



CULTURE OF LIFE

FEBRUARY
2021
Quebec Life
Coalition

Building a Christian society that defends faith, family, and the human person, from conception to natural death



February 17 - March 28
40 DAYS FOR LIFE

HELP SAVE LIVES IN MONTREAL

The **Quebec Life Coalition**'s 25th prayer vigil for the end of abortion is about to begin.

From February 17th through March 28th, our community will unite with many others worldwide for a major simultaneous pro-life mobilization. Faithful believers are praying that these efforts will mark the beginning of the end of abortion.

40 Days for Life is a focused pro-life campaign with a vision to access God's power through prayer, fasting, and peaceful vigil to end abortion.

Our mission is to bring together the body of Christ in a spirit of unity during a focused 40-day campaign of prayer, fasting, and peaceful activism, with the purpose of repentance, to seek God's favor to turn hearts and minds from a culture of death to a culture of life, thus bringing about an end to abortion.

One of the strengths of **40 Days for Life** is its simplicity. The campaign is made up of three key components:

- **Prayer and fasting:** inviting people of faith to join together for 40 days of fervent prayer and fasting for an end to abortion
- **Peaceful Vigil:** standing for life through a 40-day peaceful public witness near a local abortion facility
- **Community Outreach:** taking a positive, upbeat pro-life message to every corner of our city through media efforts, church and school outreach, petition drives, and public visibility

There are many potential benefits that our community could experience:

- Reduce abortion rates by 15%, 20%, 25%, or more!
- Recruit and mobilize hundreds of new people into effective, lifesaving efforts
- Lead post-abortive women – and men, into proven and effective healing programs
- Generate enormous “buzz” by getting prominent pro-life news coverage – even from biased media outlets
- Increase local financial support for pro-life efforts
- Develop dynamic new leaders to increase the future impact of pro-life efforts
- Make the sanctity of human life a crucial issue throughout our community and in upcoming local, state and national elections

All of these results have actually been realized in other communities, and – with God's help – could happen here in Montreal as well.

So, dress warmly, listen effectively, and pray unceasingly. Join us this Lent on the front lines of the spiritual battle, “speaking the truth in love.” Eph 4:15.

The first **40 Days for Life** vigil in Montreal was during the 2009 Lenten season and vigils have been held twice yearly since.

Pregnant? Need Help? Call Toll-Free 1-855-871-4442

A Different Kind of Conversation

This past Saturday, January 23, 2021, I participated in a day-long workshop on the topic of fostering pro-life conversations. The eight-hour event was organized by the team at Justice For All, a pro-life advocacy organization whose passion is to train pro-life persons to dialog with abortion supporters. The workshop was done over the internet and close to twenty participants had come together from across North America. The following sketches some of the points brought up in the seven workshops.

Three Essential Skills

During the workshop, seven sessions were held on a variety of themes. Each session consisted of a theoretical presentation which was then followed by role play activity between the pro-life person and the abortion advocate.

The first session introduced participants to three basic skills needed to start a conversation and keep it productive. Namely, 1. Listen to understand; 2. Ask questions with an open heart, and 3. Find common ground when possible.

The second of these was further explained by distinguishing three types of questions to ask:

- Type A questions are meant to gather information by asking for clarification, often using the “What” word;
- Type B questions focus on asking for the reasons or evidence via the “Why;” and
- Type C, is the challenge question of the persons viewpoint.

The following role play illustrates these skills and the first of the types of questions.

Pro-Life (L) What do you think about abortion? (Type A Question: What)

Pro-Choice (C): I’m pro-choice.

L: By “pro-choice” do you mean that you think abortion should be legal? (Type A: What)

C: Yes.

L: Do you think abortion should be legal through all nine months (Type A: What -Timing)

C: No way. I’m against late-term abortion.

L: I am, too. I have some pictures here of the unborn at different stages of development. (Brochure is shown) When you say you are “*against late-term abortion*” are you thinking that abortion should not be legal after a certain point?

C: [Pointing to the 18-week picture] I think after this point it should not be legal.

