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**From the President's Laptop**

*Fall, 2020*

*To provide an organization through which Lutheran Christians can unite to share dialogue and give common witness within the Church and society to their concern for the value and dignity of all human life.*

On August 11, 2003, Lutherans For Life Canada came into existence as a non-profit, federally incorporated entity. In the list of the objects (purposes) of Lutherans For Life Canada, the first is what is in italics above. As schools begin a new year, teachers and students have the task of evaluating what has been learned and retained from the past. This is not a bad time for us to refresh our memories as to the purpose of Lutherans For Life Canada.

We exist for Lutheran Christians to talk with each other about life issues. When we began, abortion was the big issue, along with teaching abstinence as the God-pleasing way for teens and all unmarried adults to treat God's gift of sex. Connected with this was teaching about "test-tube" babies and the abortions that were intrinsic to these procedures and thus the attack on the womb simultaneous with the attempt to help a womb bear life. Just coming on the horizon was the use of stem cells from aborted babies in a vain attempt to develop cures for various diseases and injuries. How much hope there was amongst Pro-Life supporters, when it was discovered that stem cells procured from adults were not only a feasible substitute for fetal stem cells, but indeed far superior to them for the purpose of healing people. Even in the span of a few short years so many new things came up to which the Life Movement could respond.

When we began, we were already fighting against the legalizing of euthanasia. Now we are educating our fellow Lutherans how to respond to euthanasia – so-called mercy killing – legalized in Canada under the saccharine phrase, "Medical Assistance In Dying," to disguise the much more accurate, "Physician Assisted Suicide." As poorly as various levels of government enforced the restrictions initially placed on abortion, there is even less oversight of doctors killing vulnerable

patients. The need for education regarding the sanctity of human life is greater than ever.

We are given the blessing as Lutherans to share with our fellow Lutherans, and anyone else who will listen, not only the message that killing an unborn baby is sin or that the taking of a human life under the guise of “mercy” falls under God’s condemnation, but something more. We get to share the Good News of forgiveness in Jesus. Jesus rebuked sinners, but not in order to rub their face in their sin. He rebuked them, so that He could absolve the repentant. He died so that He could have mercy on those who, for whatever reason, killed their unborn baby, or took the life of a family member or friend in an act of misguided mercy. Christ rose bodily on the third day, vanquishing death and the devil, and to show us that our life in the body matters to Him, our God and Saviour.

How we share this message in a manner helps people to see the truth, repent and be forgiven is a challenge. I am so thankful that, though we have decided to not have an in-person Annual General Meeting, we will still have a virtual one with the Executive Director, Rev. Michael Salemink. His presentation, “With a Smile and a Hug,” is on how to share the pro-life message so that we engage people rather than push them away. I pray that many of you can join us in hearing this live-streamed presentation. And we hope you have patience with us as we venture for the first time into this kind of meeting.

May God bless and keep you all and may He deliver us soon from this COVID 19, but not before we learn from this pandemic what He desires to teach us.

Yours in Christ, Rev. Richard Juritsch

## **FROM THE PASTORAL ADVISOR’S DESK**

### **Social Circles**

Our current pandemic has introduced me to all sorts of terms and definitions I never knew before (at least, not by name). My current favourite is the concept of the “Social Circle”.

This summer, after months of in-home lock-down, Ontario allowed us to broaden our “Social Circle” to TEN whole people! These are the people you wish to be close to you. The people you can hold and hug and be face to face without a mask coming between you. These are people you draw around you out of need and/or trust.

But after so many weeks of fearful news and getting used to isolation, the freedom to begin letting people back into your life became a nerve wracking prospect for some. After all, with each new person allowed into your social circle you are opening yourself up to possible contamination, hurt, heartache, and responsibilities. Who would you allow in? Who would you keep at arms length?

