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**“There are so many poor children here suffering. It’s better if they weren’t even born.”**

Family friend from the Philippines, after I told her my new job dealt with abortion

He was one of the dirtiest little boys I’ve ever seen.

After boarding a bus in Manila, three little boys, who looked like brothers came on and asked for anything we could give. Since we didn’t have much, my dad gave him a piece of the most sour grapefruit I had ever tasted. But the smallest boy took that piece of fruit and ate all of it as fast as possible. His shirt and shorts were coated in dust and his face was smeared with what had to be dirt. I didn’t remember him wearing shoes.

I wish I could say my trip to the Philippines was memorable because of family and friends whom I left when I was five or that I remember my trip because of the great weather and food. Instead, I remember my visit mostly because of those little boys on the bus. It’s not that I wasn’t expecting to see poverty and hardship – I’ve had enough friends return to tell me how life is like there. It’s just suffering is much more real when you see it in the eyes of a little child right in front of you.

My mind went back to those boys a few days later when I met a friend of my uncle. She was a well to do woman who was investing in my uncle’s family farm. Like many well off Filipinos, she was very pleasant woman and would have been comfortable in any setting in North America.

But when she heard that I would be working with a pro-life group, she said, “There are so many poor children here suffering. It’s better if they weren’t even born.” Her tone wasn’t confrontational or forced rather she said it a way that suggested this was just the first thing that came to her mind.

I was taken aback at first. We had just talked about her religious background and how she followed the teachings of Jesus Christ. And her church strongly supports the pro-life view. Unfortunately, her reaction is something I’m quite used to now and I was ready to respond. I agreed with her that there is much suffering in the country but the problem with abortion as a solution, is that it kills the person who suffers, not just the suffering.

She quickly agreed and changed the subject before I could go any further.

Though I wasn’t surprised by her reaction, I was saddened. As someone who said she was a Christian, I thought she would understand the need to value people. The fact of the matter is, without a belief in God, suffering makes no sense. If we believe in God not only do we understand that each cause for suffering gives us an opportunity to help, but that suffering reminds us of how valuable our lives are to God.

For religious people, we know something is a great tragedy because God declares it so. For instance, we can look at the recent events in South Asia and grieve because we know that the people who died and those who still suffer are all precious to God. It doesn't mean atheists and others can't place a high value on the lives of human beings. I've worked with pro-lifers who were not religious and are some of the best advocates for life. It simply means religious people understand where that value comes from.

For Christians, like the woman from the Philippines claimed to be, we take it a step further. As Christians, we understand that God Himself values people so much that He gave up His own life for us. And as His followers, we need to try to love people the same way.



I talked about my pro-life work in Canada at several churches in the Philippines, Nov. 2004

As I thought about my response to those boys in the Philippines or the suffering in Asia, I realised my opportunity to help was limited. Many agencies have even said that the best way to help right now was just to pray for the workers and send donations to them.

But there are many things we can do to help alleviate the suffering of children in our own country, particularly when it comes to abortion. **Over 100 00 abortions are performed legally in Canada which means in one and a half years, the same number of Canadians die from abortion as the number of people who died during the tsunami.** That's why I'll be working in Vancouver to ensure that people know about the tragedy that happens in their own neighbourhoods every day and the needs of moms and babies who live right beside them. I'll also use the GAP (Genocide Awareness Project) images to help illustrate how painful abortion really is by showing Canadians suffering in their own country, through the eyes of unborn children.

And though I don't know if I changed the mind of my uncle's friend, I do hope my decision to give up my career and life in Ottawa to pursue this new job helped her understand how important and valuable people are, not just to me but to God. As a Christian, I believe of course that what I sacrifice is nothing compared to what God suffered in His sacrifice. But I was glad to share with her the difference between the pro-choice view and the pro-life view on suffering. One looks at the disadvantaged and says there would be less suffering in the world if they were just aborted but the other looks at the disadvantaged and says if anyone is aborted, it is the world that suffers.

Thank you so much for your continued support and prayers. It's because of that support that I can continue to help make abortion unthinkable.

*Jose Ruba*  
Jose Ruba, CCBR

**Link of the month:** *Campaign Life Coalition* Canada's national political pro-life organisation. CLC is an important source of detailed candidate and party information on life issues during Canadian elections at the federal and provincial levels. <http://www.campaignlifecoalition.com/>

My own personal website will be worked on and should be up shortly.

- January: I will be speaking in Calgary at several churches before I move to Vancouver at the end of the month.
- February: I will be working from our Vancouver office and attending several important seminars and planning meetings. Keep in touch and informed as CCBR begins its national launch.

The Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform (CCBR) is a pro-life organization with a mission to make abortion unthinkable. CCBR promotes extensive training in logical, well-reasoned arguments explaining why abortion is wrong. These verbal means must be accompanied by graphic visuals such as those used in the genocide awareness project (GAP). GAP and other visual projects reach a society that thinks and learns visually and is in denial about what abortion does to the unborn child.

Graphic visuals and pro-life apologetics are thus considered essential tools in transforming this culture's perception of abortion. CCBR Staff is comprised of employees who raise their own salaries by relying on private donations. To have us train you and your group to effectively articulate the pro-life position, to get the Genocide Awareness Project organized on your campus or city, and/or to get more information, please contact Jose Ruba.

**To support Jose, please write cheques payable to CCBR and write Jose's name in the note. Visa payments are also accepted. Please feel free to ask for a Visa form.**