



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

## PM TRUDEAU HARMING

## WOMEN AND CHILDREN



Prime Minister Justin Trudeau is harming the welfare of Canadian women and their children.

Since his election in November 2015, Mr. Trudeau has made policies that damage the safety of the unborn in two ways: to oblige liberals to vote in favour of abortion and to make the summer hire-a-student program conditional on adhere his values.

The latest example is the revision to the Liberal Party of Canada political platform which preceded the September 20, 2021, general election.

This revision reads as follows:

No longer provide charity status to anti-abortion organizations (for example, Crisis pregnancy Centres - CPC) that provide dishonest counseling to women about their rights and about the options available to them at all stages of the pregnancy.

The Liberals wish to protect the sexual and reproductive health and rights of Canadians.

Yet such a policy if implemented would cause CPC to either close or undergo financial hardship.

The repercussions would be felt by the beneficiaries of such centres – pregnant women and their children.

Services offered freely and confidentially affected include clothing hampers, used and new infant supplies, financial support for groceries and rent, and counselling – the real help and encouragement to mothers in difficult situations.



On Wednesday, November 24, 2021, a rally to save our charities was held on Parliament Hill at which a petition signed by over 15000 Canadians was given to three Members of Parliament present and who will deposit these in the House of Commons.

A fourth MP observed that “the Liberal party platform mentions *Crisis Pregnancy Centres*, but only as an example. Any charitable organization which holds pro-life views may now be at risk of losing its charitable status and the associated tax exemption. There include houses of worship, Christian hospitals, homeless shelters, and faith-based schools.”

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

## SIDEWALK COUNSELLING



Under her title, Our Lady of Guadalupe which the universal Church commemorates every December 12, the Blessed Virgin continues to inspire many to this day. In the diocese of Detroit, her name was adopted by a pro-life group which have been sidewalk counseling in that municipality since 2009. The founder Guadalupe Partners wrote the following reflection on the trials of the sidewalk counsellor. I hope you appreciate his humour.

Occasionally my sidewalk counseling partner and I give seminars and workshops on sidewalk counseling. Usually people like what we say, yet very rarely does anyone step out on the sidewalk to join us. Even more rare are those who stick with it a year or more. Perhaps my approach is all wrong. Perhaps I should describe mild days in the fresh outdoors, cheering words from passing motorists, and the many honors received as a life-saving hero. Unfortunately, as we all know, that is far from the truth. Most sidewalk counseling is done in rough conditions with little or no thanks. You might go days, even weeks, without a success story to tell. You're a muffled, frozen odd ball. Sometimes even your own wife (not mine, thank God) or husband begins to resent the time you spend away from

home in what often seems a hopeless endeavor. He or she will make comments like, "What about your own children? Your own family? Your own home?" But all these sources of discouragement are, to some extent, the very reason I've been sidewalk counseling since 1987. Let me explain why.

One reason I suspect I have trouble in recruiting for sidewalk counseling is because even ardent, Christian pro-life people have to some extent been affected by the ethos of the age. Our age glorifies movement. The philosophy of movement is neatly summarized by a character named Weston in a C.S. Lewis novel, *Out of the Silent Planet*. Weston explains that the goal of the human race is to speed from one planet to the next, not letting other species hinder our process, because power is the fuel of movement, and its use is therefore justified for moving us on. Movement, he says, is Life. And is this not the thinking of our own time? Do we not tear down the past in a race to an undefined future? Do we not move from job to job, from house to house, from country to country, at a rate which would have confounded our ancestors? Do we not curse our computers when they fail to respond instantaneously to our bidding? In our human communication, have we not sacrificed meaning for speed? Do we not put those who cannot keep up the pace in out-of-the-way homes? Some of them do we not even kill? Success, for us, must be a measurable thing - measured in how many appointments we have recorded in our notebook and how many times each day the cell phone rings.

