through beautiful imagery—the sanctity of life from the very beginning of conception

(timeline of fetal development); and that show, through example, models of openness to the gift of life at all stages, planned or unplanned. And finally, we aim to show and recognize that people are, by nature, "pro-life" in their everyday activities. To date, we have three new banners and others are in progress.

Reflect upon the statement, *I am pro-life when...* as you view these banners and "see" where you fit in. We believe that all people are 'pro-life' at the start of their earthly journeys. It is our goal to help them return to the right path if they have gone astray.



Banner Project • Sharing Pro-Life through Visuals

by CPL Board of Directors

Calgary Pro-Life Association recently participated in a gathering with our Indigenous friends. With the expectation of future invitations, we decided to commission a painting depicting Our Lady of Guadalupe meeting with St. Juan Diego, an Indigenous man, as part of our Banner Project. The image on the front page was created by **Ms. Elizabeth Blair**, a local artist.

Calgary Pro-Life believes there is a profound respect for life message that is subtly revealed in this rendition of the apparition of Our Lady of Guadalupe. We ask you to ponder in your heart what that message is to you as you review some of the history of this event.

As children, some of us remember learning a song that began, "In 1492, Columbus sailed the ocean blue..." that helped us learn the history of the evangelization of the New World to the Christian faith. For approximately 40 years, evangelization was progressing very slowly among the Indigenous

Aztec people of Mexico. Then, in December of 1531, Juan Diego, a recent convert to Catholicism, witnessed an apparition of the Blessed Virgin Mary. Mary appeared to him several times, culminating in an encounter where she asked him to collect some flowers from the top of Tepeyak Hill, near current day Mexico City. Although it was not the season for flowers, Juan heeded Our Lady's request and collected the miraculous Castilian roses that are native to Spain (not Mexico) thus linking her also to the Spanish missionaries ministering to the Aztecs at that time.

When Juan Diego presented the roses to the local religious authorities, Our Lady left her miraculous image on his cactus fiber tilma. The image remains to this day. We present a key Marian message on "our" depiction of Our Lady of Guadalupe that says, "Let not your heart be disturbed... Am I not here, who am your Mother? Are you not under my protection?" We think this message is appropriate for all peoples, of all ages,

especially those living in our times. Perhaps you can see your tear-filled eyes looking at Our Lady.

Considerable discussion and debate accompany this miraculous image. Here, we present only a few facts: More than eight million Aztec Mexicans embraced the Christian faith in the 10 years after its appearance. The image remains with us almost 500 years later despite being "painted" upon a biodegradable cactus fiber. Our Lady, who is with child and is "cloaked with the sun," continues to leave an indelible mark upon those who encounter her.

We added an eagle to the image to represent the dignity of Juan Diego whose Indigenous name means **Talking Eagle**, and to capture the religious significance of the eagle to Indigenous people.

Like Our Lady, let each of us become intercessors so that we may bring others closer to God by attracting them to the beauty of the Christian faith.

by Marina Abel, CPL Board Member



Corporal Works of Mercy • Banner Artwork in Progress • Artist: Ms. Elizabeth Blair

The seven ***Corporal Works of Mercy*** are given to us by Jesus as a model of how we are to treat each other. (Matthew 25:31-46) When we follow these teachings, we are being charitable. We show respect for life when we provide for the physical needs of our neighbour(s).

Through our mission to promote the dignity and sanctity of human life, we at Calgary Pro-life Association have been stirred to create visual images that will move you to consider how you are responding to the needs of humanity.

A banner is being created where each of the corporal works of mercy will be depicted. The purpose is to motivate each of us to live out these works in our daily lives.

The seven ***Corporal Works of Mercy*** are to: Feed the hungry; Give drink to the thirsty; Shelter the homeless; Visit the sick; Visit the prisoners; Bury the dead; and Give alms to the poor.

There are many people who go without food everyday, even in our own neighbourhoods. We are called to do something to help alleviate their hunger. When my husband and I assemble a food hamper for St. Vincent de Paul and deliver it to a client/family in need – and when we collect a donation from Cobs Bread for hamper basket additions, these are a couple of ways that we are living our pro-life mission to feed the hungry.

Sometimes, when I go to the grocery store, I might see that someone is sitting on the ground outside with a placard asking for help. I take time to buy a sandwich and give it to the individual on my way out. This is just another example of how we can give to those who are hungry.

As a prelude to the ***Corporal Works of Mercy*** banner being completed, and for our next newsletter, we invite you to send in a story sharing an example of corporal works of mercy as seen or demonstrated in your daily life. You will notice that your charitable action is indeed pro-life.

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

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AGM – Keynote

by Calgary Pro-Life Assn.

Eighty-six years young, 4-time cancer survivor, husband, father, volunteer, and author of the book *Never Give Up! 12 Ways to Have an Outstanding Life*, Tom Shindruk, will be our keynote speaker at the 2022 Calgary Pro-Life AGM.

What we do to create a better life for others creates a better life for ourselves. And what we do on a daily basis is vitally important. Tom will share exactly how each of us can be actively living our pro-life vocation at every age and stage of our life.

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. Each one of us must



Tom Shindruk



decide how we receive the gift of life, from God, and go for it, knowing that from the moment of conception until the natural end of our lives we have an ultimate purpose, to live, and to help others choose life for themselves, and their family, and the world.

Calgary Pro-Life Assn. will hold its 2022 Annual General Meeting on March 21. Tom speaks at 7:00 p.m. RSVP pro-life@shaw.ca for Zoom meeting details.

CPL Members are invited to stay for the AGM meeting after the keynote presentation.

UPCOMING DATES

March 21, 2022

Annual General Meeting • Zoom

Keynote, 7:00 p.m. • AGM, 7:40 p.m.

RSVP: pro-life@shaw.ca

April 17, 2022

Easter Sunday

May 7 - June 11, 2022

Virtual 42nd Annual Hike for Life

Registration: www.calgaryprolife.com

May 8, 2022

Mothers' Day Rose Sale

at participating churches



School Presentations

February - June 2022

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



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DONATE ON OUR WEBSITE:
www.calgaryprolife.com

Thank you for your
continued support!