And then it hit me. The social circle and its consequences are nothing new, especially for those who are concerned with life issues outside of pandemics. So many of the bad decisions people make surrounding life issues are based on this underlying fear connected to our social circles. Young mothers unwilling to bring another person into their circle when they know what the added responsibility will mean. For that little one to come into her circle others will have to leave. Parties will be replaced with pampers, career pathways will have to give way to parenthood. Or on the other side of the circle are those who don’t want to bring suffering and hardship to those already in their

circle, spouses, children, grandchildren. The extra burden of care, the loss of the perceived quality of the relationship. Better just to step out “gracefully” and let others come in. We have been living with and dying for the idea of social circles for a long time.

And then this also hit me. So has God. For that is precisely what Jesus did by giving up His rightful place in heaven to come and be born among us – as one of us. God and man face to face! He made himself part of our social circle (humanity) so that He could draw us into His eternal social circle. And He did it knowing full well the consequences of drawing us into His circle, the burden of care it would entail. No fear of simply dealing with sickness and rejection (although He did that often enough). He knew that making us part of His heavenly social circle meant that He must die. He must pay for our sin. He must lay down His life. And He stepped into our circle and did it without hesitation.

Therefore let us follow the example of our Lord and not hesitate to bring the lost and hurting into our social circles, willing to bear their pain and hurt among us all. Let us be those who proclaim God’s love and greatness in Jesus. Let us share the gift of welcome and forgiveness in our Lord and Saviour. Let us replace the fear that would keep others at a safe distance with the love and joy that draws one and all into the heavenly circle of Christ’s Church and His kingdom that has no end. There is room enough for everyone!

## Prayerfully Patient Joy

How do we begin to make sense of all that has been happening around us (and to us) as of late? Should we live in anger over all the good that has been taken away or fear over all the bad that might yet be? Of course not! Instead of living our lives based on what ISN’T, God calls us to stand firmly upon what actually IS.

Like the Joy we have in the Hope of what is ours right now in Jesus Christ. A joy that sees us patiently through all the tribulations of life in a world full of what-might-have-beens and what-could-still-be’s. A joy that doesn’t erase the hardships of life in a broken world, but instead redefines that hardship into something else entirely ... like a chance to pray to God. To begin to see life not through the eyes of what we want or don’t want, but by God’s gracious and loving perspective.

Over the next few issues we will do just that by working our way backwards through Paul’s 3-fold guide to living a god-pleasing Christian Life in any reality:

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer. [Romans 12:12]
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### 1. Be constant in prayer!

#### **What prayer is**

Prayer, very simply stated, is a conversation between God and man. It is a two way exchange in which the two parties connect and grow closer together in understanding and purpose. Prayer, like worship, begins with us receiving from God and then giving back to Him from the very things we have received. You cannot separate true prayer from the hearing and the studying of God’s Word.

Many people will selfishly view prayer as a tool for bending God’s will to meeting our needs. If we are sincere enough, faithful enough, bold enough then God must give us what we want, like an end to all abortion or a renewed sanctity surrounding life! But the true power and benefit behind prayer is the bending of our sinful and selfish heart and will to God’s holy heart and will. Prayer that begins in God’s Word leads us outside of ourselves and helps us begin to see this world from God’s holy perspective. And key in that perspective is that while we are important to God we are not alone in that exalted position. Prayer leads us away from long lists of selfish desires (like wanting good on MY timeline) to

seeking God's mercy for the sake of others!

### **How it is done**

To say that there is only one right way to pray is like saying that there is only one way to have conversations with anyone. Prayer can (and should both often and regularly) include confession of our own sins and failings, and requests for God's help to overcome them. Prayer should be full of intercessions for others (even those on the other side of contentious issues), thanksgiving and gratitude, expressions of sorrow, and also of praise and adoration.

Prayer should be the first thing we do every morning and the last thing on our lips each day. We should be comfortable praying everywhere. In private, with family and friends, and most especially at church. The surest way to grow in our prayers outside of our selves is to pray regularly for and with others! By doing so we are not only encouraged in the blessed task praying for others, but we see others praying for us. We encourage one another to constancy of prayer even as God encourages us by changing our hearts and minds to be less like ourselves and more like His own.

