



“I have to admit that I didn’t take abortion seriously.”

—Drayton Valley pastor

Dear friends,

One of the most important parts of our job is to train others to be good pro-life ambassadors.¹ That means individuals who know the pro-life position, who can effectively share that view with others, and who have a character that doesn’t compromise that message.

When I was invited to speak to the pro-life group in Drayton Valley, near Edmonton, earlier this year, I challenged them to view this as their work too. I told them that only when the hearts and minds of individuals are changed can we expect the law to change. And the need for ambassadors was obvious, even in their town.

For example, one local pastor publicly shared that he had stopped taking the abortion debate seriously in the past several years. He said that he had bad experiences with pro-lifers in the past at different churches and that turned him off discussing abortion. One of the local pro-life leaders actually attends that pastor’s church currently and told me that she and her family were often frustrated trying to get the church to take on pro-life initiatives. And that pastor isn’t unique in his aversion to pro-life activity. At many churches I’ve approached, the reputation set by other pro-lifers has gotten in the way of our message. Some pastors have even refused to meet with me because of experiences they had with pro-lifers in the past.

Pro-life ambassadors were even needed at the Catholic high school where I took questions from students who viewed opposition to abortion as simply religious doctrine. Their view was that they did not follow those religions and therefore, didn’t need to take the pro-life position. One student said that opposing abortion is simply a matter of opinion, similar to preferring one type of fruit over another. They needed to hear ambassadors who would be willing to tell them why the pro-life view is true.

I told the local pro-life group that the first step in becoming a good ambassador to audiences like these, is to have an accurately informed mind—to know what the pro-life position is. This is why when we speak at different venues we show abortion videos that depict the reality of abortion. These images provide the evidence for why we must be opposed to abortion.

Along with the video, I share how past social reform movements used pictures to educate the public. For example, I describe how civil rights activists used pictures of a teenage boy killed and mutilated by racists to galvanize African-Americans and others to fight against segregation in the American south during the 1950s. A member of the audience wrote what stood out about the presentation were



Linda Smith (far right), head of Drayton Valley Pro-Life, and her friends and family.

¹ This is modelled after Stand to Reason’s training for Christian ambassadors at www.str.org

*“the pictures of the 14-year-old killed and others. I didn’t realise pictures could change minds of people, because it is too easy to look away. **But they are excellent in changing society.**”*

The second part of being an ambassador is to know how best to share our knowledge. This means recognizing that it is not enough to be right about abortion but that we need to evangelize our view in a way others can understand. For pro-lifers, that means we need to acknowledge that most people in our society want to simply dismiss the pro-life view as mere opinion. Pro-life ambassadors, then, must help them see why our position is objectively true.



St. Anthony’s, the Catholic high school in Drayton Valley

At the school, I made the case for the pro-life position, emphasizing that pro-life claims were not just personal religious opinions but were based on solid evidence. In order for them to challenge our ideas, they had to provide better evidence and not just dismiss our position as an opinion. Confronted with the evidence, in one class of about forty students, **six pro-abortion students changed their minds. One 18-year-old wrote that, before the presentation, her view was that the rightness of abortion “depends on the circumstance.” When asked if her position changed in any way due to the presentation, she wrote,**

“I believe that abortion is wrong. I would rather put up [the] baby for adoption than kill it.”

Of course, even with the right knowledge and the ability to know share that knowledge, ambassadors still need to have a good character. This doesn’t mean that everyone has to like us. Rather, it means having integrity, a character that doesn’t compromise our message.

When I shared the pro-life message at that pastor’s church, I challenged the youth group to see abortion as not just a terrible act but one that they need to take responsibility for. I asked if Christians truly believe that abortion takes a human life, which *they* claimed to believe, then how do their actions match that belief? Were they good ambassadors for the pro-life perspective? It was then that the local pastor admitted to not taking abortion seriously. But he also said that that was a mistake. He said the message convicted him to lead the church to do more to end abortion.

We at CCBR are committed to help others become good ambassadors for the pro-life position. And if those ambassadors commit to creating more ambassadors, then it is only a matter of time before the laws will change. Your prayers and financial support are making this kind of difference in the lives of Canadians across the country. Thank you.

Jojo Ruba

Link of the month: Fr. Frank Pavone, founder of Priests for Life, is a member of the CBR board:
www.priestsforlife.org.

Upcoming Schedule:

Monday Oct. 30th Debate with staff from Planned Parenthood at 101 Azreli Theatre, Carleton University at 7 pm
Thursday Nov. 2nd Metropolitan Bible Church at 7 am

PS. Please contact me for more details about these talks and others that are yet to be scheduled;

I encourage all of you to attend one of the talks if you're able to.

Please make cheques payable to CCBR, write Jose Ruba on the note, and mail them to
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Summer 2006

The Reproductive Choice Campaign (RCC): an Update

Several people have recently inquired about exactly when the truck project will begin. For security purposes, we will not give much written advance warning about the *precise* launch of the truck campaign, but we wanted to give you, our faithful supporters, an update about its status.