Amid all this, sidewalk counseling is an anomaly. Amid the rush, sidewalk counseling is a stillness. Focus and quiet, in sidewalk counseling, are essential. Sidewalk counselors do not chat, they do not preach, they do not chant slogans. They do not bear large signs. They want to be as unobtrusive as possible, because when they approach a woman or a couple, they want the moment to be one of fresh, genuine human contact.

Yet there is another element to the stillness of a sidewalk counselor. He or she must be willing to suffer – an act which does not allow for anger, defensive techniques, protestations, or arm-flailing of any sort. Of course, there will be successes; there will be miraculous moments, moments of profound mystery and joy, moments of obvious, near-palpable grace. More often, though, will be those times in which the wind whips around you, the day is bleak and bitterly cold, the clients rush in without even bothering to become angry with you, no one listens – then the world starts to whisper in your ear, “Is this the best use of your time? Are you really being effective?” This is the moment at which the sidewalk counselor must embrace his suffering; for in that embrace, in that acceptance, he holds the key to life.



Weston’s definition of Life, of course, was mostly wrong, or terribly lop-sided, perhaps. The definition of life begins not with movement, but with stillness. Life is, in the beginning, a presence – an unmoving, unchanged presence, the presence of God. The only complete definition of life that one can offer is, simply, God. That’s it. Obviously, then, the closer to God one lives, the more one has of life. But how does one draw closer? What is the essence of God’s personality? In His constant self-gift, we recognize the obvious truth that His essence is Love.

To be willing to sidewalk counsel one must be willing to suffer. But to be willing to suffer is to be willing to Love, an act which takes us to the very source of Life, to the springs of its growth. Time after time, amid the bleakest circumstances, Alicia and I have seen life flame out; we have seen mothers and fathers smile, thank us, and leave. We have seen an abortion clinic at which we sidewalk counseled for two years close; the business having been so affected by our presence that the abortionist was evicted for unpaid rent. Even without these obvious signs of life, though, we would go, trying to be the still presence we are called to be. If love is there, death can have no victory.

#### Upcoming Events

**Vigil 365** – Ongoing, call 514 344-2686 to learn more and to participate.

**40 Days for Life** – March 2 to April 10, 2021.

**National March for Life** – Ottawa, Thursday, May 12, 2022

## Ongoing Events

**Vigil 365** – Having recently completed the “40 Days for Life” prayer vigil for the end of abortion, the ongoing daily prayerful presence near four abortion facilities in the Montreal downtown core has resumed.

Do you think God is calling you to participate? The following describes our philosophy and the three ways to partake. Do you identify with any?

**Background - Spiritual Preparation** – ... the abortion crisis is first and foremost a crisis of virtue. Our ministry is first and foremost a prophetic ministry – we are bringing God’s presence to the street. This requires spiritual preparation. We must strive for personal holiness, that is the building block. We must therefore cultivate the fruits of the spirit and the virtues in our lives. A great model for a sidewalk counsellor is St. Theresa’s Little Way. It is the way of trust and absolute surrender to God. We must acknowledge our nothingness – that everything comes from God our Father.

This ministry requires the concerted efforts of three groups: the vigilers, the sidewalk counsellors, and the spiritual Helpers. No one group is more important than the others, and as we all work together, we experience the wonderful unity of the Body of Christ.

**The vigilers** – provide spiritual and moral support for the sidewalk counsellors. They are essential. Before a mother can physically abort her child, a “spiritual abortion” must take place within her heart. By their sacrifice and prayer, the vigilers obtain the grace of God that is needed to reverse the “spiritual abortion”, at the same time the sidewalk counsellors are working to prevent the physical abortion of the child.

**The sidewalk counsellors** – approach the woman going in to have an abortion and ask her to reconsider her decision. They educate her about the baby’s

biological development in her womb and help her to understand the exact way the abortion will kill her child. They will also warn her of the physical harm the abortion may cause to her own body. The woman will be provided with literature informing her of all the help available: financial, medical, and spiritual.

**The spiritual helpers** – There are some who wish to be present at the abortion site but are physically unable to come. These spiritual helpers are present ... in spirit. They contribute prayers and sacrifices made during the week and offer it all up for the work of the Helpers.

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