### **Why it is needed**

Prayer changes us. No matter how righteous the cause, everyone who works toward it is still a deeply flawed and sinful human being. Prayer changes the way we view ourselves, our problems, our future, our neighbours, and even our enemies. Prayer shapes us to see this world and the things that happen in it through His Holy lens of forgiveness, life, and salvation in Jesus Christ. Prayer trains us in compassion! That is, the willingness to come alongside one another and suffer with them or for them. Just as God showed compassion for us in Jesus.

And in a world full of fear and doubts, lives strained by sickness and the threat of death, hardships that never seem to cease or give us a moment's peace we need the constant support of Godly prayer and Christ-like compassion for one another!

### **For Reflection:**

- How is your prayer life shaped by life issues? Is it something you pray for regularly? How can you broaden the scope of your prayers? What motivates you to pray most often? What keeps you from it?
- When it comes to praying for life issues, how can you include confession of our own sins and failings? Requests for God's help to overcome them? What intercessions for others (even those on the other side of contentious issues) can and should you be making? For what can you give thanks and show your gratitude? Why can we give God praise and adoration?
- What support do you have for your prayer life? Who do you pray with/for? Who is praying for you? How can you help your congregation pray more regularly for life issues?

### **Prayer:**

Heavenly Father, Your words give us boldness and confidence to acknowledge You as our true Father and ourselves as Your true children. May Your Holy Spirit lead us to trust in Your fatherly goodness, call upon Your name in every need, and glorify You as the authour and giver of every good and perfect gift, through Your Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.



*“As Christians, we understand better than most that life is weighted with profound suffering and buoyed by eternal hope. As such, it’s time to raise our children to appreciate what a big, beautiful struggle parenthood is and that it simply cannot happen without offering compassion, love, and grace to children still in the womb and to the mothers and fathers who view the scales more filled with suffering than hope.” Tawnia Hoehne, Frazee, Minnesota – A Life Quote from Lutherans For Life • [www.lutheransforlife.org](http://www.lutheransforlife.org)*



## Lutheran Foundation Canada

REFLECTING GOD’S GRACE

Have you considered leaving a planned gift within your estate to support the work of Lutherans for Life - Canada? Are you passionate about the work they do? Have you considered how even a small percentage of your estate would allow this vital work to continue? Lutheran Foundation Canada, an organization of LCC, assists individuals who are considering a planned gift, but are unsure of how best to create the gift. Coupled with other gifts you might leave to your home congregation or others, these combined gifts can generate significant tax savings. Call Lutheran Foundation Canada to find out how, at 877-711-4438 or visit our web site at [www.lutheranfoundation.ca](http://www.lutheranfoundation.ca). Plan. Make a difference, for your loved ones, and the ministries you value.

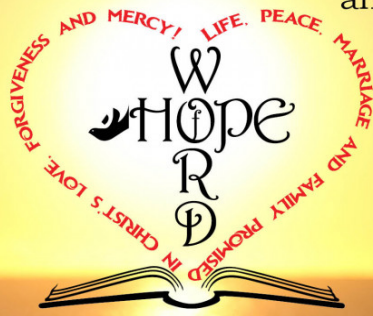
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**Please consider supporting Lutherans for Life-Canada through your prayers and making a financial contribution, or becoming a member. You are then placed on our mailing list and will receive our newsletters.**