We have raised the funds needed to cover the *one-time* costs (truck signs, purchase and outfitting of the security car, etc.). We have raised the funds to cover the *operational costs* (e.g., fuel and storage) for 4 out of 12 months. The truck itself is going to be provided by our American affiliate, the Center for Bio-Ethical Reform (CBR). However, we cannot receive the truck until late this year since this vehicle is being used in CBR's 2006 Key States Initiative (targeting "key" U.S. Senate races). While this means a later start for our RCC than originally planned, it gives us an opportunity to inform more people about our strategy as well as to raise the necessary funds.

Since our move from Vancouver to Calgary, there have been several indicators that Alberta will prove to be a wise choice for CCBR in which to launch the truck project. We have spoken to various church and school groups. We have increased our donor base. The locals we've met are impressed with CCBR's work. In fact, a Calgarian couple who have never heard us speak and have not received our mailings recently sent us \$1000. What prompted their gift? A friend of theirs who heard a CCBR strategy presentation and who receives our newsletter **endorsed us enough for them to be convinced.** Wow. Praise God!

On Easter Sunday, Street Church, an interdenominational Christian outreach to street people, held a festival in a downtown Calgary park. They provided free food and entertainment to several hundred individuals as well as shared the Gospel message. After sunset, they showed *The Passion of the Christ* on a gigantic movie screen. Before that, however, they showed a 5-minute graphic abortion video that we had provided to them. Post-abortive women and men gave their testimonies and spoke of Christ's forgiveness. **After that, a woman in the audience who had had an abortion came forward to receive Christ.**

The conservative climate of this province has also been an indicator of this being a good launching ground for the RCC. In particular, several recent incidents in the media have given us hope that we will receive good coverage when the RCC hits the road.

When the University of Calgary pro-life club conducted GAP in March, both major secular newspapers, the Calgary Herald and the Calgary Sun, ran stories about it. The former even included a picture. Then, in April, one of the editors of the Herald, Naomi Lakritz, wrote an opinion piece on abortion. She said,



▲ Last winter, Jojo went to California to intern at CBR's headquarters and to gain experience with the RCC. Here he is beside an RCC truck, wearing a bulletproof vest.

“In this week of Passover and Easter, holidays that celebrate new life and redemption, the Herald visited the most unredeemable place in Calgary—the Kensington Clinic.” That clinic is the only abortion clinic in Calgary, which kills almost 3000 babies each year (25% of those abortions are repeats). Ms. Lakritz’s article prompted a flurry of letters to the editor, many of which were pro-life. The paper published one from Cathy Smith, who is a CCBR board member and alderman from the city of Medicine Hat, as well as mine.

Beyond that, the **June 5 cover story of the Western Standard, a Calgary-based magazine, exposed sex-selection abortions happening in Canada.** In that same issue, writer Kathy Woodard mentioned CCBR in an article titled *Protecting the Wrong Victims*:

...Most of us [Canadians] sit in the mushy middle, and since so many of us have had abortions, and more of us are implicated, we’d rather ignore the whole topic. Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform director Stephanie Gray targets this mushiness in her graphic presentations—images of the reality of abortion.

I’ve always been skeptical about using real images to convince people of abortion’s evil. We’re already inundated with violence; so should defenders of life add to the culture of death? Wouldn’t such images, brought to college campuses, traumatize women already harmed by abortion? Young Stephanie, however, argues that we must “polarize the debate”. And she forced me to acknowledge my own complacency. She made me realize that, in arguing about protecting people’s feelings, we forget about the real victim: the baby.

CCBR’s film branded my memory with images... I can’t forget the tiny baby in the deadliest of places—the womb—struggling away from the pincers about to tear him limb from limb.

Ms. Woodard is right. Most Canadians would rather ignore abortion. Even many who profess to oppose abortion act as though the problem will eventually go away by itself or that someone else will fix it. This widespread complacency has led to 37 years of legalized baby-killing. This is why we must make it impossible for people to ignore abortion. This is why we must make it impossible for our many pro-life brothers and sisters to pretend that they bear no responsibility for ending the slaughter. This is why we must not allow even *ourselves* to forget the tiny baby in the deadliest of places, not even amid the many other concerns of our lives.

CCBR needs \$40,000 to complete a year’s worth of operational expenses for RCC. Once those funds are raised, we hope to find the financial support in Canada for the purchase price of a truck so as to not have to rely in the long term on our American office.

If you haven’t given to CCBR yet or if you haven’t done so in a while, or if you would even consider an extra gift above your already generous regular contributions, would you please send a gift for the RCC this month? **Would you please give until it hurts? Perhaps that will mean \$10. Perhaps that will mean \$10,000.** Ultimately, it’s not the amount that counts. It’s not about giving from our abundance. Regardless of our wealth, it’s about giving until it hurts. When we give until it hurts, we show the depth of our love, our concern, and our commitment.



Stephanie Gray
Executive Director

P.S., Please make cheques payable to “CCBR” and write “RCC” on the memo line.