L: I agree that abortion should not be legal after that point. **[Skill 3: Common Ground]** Are you saying that you think abortion is okay before that point?

C: No, I think it’s bad, but I just can’t tell other people what to do.

L: So, let me see if I understand you. You think abortion is generally bad, but you think there’s a point in pregnancy when it should not be legal, and that point is at approximately 18 weeks. [Type A: What]

C: I’m not totally sure what I think, but I think that’s pretty close.

L: I think it’s understandable if you’re still thinking through your position on abortion. It seems like you’re pretty open-minded.

C: I try to be.

L: What do you think about some of the circumstances in which women get abortions, such as the situation when a woman says she “doesn’t feel mature enough”? [Type A: What - Circumstances]

C: Early or late in the pregnancy?

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L: Good question. Let's just talk about abortions early in the pregnancy since you and I have agreed that abortion shouldn't be legal late in the pregnancy. What about the "I don't feel mature enough" circumstance when the unborn is 4 weeks from fertilization?

C: I don't think feeling immature is a good reason to have an abortion no matter if it's early or late.

L: What do you think about a woman aborting a female fetus just because she would prefer to have a male child? [Common Ground]

C: What? That happens?

L: It's common especially in India and other places where there's a strong preference for male children.

C: I'm totally against that.

L: I am, too. [Common Ground] What do you think about a woman having an abortion because she doesn't want to be a single mother? [Type I: What – Circumstances]

C: That's really understandable. I'd feel sorry for her, but it doesn't seem like a good reason for abortion.

L: I agree. I'd want to do everything I could to help, but I don't think it's a good reason either.

C: These are great questions. I haven't ever really taken the time to think through this. What are your thoughts about abortion?

L: Well, for one thing, I think abortion should not be legal even early in the pregnancy.

C: But what about a woman who's really poor? Shouldn't she be allowed to get an abortion?

Homework

Each session consists of not solely the theoretical and role play components but also a third aspect.

Participants are asked to apply the newfound skills in a conversation, at completion of the workshop.

For this homework exercise, the workshop leaders identify, somewhat humorously, three possible interlocutors, – the good, the bad, and the very bad. The first refers to persons with whom a certain decorum of respectability can be maintained, the second is characterised by the absence of listening to each other, while the third, along with the latter element, loud voices and hurt feelings result.

We are told not to avoid persons in any of these three groups. The belief is that the experienced acquired will buttress our pro-life advocacy.

Further the workshop manual, a 60-page pdf, offers guides at selecting an interlocutor, helpful opening scripts, and advice for approaching difficult persons, those whom conversations had gone very bad in the past.

Keeping a journal of these conversations is also suggested. In these, notes may be kept about the successes and failures, questions raised, and your feelings and reactions before, during, and after the exchanges.

In subsequent newsletters, I hope to cover other sessions treated such as conversations centred on the topic of rape, threats to the pregnant mother's life, and back-alley abortions, topics which frequently come up on the streets and in family gatherings.

Introducing Alicia



My name is Alicia Monfort, (pictured above with my little one) I will be taking care of QLC's *Enceinte et Inquiète*, the pregnancy resource service program.

I am writing to tell you a little about my work and to ask for your help.

Most women experiencing a crisis pregnancy choose abortion for distressful psycho-social reasons, not aware of alternatives. We are one of the very few oases of hope in the province of Quebec and the battle we wage every day requires faith, courage, and determination.

Our crisis pregnancy line, open 24/7, has a toll-free number and a chat service through which pregnant women can reach us when they need lodging, equipment to welcome their babies, or psychological support during their pregnancy.

My job is to quickly find housing and material resources, and to engage in a sincere discussion the woman who is hesitating between the life and death of her child. This task is very delicate because it requires a deep spiritual commitment but also a know-how which I am honing through studies in both theology and sexual health.

And it does not stop there! In addition to animating our social networks, I am forming a pro-life student association at Laval University and I administer a pro-woman and pro-life discussion group by regularly sharing information that allows women to develop their pro-life arguments.

Every child we help to term is a blessing. You can participate in this adventure in different ways - by praying with us and also by supporting us financially. In Jesus and Mary. Alicia

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