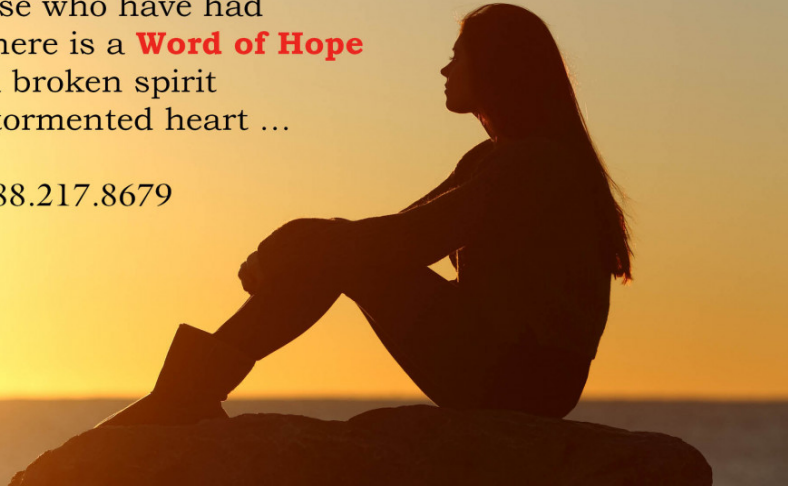
***PLEASE NOTE: In an effort to curb some of the producing and mailing expenses of the LFL-C newsletters we are happy to offer it in both formats; online in an e-mail OR a mailed hard copy via Canada Post. Please indicate your preference by providing your email address to the treasurer when you make your next donation or remit your yearly membership. We appreciate your help in this matter. PLEASE ALSO FEEL FREE TO FORWARD AND SHARE WITH OTHERS ON YOUR CONTACT LIST.***

“The Apostle St. Paul must have felt like a burden and better off dead (Philippians 1:21). Persecution caused him almost constant pain. Imprisoned in Rome, perhaps awaiting execution, he only ate, bathed, and was clothed at someone else’s pleasure. Yet though he couldn’t work, God made him a witness who blessed untold multitudes throughout history (Philippians 1:24). And what great worth and purpose likewise shines in our lives even when confined to hospital beds or completely incapacitated!”-*Lutherans For Life*

For those who have had  
an abortion there is a **Word of Hope**  
for a broken spirit  
and tormented heart ...



888.217.8679



LFL-C has a Facebook page. Just type in Lutherans for Life-Canada on your Fb search bar or Google it.

**LFL-C WEBSITE.** Please check it out at: [www.lutheransforlife-canada.ca](http://www.lutheransforlife-canada.ca).

**LUTHERANS FOR LIFE-CANADA, IS A MINISTRY AND A LISTED SERVICE ORGANIZATION OF LUTHERAN CHURCH CANADA.**

**PLEASE CONTINUE TO KEEP THIS MINISTRY OF EQUIPPING LUTHERANS TO BE GOSPEL-MOTIVATED VOICES FOR LIFE, IN YOUR PRAYERS.**

**WE GIVE THANKS FOR YOUR PRAYERS AND GIFTS**

Memberships, Membership Renewals and/or Donors to LFLC from April 20, 2020 to September 14, 2020

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Membership: \$15/Person per Year \_\_\_\_\_ \$30/Family per Year \_\_\_\_\_ \$50/Group per Year \_\_\_\_\_

Please send this form with cheque to:  
Lutherans for Life-Canada  
C/o Mr. Alan Schmitt, Treasurer  
75 Blackthorne Crescent  
London ON N6J 4B3

### **Eight Objectives of the *LFL-C* are:**

1. To provide an organization through which Lutheran Christians can unite to share dialogue and give common witness within the Church and society to their concern for the value and dignity of all human life;
2. To strengthen the existing common bond of concern by bringing Lutherans of like mind into contact with one another;
3. To gather and share pertinent information with its membership and develop strategies for witness and response;
4. To develop and distribute educational materials based upon the Word of God;
5. To identify resource people who can write and speak on behalf of the organization;
6. To monitor public and private action in order to enhance the right to life;
7. To respond to and co-operate with other groups in society who share similar concerns; and
8. To examine and correct popular but misleading stereotypes regarding pro-life advocacy.

To contact LFL-C please email us at:  
[info@lutheransforlife-canada.ca](mailto:info@lutheransforlife-canada.ca)

To order Pro-life materials;  
Concordia Publishing House – [www.cph.org](http://www.cph.org)